

大学英语素质教育拓展教材

TRANSLATION  
**PRACTICES** (REVISED)

翻译实践

(修订版)

总主编 江 滨

主 编 谷玉霞 张 佩 王立松

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# 前 言

随着社会的变革与发展,我国大学英语教学改革日益深化、日益成熟,英语教学已成为英语教育,其功能已从单一传授知识向传播文化、训练语言技能、培养交流能力、提高文化素养和思想品德的多元化功能转化。因此,为非英语专业本科生开设了大学英语素质教育系列拓展课程,这些课程是大学英语课程体系的一个组成部分,主要包括语言技能类、文化类、文学类以及应用类,旨在实现大学英语教学的个性化教育与综合素质培养的目标,结合语言学习,综合提高学生语言文化能力和应用能力,全面提升学生的语言素质、心理素质和文化素质,发掘大学英语课程的隐性功能。

大学英语素质教育系列拓展课程的配套教材共 8 本:《翻译实践》(修订版)、《西方文化掠影》(修订版)、《英美文学》(修订版)、《商务英语基础阅读》(修订版)、《英语影视欣赏》(修订版)、《中国文化概览》(修订版)、《英美文化掠影》(修订版)、《实用英语写作》(修订版)。

本教材在 2011 年天津大学出版社出版的《翻译实践》的基础上,根据时代的发展以及教学实践的需要补充、更新和修订而成的。

翻译在英语教学中具有十分重要的地位和作用,它是语言

知识和语言技能的综合体现和实际应用。针对理工科大学生的专业特点,本书共分8章,每章都包含知识导入、知识概述、知识复习和知识拓展四个模块,简单论述我国的翻译史,概括讲解翻译理论,重点而系统地训练英汉翻译技巧。旨在通过理论讲解和大量实践练习的有机结合,使学生自觉地应用这些理论来指导自己的翻译实践,避免翻译过程中的盲目性和随意性,从而提高学生的翻译能力。

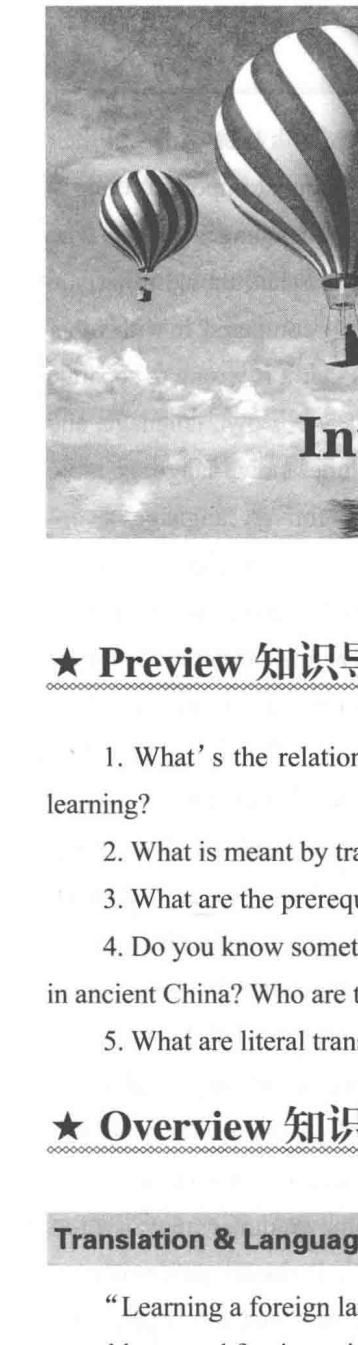
此教材是多年教学积累和资料梳理的成果。在此书出版之际,向给予我们大量支持及提出建设性意见的同人,向曾经一起开设课程、共同研究、共享教学资源的老师,向对知识孜孜以求给予我们动力出版此教材的学生,向始终在默默地支持和奉献着的编者家属表示由衷的敬意。感谢你们!

大学英语素质教育拓展教材编写组

2016年于天津大学

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## Chapter 1

# Introduction

### ★ Preview 知识导入

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1. What's the relationship between translation and foreign language learning?
2. What is meant by translation?
3. What are the prerequisites for a qualified translator?
4. Do you know something about the translation of Buddhist scriptures in ancient China? Who are the three giants?
5. What are literal translation and liberal translation?

