



普通高等教育“十五”国家级规划教材

英汉翻译入门

Approach to
Translation between
English and Chinese

陈德彰 编著

外语教学与研究出版社

FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RESEARCH PRESS



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前 言

笔者二十多年前开始在北京外国语大学英语系教授英语专业高年级的英汉、汉英笔译实践课，在讲评学生翻译作业中的一些问题时，往往需要相当数量的例子（尤其是结构类似却需要不同译法的例子），以便能举一反三说明某种译法，起到一定的启发和指导作用，于是在课余有意识地收集积累各种例句。笔者在教学过程中发现，对英汉语言进行语意、结构、习惯用法、语用意义、文化等方面的分析对比，找出一些有规律性的东西，不仅让学生知其“然”，而且让他们知其“所以然”，有助于学生在翻译实践中养成一定的自觉性。后来，我觉得每次 20 分钟左右的讲评很难将问题说透，于是在陆续积累的材料的基础上把有关的理论部分分离开，形成了一门单独的课，称之为“翻译入门”，作为翻译实践课的平行课同时开设，以提高学生的翻译实践水平。10 年前，我系在本科高年级开设了翻译专业倾向班，选修该专业倾向的学生很踊跃，“翻译入门”成了该专业倾向的必修课。这么多年来，经过不断补充和更新，这门课的材料日益丰富，并在吸收翻译界研究成果的基础上形成了自己的系统，编成了十几个题目的讲义。这门课开设以来颇受学生欢迎。同事们和学生，还有每年来进修的许多访问学者都建议我出书，但我始终觉得不少提法和理论依据还不成熟，需要进一步充实，所以就拖了下来。三年前，教育部征求高校文科“十五”重点推广教材，我在同事们的说服下提出了申报，结果批了下来，于是正式开始编写本书。

多年以前教育部推广使用的翻译教材《英汉翻译教程》（张培基等编著）和《汉英翻译教程》（吕瑞昌等编著）显然已显得陈旧。近几年国内出版的各种翻译教程少说有上百种，许多都是从事翻译教学多年的教师的经验之谈，是教学和研究成果的结晶，而且各有千秋。所以，在谈到要编写这本教材的时候，有一位同事提出：不要搞成那种“多一本不嫌多，少一本不嫌少的”教材，也就是说，要有特点，有新意：这成为编写本书的一条宗旨。但是，体现一个“新”字却不是一

件容易的事。从20世纪80年代以来,国外的翻译理论被大量介绍到国内,国内的翻译理论研究也异常活跃,学术成果颇丰。有的从符号论、交际理论等分析解剖翻译,不少学者将语言学研究的诸多成果引入翻译研究;有人提出要建立“翻译学”,其中有不少人提出要创建“有中国特色的翻译学”,有的则提出要研究翻译的心理过程,还有人企图找出翻译中的“量化”规律,以求发现其中的科学规律;有的教材以各种文体的翻译为系统,有的以常用翻译技巧或方法担纲,真是百花齐放,其中有不少佳作。作为英语专业的翻译教学,当然有必要向学生介绍有关学科学术研究方面的发展和动态,但是这里有个“度”的问题,要有所选择,更要适可而止,太多的理论有时让人眼花缭乱,有的“纯”理论对指导翻译实践不见得有多大作用。老实说,有些所谓的“理论”把简单的事情搞得很复杂,不但有故弄玄虚之嫌,简直就是“学术泡沫”,没有什么真正的价值。诚然,对本科生而言,让他们学一些必要的理论既可以指导翻译实践,也可以引导他们进行一定的研究(如写好毕业论文,为学习研究生课程打下基础等),但一定要有针对性。笔者以为,对英汉语言的各种语言现象进行对比,将翻译放到具体语言交际(即语用)中进行分析,是最实用最有效的办法,这也是本书的主要思路。

由于翻译理论处于百花齐放、百家争鸣的状态,本书不一定遵循某一家的说法,有不少观点得益于前辈和同行的著作,有些看法和提法只是笔者自己归纳出来的,也许没有权威的支持,甚至有的术语都是笔者自己“发明”的,但决不是为了故意追求“新”或时尚,更不想“一鸣惊人”,目的只有一个,即希望能对学生有所启发。本书有自己的体例,更强调实用性,以能有的放矢地解决学生遇到的一些实际问题。翻译理论涉及到许多方面,如符号学、交际理论、心理学、社会学、美学等等,本书不一定一一提到,但是对学生容易出错或常被忽视的方面有较多阐述。选用本书作教材,也可有选择地或“创造性地”使用各章节。翻译课应该强调师生互动,不仅翻译实践是一种以任务为中心的交际活动,翻译理论与技巧的讨论也应该这样,要培养和帮助学生提高实践的自觉性,讲授理论或介绍翻译时要留有余地,让学生发挥主动性,进行积极思考,所以,本书有大量的例句,只有一部分进行了讲解,提供了译文,但也只是仅供参考。相当多的例句

