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浙江省哲学社会科学规划课题成果

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FUNCTIONS OF TRANSLATION:
FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF
INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

跨文化传播视阈下的 翻译功能研究

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内容提要

翻译学研究从文艺学范式研究走到语言学范式研究,再到当今的文化学范式研究,经历了一个从微观到中观、再到宏观的发展演化过程。本书便是在这一研究背景之下,把翻译置于跨文化传播的语境中,从宏观、动态、外部的视角探究中国历史上的数次翻译活动(包括翻译主体、翻译作品、翻译策略、翻译行为等因素)对中国社会历史文化发展变迁所产生的巨大的不可或缺的推动和催化作用,从而论证翻译活动的典型的无可替代的跨文化传播功能,并从历史发展观说明翻译兴则文化盛则社会进、翻译废则文化衰则社会退这一历史规律,强调并呼吁在当今时代,更应重视和加强作为跨文化传播主要途径的翻译活动。

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前 言

翻译活动是一种重要的跨文化传播现象,所有社会的发展都离不开借鉴域外文化的成果,而进行这种成果交换的最有力的媒介就是翻译。回顾中国数千年的社会发展变迁史,可以看到翻译活动已经影响渗透到其文化的各个方面。离开了这些翻译活动,我们就很难真正写出一部完整的中国社会文化史,也无法梳理清楚数千年来的中外文化交流史。

作者以前的学习兴趣和研究方向是跨文化传播(跨文化交际),对历史上中外文化交流和跨文化传播过程中的翻译活动尤其感兴趣,曾经阅读研习了大量翻译理论方面的书籍,对翻译研究也产生了浓厚的兴趣。尤其是翻译研究学派或文化学派的理论,把翻译研究和文化研究结合起来,实现了翻译研究的“文化转向”,又进而提出文化研究的“翻译转向”,把翻译置于社会历史文化的大环境中,研究其社会文化功能和作用。这与作者的兴趣不谋而合,翻译和社会文化之间的互动关系研究便成为了本人这些年学习和研究的重心,目前已在多角度、多方位对这一领域进行了研究并取得了不小的收获。

翻译传播理论萌动于 20 世纪 60 年代。这一时期,美国语言学家和翻译理论家 Eugene A. Nida 开始把通讯论和信息论的成果应用于翻译研究,指出“语言交际产生于社会场合,把它从这个场合中抽象出

来,它就不可理解。相反,必须把它置于整个环境中加以分析”(Nida & Taber, 1969)。1977年,德国翻译理论家 Wilfram Wilss 在《翻译学:问题与方法》一书中,对以往翻译学研究的过程进行了分析总结,指出过去的研究迫使翻译学科研究忽视了翻译本身的许多特点,特别是有关信息传递性质的特点,并指出“翻译是与语言行为和抉择密切相关的一种语际信息传递的特殊方式”(Wilss, 1982)。1991年,英国翻译理论家 Roger Bell 在其著作《翻译与翻译行为:理论与实践》一书中根据信息论原理提出了翻译过程模式,阐释了译者从信息接收、识别、解码、获取、理解、选择、编码、传输、再接收等九个步骤(Bell, 1991)。此外,美国学者 Scott L. Montgomery 于2000年在他的《翻译在科学知识跨文化跨时代传播中的作用》一书中则把翻译和跨文化传播联系起来,论述了翻译在人类跨文化传播中所起的重要作用和功能。

