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主编 连淑能

# Translation as Manipulated by Power Relations

论权力关系对翻译的操控

贺显斌 著

厦门大学出版社



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**图书在版编目(CIP)数据**

论权力关系对翻译的操控/贺显斌著. —厦门:厦门大学出版社,  
2005

ISBN 7-5615-2328-9

I. 论… II. 贺… III. 权力—影响—翻译—研究 IV. ①H059  
②D033

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2005)第 118919 号

\* 本书获广东技术师范学院学术著作出版基金资助

厦门大学出版社出版发行

(地址:厦门大学 邮编:361005)

<http://www.xmupress.com>

[xmup@public.xm.fj.cn](mailto:xmup@public.xm.fj.cn)

福建二新华印刷有限公司印刷

2005 年 11 月第 1 版 2005 年 11 月第 1 次印刷

开本:890×1240 1/32 印张:6.25 插页:2

字数:185 千字 印数:0 001-1 000 册

定价:16.00 元

本书如有印装质量问题请直接寄承印厂调换



## 作者简介:

贺显斌, 1965年出生于湖南耒阳。1998年获长沙铁道学院硕士学位; 2004年获厦门大学博士学位; 2005年-2006年获国家留学基金资助, 在英曼切斯特大学翻译与跨文化研究中心留学。现为广东技术师范学院外语系副教授、中国英汉语比较研究会会员。2001年以来在《现代外语》、《外语与外语教学》、《解放军外国语学院学报》、《四川外国语学院学报》、《天津外国语学院学报》、《西安外国语学院学报》、《中国科技翻译》、《上海科技翻译》、“Journal of Language and Politics”、“International Journal of Translation”、“Translation Today”、“Translating Today”、“Translation Journal”和“Teaching English in China”等近20家国内外核心期刊和专业刊物发表过学术论文, 参编的《译学词典》2004年3月由上海外语教育出版社出版。



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主编 连淑能

## 序

人们过去研究翻译,注重文本对比和两种语言系统的比较,侧重语言分析、译作评价和对翻译技巧的把握,把翻译看作在真空中进行的、价值中立、完全平等的语际转换和文化交流活动,忽视翻译的特定语境和所受到的社会文化制约,局限性较为明显。

本书从翻译与权力的关联这个崭新的角度入手,对翻译进行宏观和跨学科研究,揭示翻译过程中各种社会文化因素与翻译主体间的互动关系,探讨权力关系对翻译的操控问题,内容涉及翻译理论、翻译史、文化研究和国际政治关系等多个方面。作者以权力关系概念为轴心,围绕原文、原语、原语文化、译者、译语、译语文化、赞助者、读者之间的关系,以多个视角、多个层面展开。其理论框架基本取自20世纪90年代末以来的西方翻译理论,分析的素材以中国的文化语境和翻译史为主,可以说是用西方的翻译理论分析中国的翻译史实,用中国的翻译史料验证和完善西方的翻译理论,同时兼顾了中西文化语境的对比。

翻译与权力的关联是西方译界近年的一个研究热点,至今国内相关研究还不多见。本书作者贺显斌在攻读博士学位期间,刻苦钻研,虚心求教,在国内外多个重要刊物上发表了质量较高的学术论文,在参阅大量古今中外相关文献的基础上,就权力关系对翻译的操控这一专题提出了独到的见解。本书可以说是一项开拓性的探讨。

本书对国际译学中的最新相关成果进行了全面的综述和评析,拓宽了翻译中权力操控概念的范围,对操控学派理论和赞助人理论进行了修正,对中国翻译研究中一些长期争论不休的问题提供了新的视角和更为合理的阐释,对中西翻译史上的一些现象做出了新的解释,视角比较宽广,研究较为深入,论证严密,表达流畅。本书对译学研究具有较大的学术价值,对翻译实践和翻译人才的培养有一定

的启发作用,并可望对史学和文化研究提供借鉴。

我祝贺贺显斌的博士论文得以出版,并期待他在翻译理论研究方面取得更大的成绩。

连淑能

2005 年 11 月 18 日

于厦门大学外文学院





## 前 言

翻译是历史、社会与文化的产物,总是在特定的语境中进行的,必然受到社会文化因素(包括权力关系)的制约。研究翻译不能仅仅对两种语言系统的结构差异加以对比,由此推导具体的翻译原则和方法,或者将原作与译作进行分析,评价译文在语言或美学层面上与原文等值的程度。这类研究视翻译为语码转换,注重对翻译成品的价值判断,将翻译研究局限在对比语言学和应用层面,既不全面,又有诸多局限。