作为作业或供学生自我练习用，没有附上常见的“参考译文”，目的是鼓励学生在理解的基础上发挥“再创造”的能动性，教师可以鼓励学生讨论。尤其要说明的是，不少例句在不同的上下文中可以有多种译法，教师应该指出各种可能性。

加强启发性是我国高等教学改革的一个重要方面。本书所提供的诸多例句的译文也决不是最好的，更谈不上是“标准译文”，只起参考或借鉴启发作用，或是介绍给学生别人是怎么翻译的（即所谓的 *descriptive*，而不是 *prescriptive*）。学生们可以讨论得出更好的译文来。同时还要指出的是，这门“翻译入门”课要和翻译实践课同时开设，不单独开设此课的，可以将此书作为翻译讲评课的补充参考。许多翻译理论和技巧要通过篇章整体翻译才能讲清楚。本书没有像不少翻译教材那样附有翻译练习的篇子，一是因为翻译练习篇子好找，二是因为篇子容易过时，在书里还会占用大量篇幅。

许多翻译教材将英汉翻译和汉英翻译分成两大块。其实两者是一个问题的两个方面。笔者认为两者是相辅相成的，比较两种语言的异同既可以指导英汉翻译也可以指导汉英翻译。翻译的第一步是理解，这在英汉翻译中似乎比较突出，不少学生在理解英语原文上有较多的困难，尤其是看似简单，由于习惯用法而不能从汉语角度思维的词语和习惯用法等，所以本书的例句以英译汉为主。但是反过来看，许多时候可以将英汉翻译分析的英语表达形式，尤其是英语特有的习惯用法运用到汉英翻译中，这对译出地道的英语大有帮助。所以本书往往将英汉翻译和汉英翻译放在一起讲。

最后还要说明的是，本书用英语写成，这是因为作为英语专业高年级学生开设的专业课，应该用英语讲解，而且这和要求学生用英语写毕业论文是一致的。但是，引用的原文是中文的理论阐述和中文例句时，则保留中文原文，以免翻译“走样”。恐怕这也是翻译教材的“特权”。国外类似的文章将汉语部分用汉语拼音，笔者认为不可取，因为汉语的同音词特别多，常使意思不清楚，即使标上四声也无济于事。

本教材可供英语专业本科高年级使用，也可供翻译专业和其他专业研究生和自学翻译者使用。也建议准备报考英语专业研究生考试和参加全国翻译资格证书考试的同志们一读。

本书中的不少例句转引自一些翻译教材和论文，有的进行了加工改译。由于来源较广，没有一一注明来源和原译者，大部分见诸附录中列的推荐书目。在此向有关同行们表示真诚感谢。本书的出版还得到了外语教学与研究出版社的大力支持，在此一并表示感谢！

陈德彰

2005年6月

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I. Introduction

1. Definition of Translation

There are many definitions of translation. 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*

把已说出或写出的话的意思用另一种言语表达出来的活动。
——《中国大百科全书·语言文字卷》

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

To translate is to change into another language, retaining as much of the sense as one can.
—Samuel Johnson

(Translating) is rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way the author intended the text.
—Peter Newmark

Translation is an art that involves the re-creation of a work in another language for readers with a different background.
—Malcolm Cowley

In the above definitions several words are of much importance. The first one is “textual” (or “text”), which reminds us what we usually translate are texts rather than independent words or sentences. The second word is “natural” which tells us that it is not enough to produce grammatically correct sentences (that is the basic demand, especially in Chinese-English translation)

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but idiomatic, natural sentences. A further demand is raised in the third word “flavor” (or “style”), that is, the translator should do his best to retain the special characteristics of the original writer. For example, translations of different styles should be produced, such as political essays or colloquialisms, or works by Hemmingway and by Mark Twain should be reproduced into different styles based on the original ones.