在我国,吕俊教授于1997年在《外国语》第二期发表的“翻译学——传播学的一个特殊领域”一文,在国内首次较完整地提出了翻译的传播学理论。他指出:“翻译是一种跨文化的信息交流与交换的活动,其本质是传播”,在该文中他把翻译学归于传播学的一个分支。不过九年后,他又在他的专著《翻译学——一个建构主义的视角》中,把传播学的结构模式作为翻译学的机体结构进行研究,来构建翻译学服务(吕俊、侯向群,2006)。随后,廖七一教授在《四川外语学院学报》1997年第三期上发表了“翻译与信息理论”的文章,将信息传播的基本理论应用于翻译研究。在此后的几年中,虽偶有研究翻译与传播学理论的文章出现,如曾涛(1999)的“现代信息传递理论与翻译实践”、张俊的“翻译学的传播理论探究”(2001)等,但对翻译传播学理论的研究一直处于一种表面的、非连续性的状态,直到孟伟根于2004年结合传播学原理,构想建立翻译传播学理论框架,以及张从益(2007)对翻译的文化属性和文化功能的思辨,认为翻译是跨文化传播的中介环

节,具有文化和传播的双重性质。近年来,刘明东、陈圣白(2012)把翻译与提升文化软实力结合起来,强调翻译是跨文化传播和交流的重要途径;还有学者(王志标,2013;胡兴文,2014)从翻译出版角度论述翻译对文化强国战略的重要意义,等等,基本开始了从传播学研究翻译功能的研究。

以往传统的翻译理论著作往往局限于语言与文字两个方面和译语与原语的两极之间,不能适应日益广泛的实际信息传播活动。我国传统译论体系中的翻译理论,主要可以视为文艺学的翻译理论(罗新璋,1984;吕俊,1997;谭载喜,2000),一直把忠实传达作者的原意作为翻译首要也是最终的目的,因此一直被看作是两种语言之间的转换过程,是一种纯粹的知识输入活动,翻译研究也一直以语言分析和文本的对照为主要任务,偏重语言的、艺术的、规定性的翻译批评而忽视文化的、历史的、描述性的翻译研究。虽然目前为止,国内不少学者都对中国的翻译文化和翻译史进行宏观研究,探讨翻译的作用和影响,出版了不少这方面的专著,譬如《有翻译史》(马祖毅,1998;谭载喜,1992)、《翻译文学史》(陈玉刚,1989;郭延礼,1998)、《翻译理论史》(陈福康,1992),还有研究翻译与文化关系的(王克非,1997;谢天振,1999),以及研究翻译影响文化变迁的(邹振环,2000;范祥涛,2006)等等,不一而足。尽管吕俊(2001)曾有过理论入门式的引进,但这些著作大多是从理论的、局部的范围进行研究,鲜有从翻译的跨文化传播本质属性这个方面来全面进行论述的,更没有结合翻译传播与社会历史文化变迁,从翻译功能方面进行实证性的系统研究。对此,除了反思整理现有的理论外,还应对那些尚未深入探讨的领域进行比较全面系统的探索和梳理,拓展翻译理论研究的领域,襄助翻译学科的建设与发展。

本研究参照跨文化传播学的模式和特点,构建翻译的跨文化传播模式,并通过历史案例,实证研究翻译在中国社会历史文化变迁中所发挥的巨大作用及其强大的跨文化传播功能。这种把翻译研究和跨

文化传播学结合起来所进行的系统性研究,在国内尚属首例,是开拓性的研究。它一方面使比较成熟的跨文化传播学理论得以在别的学科进行运用,另一方面也拓宽了翻译研究的领域,可以进一步作为中国翻译学建设的一部分素材进行深入的挖掘和研究。其创新之处在于:第一,通过回顾分析“经验主义文艺学范式”、“结构主义语言学范式”和“解构主义文化学范式”等翻译研究范式,提出“建构主义多元范式”,意图建构一个比较合理、完善、严密的翻译研究体系。在该体系中,既有对翻译进行微观、静态和内部的研究,又有宏观、动态和外部的研究;第二,对“文化翻译”和“翻译文化”重新进行概念界定,描述从翻译过程到翻译结果的文化变迁,说明翻译和文化的互动关系;第三,用新术语“显形翻译”和“隐形翻译”把历史上的种种翻译活动(包括译者)——可见的与不可见的、可考证与不可考证的——都包括进去,也是为了纪念那些名不见经传、作用却不见得不大的“无名”译者及其翻译活动;第四,首次提出“后翻译时代”一词,旨在和翻译活动发生前的社会年代进行对比,来说明翻译及其传播对译入语社会和文化所引发的或量或质的转变,使翻译在中国社会历史文化发展变迁中的作用和功能更加显现。