翻译与权力密切相关。西方学者早在 20 世纪 70 年代末就开始关注翻译与权力的问题, *The Manipulation of Literature* (1985) 一书的出版把这一研究推向一个新的高度,但对权力与翻译的关系进行的集中研究则始于 20 世纪 90 年代初, Bassnett 和 Lefevere 在 1990 年合编的《翻译·历史·文化》一书的导论中,号召翻译学者研究社会中权力运作的兴衰及其对文化产生的影响。译学发生“文化转向”以来,突出权力问题的重要著作相继问世。从某种意义上说,“文化转向”已变成“权力转向”,译史和译论都开始突出权力问题,关注的方面涉及翻译与原作的关系;翻译作为一种文化武器在殖民统治、解构男权话语和建构文化身份中的作用;翻译对人类文化发展的贡献以及所受到的社会文化制约等等。分析的理论视角有后殖民主义、解构主义、女权主义、批评话语分析等等。

“操控学派”认为,从译语文学角度,为了达到某个目的,所有的翻译都对原作进行一定程度的操控。但翻译中的操控其实并不限于针对原文,为了操控译语社会,赞助者往往操控译者,使其操控原文。翻译也受到原作和读者的操控,有时译者也操控赞助者。因此,译者既受到操控,又是操控者。

本书探讨权力关系对翻译的操控问题,共八章。第一章回顾译

学研究的“权力转向”,探讨翻译学中研究权力关系的几种主要方法,分析翻译学中研究权力关系的意义。第二章分析和对比中西翻译传统中的原作地位,认为原作的权力与翻译的题材、目的以及社会、历史和文化环境有关,原作和等值概念在描述译学中的地位虽已下降,但在应用译论和翻译实践中仍十分重要。第三章对中西翻译史上的文化取向之争进行了历时和共时的对比,对译者的文化成因提供了新的解释,认为 *foreignization* / *domestication* 与“异化”/“归化”并不对等,二者的渊源和指称不同,使用的语境和目的也不同。对《三国演义》英译本的分析表明,讨论译者的文化取向成因需区分译者群体和个体,二者需要不同的理论加以解释。第四章探讨了语言地位的不对称对翻译中语言选择的影响。在中国翻译史上,语码权力对翻译流向、平行文本的效力以及译者的文化和时间取向都有过明显的影响。在欧盟,英语、法语和德语等强势语言成了欧盟的通用语,语言垄断为使用该语言者带来更多的文化资本和象征性权力,从而可能实施象征性支配。第五章分析了意识形态和赞助者操控翻译的具体方式,认为赞助者和文学专业人士有时可能是同一批人,因而既干预意识形态,又影响译者的诗学选择,赞助者理论需要修正。第六章运用权力关系理论对严复的翻译进行了个案分析,发现在译作中有针对性地突出和强调原作的某个方面也是一种操控手段,并验证了译者既受权力操控又可能操控赞助者的论断。第七章论述了权力的相对性以及权力关系研究中应注意的事项,认为翻译研究不可忽视原作与原语文化的地位,不可忽略文化以外的因素;区分原语文化和译语文化并非总是易事;翻译受规范制约,但译者仍然可以而且应该发挥能动性和创造性,制约性和主体性的关系需要辩证地看待。第八章对前面各章节的内容做了总结。本书涉及主要的权力关系,但没有也不可能穷尽该项研究。

作者主张辩证地看待权力关系,认为语言文化权力的不平等并不意味着译者应屈服于文化霸权,对翻译中的意识形态操控的描述和揭露并不说明操控是正当的;过于强调社会文化制约可能导致译者地位下降,完全忽略它们又可能使乱译盛行。

权力关系理论有助于了解翻译的社会文化成因及其背后的权力关系,是对其他译论的有益补充,能使翻译研究更为全面和客观。



本书原是作者 2004 年向厦门大学提交的博士论文,部分章节已经在国内外学术刊物发表。出版前作者利用在英国曼切斯特大学留学的机会对全书作了修改。

在攻读博士学位和撰写与出版博士论文的整个过程中,我始终得到我的导师连淑能教授悉心的指导、无微不至的关怀和亲切的鼓励。从选题、拟定提纲和完成论文初稿,他都提供了许多观点和材料上的帮助,并对论文定稿提出了建设性的意见。我谨向他表示由衷的谢意。