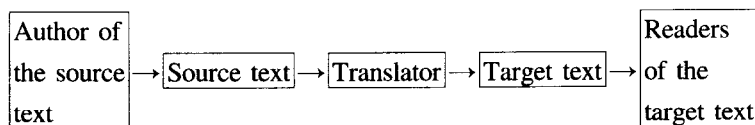
We may add some definitions by some modern translation theorists.

Israeli translation theorist Gideon Toury says: “A translation is taken to be any target-language utterance which is presented or regarded as such within the target culture, on whatever grounds.”

German translation theorist Christiane Nord gives this definition: “Translation is the production of a functional target text maintaining a relationship with a given source text that is specified according to the intended or demanded function of the target text.”

Toury emphasizes the culture while Nord gives more emphasis to the pragmatic approach, that is to fulfill the function through the text. However, American translation theorist Jean Sager points out another aspect: “Translation is an externally motivated industrial activity, supported by information technology, which is diversified in response to the particular needs of this form of communication.” This definition puts translation as an industry, and translators have to suit the needs of their employers, who may raise special specific demands.

Traditionally, the translator was held to be responsible for the source text. This is not enough. From the above definitions we find not only “in the way the author intended” but also “for readers with a different background”. This clearly reveals the process of translation consists of five links:



Translation (or the translator) is often compared to a bridge, which is not just between the source text and the target text but between the author of

the text (dispatcher of the original information) and the reader of the target text (final and indirect receiver or receptor of the information). So, 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.

We would find more or less the same emphasis in some of the definitions of translation given by some Chinese translators:

翻译是一种跨文化的信息交流与交换活动，其本质是传播，是传播学中一个有特殊性质的领域。
——吕俊

翻译是把具有某一文化背景的发送者用某种语言（文字）所表述的内容尽可能充分地、有效地传达给使用另一种语言（文字）、具有另一种文化背景的接受者。
——沈苏儒

翻译是两个语言社会之间的交际过程和交际工具，它的目的是要促进本语言社会的政治、经济和文化进步，它的任务是要把原作中包含的现实世界的逻辑映像或艺术映像，完好无损地从一种语言译注到另一种语言中去。
——张今

We can quote the *Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language* to sum up translation as a task to be accomplished:

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 language 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.

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Translation can be classified into the following types:

Oral (interpretation): instantaneous (consecutive), simultaneous

Written: whole text literature, pragmatic excerpt, summary, adapted translation, and rewriting in another language

Machine translation

In a sense, capacity in written translation is the basis of oral interpretation, but the former allows more refining and better accuracy while the latter requires more on-the-spot handling capacity. Our entrance of the information age often asks for different kinds of translation other than whole text translation. For example, the translator may be given a text of, say 3,000 words, and is asked to sum up the main idea in 300 words in the target language. In this case more than language transformation is needed.

As for the purpose of translation, let's quote Peter Newmark from his *About Translation*: 1) To contribute to the understanding and peace between nations, groups, and individuals. 2) To transmit knowledge in plain, appropriate and accessible language, in particular in relation to technology transfer. 3) To explain and mediate between cultures on the basis of common humanity, respecting their strengths, implicitly exposing their weakness. 4) To translate the world's great books, the universal works in which the human spirit is enshrined and lives. 5) As a general aid or as a skill required in the acquisition of a foreign language.

The importance of translation in China's drive for the four modernizations while facing the rapid globalization is understood by everyone and it is not necessary to elaborate here.

2. Criteria of Translation

The activity of translating in China began thousands of years ago when people of different tribes and ethnic groups speaking different languages and dialects communicated with each other. So China has a long history of practice in translation. And later the translation of Buddhist scripture made great contribution to Chinese culture. Xuan Zang (玄奘, 600 – 664) alone presided over

the translation of more than a thousand volumes of Buddhist scriptures. Many translators summed up their experience and raised standards of translation. As early as in the Eastern Han Dynasty Zhi Qian (支谦, 25 – 220) pointed out in 《法句经序》, “佛言, 依其义不用饰, 取其法不以严。其传经者, 当令易晓, 勿失厥义, 是则为善”, emphasizing the conveyance of the original meaning and expressiveness of the translation. Dao An (道安, 314 – 385) of the Eastern Jin also warned translators on guard against 五失本 (five ways of losing the original essence in translation) in 《摩诃钵罗若波罗蜜经钞序》*. The “five losses” in improper translation he mentioned are: 1) unnecessary reversion of word order, 2) added description (which does not exist in the original), 3) cutting of repeated wording (necessary as religious scriptures for prayers), 4) omission of repetition of certain conclusive messages, and 5) cutting of contents repeated as introduction to a new topic. We can see he emphasized the importance of following the original text faithfully.