### ★ Overview 知识概述

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#### Translation & Language Learning

“Learning a foreign language is not easy but it is worthwhile. It makes you able to read foreign scientific and technical literature, and that might be

useful. It makes you able to read some of the world's best works in their own language, and this is a great pleasure. But the most important thing is that it gives you a better understanding of your own language." Engels who knew a number of foreign languages, including Russian, thought that you could only know your own language only if you compared it with other languages. N. K. Krupskaya, wife of Lenin, says that it is wrong to separate the study of foreign languages from the study of one's own language, and that the knowledge of foreign languages makes one's own language more flexible and expressive. Therefore, the study of a foreign language is connected with that of one's own. And translation serves as the very course for foreign language learners to achieve this goal. Translation is of great value to the foreign language learner only when he has mastered the mechanisms of the source language as well as those of the target language. Karl Marx once said, "A foreign language is a weapon in the struggle of life." We Chinese people are now striving for strengthening scientific and technical cooperation and academic exchanges with other countries, so we are in need of many foreign languages. However, it has been proved that to acquire a mastery of a foreign language is no easy job. Nor would it be practical for each of us to pick up one or two foreign languages in a short space of time, thus raising a great need for translation. The English language has spread all over the world since 1850. It serves as the primary medium for science and technology. It stands no reason, therefore, that we are to occupy ourselves with translation from English into Chinese and vice versa.

Some people think as long as you know some grammar rules of a foreign language you can translate with the help of a dictionary. Is it really so? Now look at the following seemingly easy sentences and see if you agree with the translations.



1. He is easily the best student in the class. 他很容易地成了班上最好的学生。

2. This is a very good price. 这是一个非常好的价钱。

3. I can't agree more. 我不能同意更多了。

4. Do you have a family? 你成家了吗?

5. I dare say he is honest. 我敢说他是诚实的。

The word “easily” in Sentence 1 is not of the usual sense and can't be translated as “容易地”. It means “by far”. So the sentence should be translated as “他无疑 / 绝对是班上最好的学生” or “他比班上别的学生要好很多”.

Sentence 2 seems to be an utterance of a customer. “Good” is a typical word whose meaning is often vague. So it would be better to translate it simply into “真便宜”.

Sentence 3 uses a negative form to express the meaning of the superlative degree. The translation is wrong because “agree” here is an intransitive verb (when used as a transitive verb, it is often followed by a that-clause) and “more” is not its object but its adverbial. So the sentence should be translated as “我完全同意”, or more vividly “我举双手赞成”.

Some people may think “你成家了吗” is quite a good translation of Sentence 4 as it sounds much better than “你有家吗”. But the word “family” has a different meaning from Chinese “家” or “家庭”. The question “Do you have a family” is not intended to ask about a person's marriage status but about one's duty to a family, usually emphasizing the duty of a parent. So a proper translation should be “你有孩子了吗”.

Most beginners would translate Sentence 5 “I dare say he is honest” as “我敢说他是诚实的”. They neglect a fact that people speaking different languages may use different ways to express their tones, which might



be their real intentions. “我敢说” in Chinese shows the speaker is ensuring the listener what he says is true as he is sure of the fact. However, “I dare say” in English expresses the opposite situation. The speaker is not sure, or at least he does not intend to impose his opinion on the other party. He is simply expressing his own opinion. So the proper translation should be “我看 / 认为他是诚实的”.

### Definition of Translation

Being a commonly acknowledged complex process, translation is hard to define completely and thoroughly in a few words. Many distinguished translators and translation theorists have been studying the definition of translation from the views of linguistics, culture and intercultural communication since ancient times. The meaning of translation is changing constantly and open to interpretations, so we should study translation more flexibly.

Translation, generally speaking, means rendering from one language into another of something written or spoken. It is essentially the faithful representation in one language of what is written or spoken in another. It is the replacement of the information of the source language by its counterpart of the target language. Strictly speaking, translation is a kind of science because it has a whole set of rules governing it and certain objective laws to go by in the process of translating just as other sciences do. In addition, translation, from an artist point of view, is an art, a bilingual art, since certain skills and techniques are needed in translation to attain clearness of style and fluency in language.

There are many definitions given by dictionaries and famous translation theorists. Now let us look at a few of them:

Translating is the art of recomposing a work in another language without losing its original flavor. — Columbia Encyclopedia

Translating is the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual in another language (TL). — J. C. Carford

Translating consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style. — Eugene A. Nida

The translator attempts to produce the same effect on the target language readers as was produced on the original source language readers. — Peter Newmark

In the above definitions of translation, we can find something in common showing what translation is. The word “textual” reminds us what we usually translate are texts rather than independent words or sentences. The word “natural” tells us that it is not enough to produce grammatically correct sentences (that is the basic demand), but idiomatic, natural sentences. The word “flavor” or “style” implies that the translator should do his best to retain the special characteristics of the original writer.