此外,我还要感谢我攻读博士学位期间的所有任课教师:连淑能教授、杨信彰教授、苏新春教授、Marian Wyse 博士;感谢罗选民教授、黄国文教授、方梦之教授、王东风教授、陈德鸿教授、杨信彰教授、傅似逸教授、张礼龙教授、胡兆云教授、纪玉华教授等对我的提纲或论文提出的宝贵意见以及对我的鞭策与鼓励;感谢林克难教授和国际译学杂志 *Perspectives* 主编、丹麦哥本哈根大学 Cay Dollerup 教授向我提供他们的重要著述;感谢厦门大学图书馆馆际互借部的李明和其他老师提供大量的校外图书资料服务;感谢博士生同学、厦大外文学院吴建平教授和陈燕副教授的鼓励和帮助。

最后,我还要感谢我的工作单位广东技术师范学院外语系原系主任冯清高教授、现任主任邹东期副教授和邱乐群书记等领导在我攻读博士学位期间提供的支持,感谢厦门大学出版社所做的一切工作,感谢“广东技术师范学院学术著作出版基金资助项目”提供的资助,感谢国家留学基金委提供我到英国公派留学的机会。

贺显斌

2005 年 10 月 20 日

## Contents

### Chapter 1 Introduction/1

- 1.1 The “power turn” in translation studies/1
- 1.2 Major perspectives on translation and power/4
- 1.3 Significance of studying power relations in translation/8

### Chapter 2 The unstable source text power/10

- 2.1 The vicissitude of source text power in the Western context/10
- 2.2 The undervalued source text in the Chinese tradition/18
- 2.3 Cultural traditions and source text power disparity/25
- 2.4 Source text power and translation practice—The concept of “equivalence” revisited/28

### Chapter 3 The pull of two cultures and the translator’s cultural orientation/38

- 3.1 Diachronic study of two major translation strategies in China and the West/38
- 3.2 Non-equivalence between foreignization/domestication and “yihua/ guihua”/45
- 3.3 Cultural orientations of translators as a collectivity vs. as individuals: The case of Moss Roberts’ translation of *Three kingdoms*/56

### Chapter 4 Power asymmetry and language choice in translation/68

- 4.1 Cultural status and language selection in Chinese translation/69
- 4.2 Translation and symbolic power in the European Union/81

### Chapter 5 Power interference from the target culture/94

- 5.1 Ideological manipulation in translation/94
- 5.2 Patronage and the poetic choices of Zhu Shenghao and Liang



Shiqiu/113

**Chapter 6 Translation as manipulation: a case study of Yan Fu's rendition of *On Liberty*/126**

6.1 Main ideas of *On Liberty*/127

6.2 Yan Fu's manipulating strategies/128

6.3 Differences between the source and target texts/135

6.4 Power relations behind Yan Fu's translation/139

**Chapter 7 Suggestions for future research/143**

7.1 Relativity of the cultural influence on translation/143

7.2 Translation norms and the translator's agency/161

**Chapter 8 Conclusion/174**

**Bibliography/178**

中文文献/186

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### 1.1 The “power turn” in translation studies

Influenced by contrastive and applied linguistics, systematic study of translation started in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Translation was understood as a linguistic phenomenon, a process of trans-coding between the source and target languages. Any difference between the two languages that became obvious in a translation was attributed to the differences in the two linguistic systems. Consequently, translation studies was conceived as a linguistic discipline. (Schaffner, 1998: 2)

The early linguistic theories of translation focused on precise description of the systematic regularities in the two languages and accurate reproduction of the source language texts. A huge number of studies into specific linguistic phenomena provided detailed explanations of regularities in SL and TL, and tried to derive rules for translation. They largely ignored the social, cultural and political contexts in which texts are produced and re-produced.

Translation takes place in a given social context, a context of complex structures, including power structures. It involves agents who are both conditioned by these power structures or at least entangled in them, and who exploit or attempt to exploit them to serve their own ends and interests, whether individual or collective. The power structures cover political and economic power but also, in the field of cultural production, those forms which Pierre Bourdieu calls “symbolic power”. The

agents, faced with an array of possible options, have to make choices and decisions about how to proceed. (Hermans, 1996:27-28)

Explicit interest of scholars (predominantly those from the Low Countries and Israel) in the topic of translation and power had its beginnings in the late 1970s and early 1980s. A new stage was reached in 1985 with the anthology *The Manipulation of Literature*. The authors of these essays demonstrated that translations were one of the primary literary tools that larger social institutions had at their disposal to “manipulate” a given society in order to “construct” the kind of “culture” desired. (Gentzler & Tymoczko, 2002:xi-xviii)