Ma Jianzhong (马建忠, 1845 – 1900) is remembered not only for his contribution in writing the first Chinese grammar book 《马氏文通》 but also for making important remarks about translation based on the comparison between European languages and Chinese. He held that the translator should see to it that:

所有相当之实义, 委曲推究, 务审其音声之高下, 析其字句之繁简, 尽其文体之变态, 及其义理精深奥折之所由然。夫如是, 则一书到手, 经营反复, 确知其意旨之所在, 而又摹写其神情, 仿佛其语气, 然后心悟神解, 振笔而书, 译成之文, 适如其所译而止, 而曾无毫发出入于其间, 夫而后, 能使阅者所得之益, 与观原文无异, 是则为善译也已。

According to him, the translator should carefully read and analyze the source text to get the real meaning, the structure, the style, the spirit, the tone, and the sound effect before he begins to translate. Actually he also

* See 《中国译学原理论史稿》(陈福康著, 上海外语教育出版社, 1992)

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mentioned the effect of the translation on the target readers should be the same of that of the original text on its readers.

The most popular and acclaimed criterion was the three characters 信, 达, 雅 (usually translated as “faithfulness”, “expressiveness”, and “elegance” or “refinement”) raised by Yan Fu (严复, 1854 – 1921). He said in 《天演论·译例言》:

“译”事三难：信、达、雅。求其信，已大难矣。顾信矣不达，虽译犹不译也，则达尚焉。……译文取明深意，故词句之间，时有所颠倒附益，斤斤于字比句次，而意义则不倍本文。……至原文词理本深，难于共喻，则当前思后衬，以显其意。凡此经营，皆以为达：为达，即以为信也。《易》曰：“修辞立诚”。子曰“辞达而已！”又曰：“言之无文，行之不远”。三者乃文章正轨，亦即为译事楷模。故信达而外，求其尔雅。

The three characters have been regarded as guiding principles for translation for many years in China. However, the content summed up in the three characters is very general or even sweeping, especially the first character 信 or “faithfulness”. In what way can a translation be said as “faithful”? There have been many interpretations of them over the years. Professor Wang Zuoliang (王佐良) explained the three characters raised by Yan Fu:

他之所谓“信”是指为读者准确传达原作的内容，
“达”指尽量运用他们所习见的表达方式，
“雅”是通过艺术地再现和加强原作的风格特色来吸引他们。

Modern scholars also raised different criteria:

译书自以能存真为第一要义……最好一面极力求不失原意，一面要译文流畅。
——郑振铎

译者不但要求达意，并且要以传神为目的，译文必须忠实于原文之字神句气与言外之意。
——林语堂

Liu Zhongde (刘重德) and Si Guo (思果) modified the three characters raised by Yan Fu respectively into: 信——信于内容, 达——达如其分, 切——切合风格 and 信、达、贴 (贴切, 译什么像什么).

Fu Lei (傅雷) said the purpose of translation was to “achieve the ‘spirit’ of the original” (获致原作的精神), then he added:

以效果而论, 翻译应像临画一样, 所求的不在形似, 而是神似。

He compared translation to copying a painting and raised the idea of “spiritual similarity”, which is, however, very difficult to grasp.

Qian Zhongshu (钱钟书) put forward the idea of “conversion”, which aimed at “perfection”:

文学翻译的最高理想可以说是“化”。把作品从一国文字转变成另一国文字, 既不能因语文习惯的差异而露出生硬牵强的痕迹, 又能完全保存原作的风味, 那就算得入于“化境”。

It is really very difficult to translate 化境 into English. It is a term used in art, meaning “perfection” or “consummation”. It raises the highest criterion for translation, but it is more of an ideal aim than something that can be achieved in practice as nobody can claim his translation is perfect.

Xu Yuanchong (许渊冲) proposed that the translation of poetry should not only be 意美, but also be 音美 and 形美. As for 化, he raised three levels: 等化, 浅化, 深化 so that the translation shall make the reader of the translation 知之, 好之, 乐之. These are the reflections of a well versed poetry translator. His French and English translations of many Chinese classic poems are well received by Western scholars. He was concerned not only about the meaning but also about the sound effect and even the form of poems from an artistic point of view. He also told us translation was an endless process seeking for the better in order to bring enjoyment to the target reader.