The translator is often compared to a bridge, which is not only between the source text and the target text but between the author of the text and the reader of the target text. Therefore, as an intermediate information receiver and at the same time the secondary dispatcher, the translator has to analyze the intention of the author in writing the source text and try to convey it to the reader of the translation, who should understand the intention of the author through the target text.

It is sometimes said that there is no task more complex than translation — a claim that can be readily believed when all the variables involved are taken into account. Translators not only need to know their source lan-



guage well; they must also have a thorough understanding of the field of knowledge covered by the source text, and of any social, cultural, or emotional connotations that need to be specified in the target language if the intended effect is to be conveyed. The same special awareness needs to be present for the target language, so that points of special phrasing, local (e.g. regional) expectations, and so on, can all be taken into account.

—*The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language*

### Scope of Translation

In terms of languages(按所涉及的语言): native languages, foreign languages

In terms of modes(按工作方式): oral interpretation, written translation, machine translation

In terms of materials to be translated(按翻译材料): scientific materials, literary works, political essays(政论作品), practical writing(应用文)

In terms of disposals(按具体的处理方式): full-text translation(全文翻译), abridged translation(摘译), adapted translation(编译)

### Requirements of a Qualified Translator

A common impression among many people is that anyone with a bit of knowledge of foreign languages could do translation. However, the fact is that translation is the most complex task to be accomplished. A translator must be a “Jack of all trades and master of some”. To be a qualified translator, he must meet the following demands.

#### A sense of responsibility

The translators should be responsible for representing the original and satisfying the demands of the TL (target language) readers.

### **Bilingual competence**

It is known that a translator must acquire “bilingual knowledge”, which means a translator’s command of the target and source languages involved in the process of translating. Some books are said to be poorly translated because some English terms, idioms, slangs or fictions are misunderstood or misinterpreted. Other books are equally poor because they are not well expressed in Chinese. Some translators are poor in Chinese, even poorer than their mastery of foreign languages, so their translated works contain sentences in Chinese characters but in English construction, quite contrary to good usage of the Chinese language.

### **Bicultural competence**

It is always assumed that translators are at least bilingual, but this is rarely enough. To be a fully competent translator, one also needs to be bicultural in order to “read between the lines”. Culture reflects the total way of life of a people. The translator must analyze the source language within a certain cultural context carefully for the purpose of using appropriate words to represent in the target culture the object or process the original writer describes.

### **Encyclopedic knowledge**

Apart from a good knowledge of the two languages and two cultures, acquaintance with the subject matter covered in the book or article is also an indispensable factor in doing translation work well. Suppose you are going to translate a book on chemistry, you have to know something more about the science than the book deals with, otherwise you will take the risk of making mistakes in the subject matter imperceptibly.

In addition to all these qualifications mentioned above, we have to bear in mind one more point — “keep objectivity of the original and shun

subjectivity”(保持原文的客观性而避免主观性)。This is what really matters to us. Because translators sometimes make some changes of the original text purposely or accidentally. But as a truly qualified translator, one should in no circumstances change the attitude of the author of the original text. “Faithfulness” is the pith and marrow and vitality of translation.

### **A Brief History of Translation in China**

Translation in China has a long history of about two thousand years. During the centuries, a large number of distinguished translators in China appeared one after another and they made great contributions to China and the world as well in the development of translation. Scholars now generally agree that, in its long history of translation, China experienced three climaxes of massive translation activities, which exerted profound and lasting impacts on the culture and social development of China. The three climaxes of translation not only witnessed a large quantity of excellent translations but also saw many great translators whose contributions to translation, in terms of translation works and translation theory, are valuable resources for translation scholars.