本研究在理论、学术及实践上都有一定的研究意义和价值。

首先,本研究从跨文化传播这一新的视角,结合跨文化传播学的基本理论来研究翻译,对翻译活动的各个方面及关系进行客观而严密的阐述和分析,从而揭示翻译的本质、属性、特征和功能,在理论上完善了跨文化传播的主要环节,拓展了翻译研究的领域,是对翻译进行跨学科或交叉学科研究的有益尝试,也是翻译学建设重要的一个环节。

其次,借鉴近年来从国外译介过来的最新的翻译研究理论,即主要是运用描述性翻译研究方法和文化派研究范式,以翻译目的论为理论依据,探讨我国历史上的翻译实践活动,论证翻译的社会历史文化

功能。这是翻译对翻译研究的贡献,是翻译功能在翻译研究发展中的体现,其本身也恰恰证明了翻译的跨文化传播作用和意义。

最后,本研究研究翻译实践活动在中国社会文化变迁中所发挥的作用,一方面旨在阐明翻译不可估量的历史价值,凸出其重要的历史地位,另一方面是为了彰显翻译的社会文化功能,为在当今文化多元化及全球一体化之背景下,引进和利用外国先进文化,继承和发扬中国传统文化,发展并繁荣中国当代文化,提供可资借鉴的理论依据和史实参照。

翻译的跨文化传播功能在社会文化发展中所起的作用在以往翻译研究中一直是遭到忽视的领域,但现在该是它得到重视的时候了。本书的首要意义就在于从跨文化传播的角度实证研究翻译活动对中国社会文化发展变迁的影响。作者的这一视角使得本书不同于以往的翻译史研究,并显示出其深度与广度。对于文化研究来说,这本书让我们了解了翻译活动在文化变迁、历史发展进程中的巨大力量;对于翻译研究来说,它揭示了翻译现象的无穷魅力,从而加深了我们对翻译活动的更深层次的认识。

摘 要

本书采用理论分析与实证研究相结合的方法,论证作为跨文化传播特殊方式的翻译在社会历史文化变迁中的功能。总体按照文献综述、原理参照、主题阐述、实证研究以及意义分析的基本思路展开,把翻译和社会文化之间的互动关系作为本书研究的重心,即在跨文化传播的视野下,结合跨文化传播学的原理,运用描述性翻译研究方法,采纳翻译文化研究学派研究范式,以翻译目的论为理论依据,分析、阐述翻译的社会历史文化功能。也就是把翻译置放于跨文化传播的语境中,从宏观、动态、外部的视角探究翻译活动(包括作为翻译主体的译者活动)和翻译作品对中国社会历史文化的发展变迁所产生的巨大作用。

首先回顾国内外翻译研究的发展历史、现状和主要理论研究派别,着重介绍了翻译研究中的文化研究学派,接着介绍翻译研究的新视角——跨文化传播学的主要概念、基本原理和功能,以及如何从跨文化传播学视角研究翻译,继而阐释翻译的跨文化传播功能。然后以中国历史上出现的第一次翻译高潮——佛经的汉译及传播为例,对翻译的跨文化传播作用进行了实证描述,探讨翻译对中国社会历史发展和文化变迁所起的作用,并藉此强调翻译在跨文化传播及促进人类文明和社会文化发展中所起的作用。接下来还通过选择几个典型个案,