These manipulation theses evolved into the “cultural turn” in translation studies in the 1990s. Translation came to be considered a form of re-writing and acculturation. One common feature of much of the research in Translation Studies was an emphasis on cultural aspects of translation, on the contexts within which translation occurs. This has brought to the fore an interest in the power relations embedded in textual practice: at one level, the translator’s power in representing the source culture, at the other, the power in influencing or manipulating the text’s reception in a particular target culture. Susan Bassnett and Andre Lefevere (1990:5) wrote in the introduction to *Translation, History and Culture* that although empirical historical research can document changes in modes of translation, to explain such changes, a translation studies scholar must go into “the vagaries and vicissitudes of the exercise of power in a society, and what the exercise of power means in terms of the production of culture, of which the production of translations is a part.” “Translation is a rewriting of the original, and rewriting is manipulation of literature in the service of power. The history of translation is the history of the shaping power of one culture upon another.” (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1992: xi)

Since then, significant works have been produced foregrounding issues of power and focused on questions of power and colonialism. For instance, Cheyfitz (1991)’s *The Poetics of Imperialism* views American

foreign policy in terms of how Anglo-American power subjugates or “translates” other “nations” within its borders, and translates and transforms their lands and cultural identity. In *Sitting Translation*, Niranjana (1992) says that translation is at the heart of colonial exchange and postcolonial subjects are constructed through mechanisms of translation, and argues for a postcolonial translation practice that is alert to relations of power and historicity. Spivak (1992) theorises translation as cultural practice that might bring about social change and advocates the literalism of the “in-between discourse” to disrupt the effect of English hegemony. Bhabha (1994) goes so far as to coin the term “translational culture”, emphasising its autonomy as site for cultural production and its power as the “third space”: the space of hybridised and migrant identities that are typical of the contemporary, global condition.

The expansion of scholarship over the last decade is not confined to postcolonial research interests, but deals with broader issues, like the relations between translation, ideology, and international politics. Projects have focused on links between textual constructs and social power, with translation as a central site where discourses meet and compete. Historically, translation has always been a terrain for ideological clashes; it is not surprising, therefore, that in a climate of international turmoil among power blocks, recent research has produced significant works on issues of “power”. (Dimitriu, 2002: 1 – 12) Major contributions include Venuti’s *Rethinking Translation* (1992), *The Translator’s Invisibility* (1995), *The Scandals of Translation* (1998); Todd Burrell & Sean K. Kelly’s *Translation, Religion, Ideology, Politics* (1995); Álvarez and Vidal’s *Translation, Power, Subversion* (1996); Theo Hermans’ *Crosscultural Transgressions* (2002); Tymoczko and Gentzler’s *Translation and Power* (2002); and Calzada-Pérez’s *Apropos of Ideology* (2003).

The key topic that has provided the impetus for the new directions that translation studies have taken since the cultural turn is power. Questions are frequently asked as to under what circumstances translations



have the most impact, what forms of translation are most successful, and how all this relates to cultural dominance, cultural assertion, and cultural resistance—in short, to power. In a sense such questions have meant that the “cultural turn” in translation studies has become the “power turn”, with questions of power brought to the fore in discussions of both translation history and strategies for translation (Gentzler & Tymoczko, 2002:xi–xviii).

## 1.2 Major perspectives on translation and power

“There is no commonly accepted definition of social power, but the essential idea is that power is the ability to affect the actions or ideas of others, despite resistance. It is thus a dynamic process, not a static possession, that pervades all areas of social life.” (Olsen & Marger, 1993:1)

Power is seldom defined in translation studies literature. The only clear definition is available in *Translation and Power* by Gentzler and Tymoczko (2002:xvii). In this anthology meanings of power in relation to translation range from questions of **influence and authority** in the nineteenth century, bolstered by changing meanings of the word *democracy* in translation, to **the legal capacity** of the British and the establishment of dominion over the Maori by the Treaty of Waitangi, to **the vigour and energy** of translation in the transformation of cultures in China and Latin America. Translation is not simply associated with the “**possession of control or command over others**” and hence, with **colonization or oppression**, but also with the “**ability to act upon**” **structures of command**, such that translation becomes a means to resist that very colonization or exploitation. The two editors claim that translation is associated with power in all these senses.

As the discipline expands, theoretical approaches to translation and power multiply, drawing on a mix of theories and methodologies not only from within translation studies proper (polysystem, skopos), but also from linguistics (critical discourse analysis, pragmatics, computerised corpora), and from literary and cultural theory (postcolonialism and