The first climax of translation in China refers to the translation of Buddhist scriptures during the nine-century period from Han Dynasty to Song Dynasty. Although translation activities began very early in China, the days when translation played a crucial role in China's social development only came when Buddhist scriptures began to be rendered into Chinese on a large scale. Buddhist sutra translation formed the first climax of translation in China. Sutra translation in China can be roughly divided into three phases: Eastern Han Dynasty and the Three Kingdoms Period; Jin

Dynasty and the Northern and Southern Dynasties; and Sui Dynasty, Tang Dynasty and Northern Song Dynasty. During the first phase, the sutra translators were mostly monks from Central Asia and Sinkiang. The majority of these monk translators were revered for their profound knowledge about Buddhism, but their knowledge about the Chinese language can only be described poor. Linguistic disadvantage greatly affected their approach to sutra translation. They adhered to the source language rather closely for fear of departing from the sacred messages contained in the source texts. As a result, their translations were often hard to understand for readers without a considerable knowledge about Buddhism. During the second phase, many of the monk translators were capable of translating directly and verbally from the source texts into Chinese. Among these monk translators Kumara-jiva (鸠摩罗什) is probably the best-known and holds an important position in Chinese translation history. Kumarajiva translated over 300 volumes of Buddhist scriptures into Chinese and his approach to sutra translation greatly affected translators of later generations. The monk translators in this phase had more courage and ability to go beyond the confines of the source language, and their translations became more readable. In the third phase, which is often viewed as the golden age of translation in ancient China, the task of translation began to be undertaken by Chinese monks whose knowledge about Buddhist scriptures and the source language, mainly Sanskrit, was improved considerably. In Song Dynasty, the government established a Sanskrit school with a view to training Chinese translators of sutras. In this phase, sutra translation was dominated to a great extent, by Xuanzang (玄奘) who translated over 1,300 volumes of Buddhist sutras into Chinese. Xuanzang argued that more attention should be paid to the style of the source texts. Many rules set down by him had lasting influence on later

generations of translators. Xuanzang, together with Kumarajiva (鸠摩罗什) and Paramartha (also called Gunarata)(真谛或波罗末陀), is praised as the three giants in translating Buddhist scripture.

The second climax of translation in China covers the scientific and technological translations in the period from late Ming Dynasty to early Qing Dynasty. It was also related to religious activities. But this time the religion concerned was not Buddhism but Christianity. Many Jesuit missionaries arrived in China in the late sixteenth century and they started this wave of massive translation. Translation itself serves as a means to achieve the real purpose of spreading the gospel and of converting the Chinese people. To satisfy this aim, they translated a number of books on science and technology, including mathematics, astronomy, geography, etc. which they believe could cultivate the educated class and the target readers in turn could help them accomplish their religious missions. Many of these missionaries had a limited knowledge about Chinese, so they had to collaborate with some Chinese officials who worked as their co-translators, among whom were Xu Guangqi (徐光启), Yang Tingjun (杨廷筠) and Li Zhizao (李之藻). Take Xu Guangqi for example, he and M. Ricci (利玛竇), an Italian were co-translators of *Euclid's Elements* (or: *Euclidis Elementorum*) (欧几里得的《几何原本》). Though these Chinese officials are later termed as “translators” or “co-translators”, they knew almost nothing about foreign languages. The way they collaborated with those foreign missionaries is worth studying and can offer some insight into today's ever-increasing collaborative translations.

The third climax of translation in China refers to the translation of Western writings during the period from late Qing Dynasty to the 1930s. Translation in this period was mainly intended to import Western ideas and





literature into China to enhance social reformation. The May 4<sup>th</sup> Movement can be viewed as a turning point of translation in modern China. In the first phase, Yan Fu (严复) and Lin Shu (林纾) are two typical examples to demonstrate the salient features of this sub-period. Yan Fu translated Thomas Henry Huxley's long essay *Evolution and Ethics and Other Essays* into Chinese in 1897 and entitled it "Tian Yan Lun" (《天演论》). This book was a milestone in Chinese translation history, in which Yan Fu put forward the three-word criteria of translation that has been quoted ever since, namely, faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance. He translated in a loose way and often incorporated his own understandings and observations into his translation. While Yan Fu made great contributions in the field of philosophy and social science, Lin Shu achieved prominence in literary translation. Although Lin Shu is honored as a great figure in literary translation, he is unusual as a translator in that he knew no foreign languages. He had to collaborate with his partners who translated orally for him, and he was responsible for composing the oral draft into classical Chinese. His first translation of Dumas' *La Dame aux Camelias*, his first literary translation, was an instant success and won over a large audience. The following is given a list of Yan Fu and Lin Shu's well-known translation works:

Yan Fu:

*Evolution and Ethics and Other Essays* by Thomas Henry Huxley 赫胥黎《天演论》

*An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* by Adam Smith 亚当·斯密《国家财富的性质和原因的研究》(usually is abbreviated as *The Wealth of Nations*《国富论》)

*On Liberty* by J. S. Mill 约翰·穆勒《群己权界论》

*A History of Politics* by E. Jenks 甄克思《社会通论》