把翻译主体及翻译策略、翻译内容及翻译目的、翻译过程及翻译影响等翻译传播因素作为切入点进行重点分析,使翻译的作用和社会文化功能更加具体而清晰。最后,本书从历史发展观视角分析了中国历史上经过几次翻译高潮之后中国的社会、历史和文化所发生的变化,从而说明翻译在中国社会历史文化变迁中的功能和作用,且从正反两方面来说明:在特定的历史发展阶段,翻译兴则文化盛则社会进、翻译废则文化衰则社会退这一历史规律,强调并呼吁在当今这个经济全球化与文化多元化语境下,更应该重视作为跨文化传播主要途径的翻译活动。

Abstract

Translation takes place not only between different languages but also between different cultures. As one of the most important means for human communication, it is more a cultural action or cultural exchange than simply a linguistic transformation from one language into another. Communication concurred with human culture and it promoted cultural development and change, whereas in intercultural communication, translation bridges languages and cultural barriers. It is no exaggeration to say that without translation there would be no cross-linguistic and intercultural communication between different languages, let alone rapid progress of human society. Throughout the world history, translation plays a unique and profound role in human civilization; whose function can be proved either in the rise of European Renaissance or in the wide spread of Buddhism from ancient India to East Asia, or in the inflow of the Western learning to China in late Ming and early Qing Dynasty.

Given an overview of the chief proponents as well as the features of translating and translation theories, the school or theory of Translation Studies comes to the front. It integrates translation



studies with culture to realize “cultural turn” in translation studies and further proposes a “translation turn” in cultural studies, the purpose of which is to put translation in a social context to study its socio-cultural functions. With the cultural turn, translation studies have gone beyond language texts and focused on the interacted relationship between translation and culture, particularly in the way that culture constrains translation and translation or translating exerts more or less influence on the society and culture of the target language. From the perspective of intercultural communication, this dissertation, focusing on interrelationship between translation and culture, adopts cultural paradigm of translation studies to perform a study with authentic proof on socio-cultural functions premised on *Skopos* Theory. Or in other words, translation is placed in the intercultural context so as to exploit the roles of translating and translated works in the target culture from a macro, dynamic and external view.

In the light of the logical arrangement of the structure: literature review, theory elaboration, theme statement, empirical study and sense-oriented analysis, this dissertation covers content as follows:

Chapter One reviews the literature of translation studies at home and abroad, introduces the work done on the socio-cultural functions of translation, and analyzes the historical background, internal reasons, philosophical basis, and methodology of cultural turn proposed by the theory of Translation Studies, from which a conclusion has been drawn that cultural turn is an inevitable trend in the evolution of translation studies. Currently, we are confronted with another important study topic—translation turn in Culture

Studies. It studies, in intercultural communication, what role that translation plays, in the development of history and culture of the target language, including how it works and what effects it will produce. Thus emphasis should be focused on translation turn in Culture Studies as well as on cultural turn in Translation Studies.

Chapter Two makes a survey of intercultural communication—a new perspective for Translation Studies, including some main concepts, basic principles and its functions of intercultural communication. Intercultural communication originates from communication studies, thus the main thread in this part is the transformation from communication mode and its function to those of intercultural communication; from 5W mode of Harold Lasswell (who, what, to whom, in which channel, with what effect) to 7 elements of Bradlock (adding “in what circumstance” and “for what purpose” on the basis of 5W). As translation is a special cultural transmission activity, this dissertation adds another new element: what kind of communication mode. For one thing, it establishes a perfect communication mode or process in intercultural communication; for another, it gives rise to the key research topic discussed in the later part—translation, or more specifically, translation functions from the perspective of intercultural communication.

Chapter Three probes translation from the perspective of intercultural communication with a different interpretation of translation at début. Previously, scholars mainly made research on literature translation, but this dissertation expands its domain to culture, an all-inclusive concept. In this way, therefore, cultural

translation involves such categories as literature translation, sci-tech translation, institution translation, custom translation, and even object translation; and this in turn extends the intension and extension of translation. According to the eight communication modes aforementioned, this chapter affirms the intercultural nature of translation. At last, it defines “cultural translation” and “translation culture” and considers the process from cultural translation to translation culture as the realization of the translation function from its start to the stage that generates effects, and, as a result, the communication functions of translation in the intercultural context is elucidated.

Chapter Four takes Buddhism translation or translating as an example to make an empirical demonstration of the unique dissemination functions of translation. It firstly describes Chinese original indigenous culture before Buddhism spread into China to set a background for contrast to the later socio-cultural situation influenced by the translation effect. Then the role of translation is exploited in Chinese history and cultural changes to highlight the impacts of translation in intercultural communication, human civilization and social progress by descriptive and empirical analysis. It is in some way so overstated that some may take it as “pan translation” or “only translation”. The author is attempting to reveal the historical and socio-cultural function of translation in a tune of hypercorrection so that the whole society will attach more importance to translation and translators as a social drive to facilitate China’s translation progress. Ultimately, translation culture in China will become prosperous in the foreseeable future.

As Chapter Four is a general and theoretical study on translation functions linearly and planarly, the main story of Chapter Five, otherwise, highlights some case studies in point concerned with the Chinese history of translation. Yan Fu and Lin Shu, the two eminent figures in the Chinese translation history, employed translation to accomplish some tasks by means of rewriting against the original under a given social milieu. When *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the great novel written by Harriet Beecher Stowe, an American writer was translated and introduced into China since 1901, it has been producing effects and even changes on Chinese society and culture in different eras and in various ways. Another case in point is the initial introduction and dissemination of Marxism in China, which also owed a lot to translation. Hereupon translation's role and its socio-cultural function are clarified by respectively incisive analysis of translators, translated works, translation strategies, and translation of social ethos.

Chapter Six, the conclusion part, demonstrates the historical and socio-cultural changes or turns generated by translating and integrating alien culture into Chinese culture in the wake of several translation climaxes. Thereupon such concepts as “post-translation era”, “visible translation” and “invisible translation” are put forth, aiming to contrast it with the era during which there is no major translated or alien culture. Only in this way will the role or impact of translation stand out. Through pros and cons, a truth has been conveyed that during a specific period of history, translation has a closely positive or negative relation with culture prosperity and social progress. In the context of globalization and cultural diversity, we need to highlight the translation action—the key to intercultural

communication, and introspect some translation phenomena and dilemmas. Finally an appeal is made to call for a translation equivalence between strong or dominant culture and weak culture, and for a statistic balance on translation from foreign languages to Chinese, or vice versa.

The significance of this study may be listed as follows:

Firstly, the study is made from a brand new perspective, that is, by integrating intercultural communication studies with translation studies, which theoretically extends the domain or frontier of translation studies, and thus contributes somehow to interdisciplinary research.

Secondly, from the perspective of intercultural communication, this study objectively describes and analyzes all elements involved in translating, such as the trio relation among the author, translator, and target reader, and among translation purposes, translation strategies, and translation effects. All the above-mentioned description and analysis unfold the principle, disciplinarian and function of translation, and further enrich the connotation of translation studies. It may duly turn out to be an indispensable step in the construction of translation studies.

Furthermore, in the light of latest Western translation theory, this dissertation adopts the cultural paradigm created by the school of Translation Studies and *Skopos* Theory to discuss the translation activities in Chinese history, which adapts the notion of serving China with foreign stuffs to translation studies. The study itself proves the significant role of translation in intercultural communication and its practical application.

Finally, all the theoretical explanation and empirical analysis indicate that translation ever played an irreplaceable role in both Oriental and Occidental history. Time will never see the value of translation dwindle; instead, it will be constantly strengthened. Translation is, therefore, supposed to be a matter of concern and regards rather than of any neglect.

In sum, translation as an important medium of intercultural communication has the same factors and characteristics with intercultural communication. The cultural turn in translation studies and the translation turn in cultural studies both represent a tendency, a breakthrough, and a hot topic in the present field of translation studies. This dissertation, from the perspective of intercultural communication, is an academic interpretation about the indispensable function and role that translation has played so far in introducing Western culture into Chinese culture.