



青年学者文库

翻译适应变异论

Translation as Adaptive Variation

马萧著



WUHAN UNIVERSITY PRESS

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序

马萧 2002 年进入广东外语外贸大学攻读语言学及应用语言学博士学位，随我从事语用学的研究。寒窗勤读多年，他终以优异成绩获得博士学位，并任教于武汉大学。随后，马萧博士又获机会赴英国深造逾年，追随著名翻译理论家 Mona Baker 教授，现在已是武汉大学外国语言文学学院教授、博士生导师，他的学术兴趣主要在语用学和翻译研究领域，攻博期间他曾在我国核心期刊发表多篇论文，还出版了译著。现在他要出版他几经修改过的博士论文 *Translation as Adaptive Variation* (《翻译适应变异论》) 了，付梓前他向我索序，我欣然应允，并致祝贺。

翻译变异 (translational variation) 是翻译中普遍存在的现象。翻译实践的一些基本事实告诉我们，如果同一个原文有多种译本，只要将其中任何一种译本与原文加以对比，我们都不难发现，该译文或多或少都对原文进行过不同程度的变通处理。问题是，这种处理是应该的吗？它在翻译过程中只是一种偶然的現象，还是必然发生的呢？到底是什么原因导致译者对原文进行了变通处理？这些变异现象又说明什么问题？——所有这些疑问都值得我们去深入研究，而马萧的这部专著却正好给我们解答了这些问题。

马萧博士基于 Verschueren 语言顺应论的理论框架，构建了一个他称之为“翻译适应变异论”，旨在解释翻译中存在的变异现象，从而阐明翻译的本质特性。他的基本研究思路是这样的：从翻译变

异现象出发,认为翻译变异是为了适应变化了的翻译语境,也就是说,翻译变异是由翻译适应引起的。因此,翻译适应性是翻译变异性的动因,翻译变异是翻译中不可避免的创造性策略。在翻译过程中只有通过变异性处理,才能使翻译在异域语境中达到成功交际的目的。马萧的这个思路与达尔文对自然界生物多样性的见解十分吻合,因此,翻译之变异犹如生物之变异。古语云:“橘生淮南则为橘,生于淮北则为枳……所以然者何?水土异也。”(晏子春秋·杂下之十)同理,翻译变异实乃源于翻译语境之变化。

翻译适应变异论引入了认知语境的概念,试图解决翻译语境因素介入翻译过程的机理。马萧认为,“意识凸显程度”是译者选择语境因素的“过滤器”,影响译者做出翻译选择的语境因素由译者的意识凸显程度(salience)所决定,意识凸显程度高的语境因素对译者抉择起着至关重要的作用,意识凸显程度低的语境因素起着次要作用,那些没有进入译者意识或没有引起译者注意的语境因素对翻译根本就不起任何作用,从而被过滤掉。

翻译适应变异论着重讨论了翻译的适应性和翻译的变异性,并提出了翻译的两种适应类型:强制性适应与选择性适应。所谓强制性适应是指翻译过程中译语必须遵守目标语系统中的基本规则和原则,正是这种强制性促使翻译过程必须进行策略性的变通处理;而所谓选择性适应是指翻译过程中译者为了适应不同的翻译语境做出不同的选择。也正是这两种适应形式导致了翻译产出的多样性。

马萧的翻译适应变异论是语用翻译理论中的一种创见,它将是我国翻译理论中的一朵奇葩,我们期待它在翻译实践中得到验证和发展。



2012年3月
于广州白云山

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Abstract

This research endeavors to take translational variation as the starting point for translation investigation and aims at constructing a theoretic framework accounting for its operation. By “translational variation”, we mean both different types of inevitable changes, necessary and justifiable, deviated from the ST as an action on different translational levels, and varieties of translation products that result by means of transformation with adaptation to a certain translational context in the process of translation. As we know, translational variation is a ubiquitous phenomenon in translation activities. It is not a contingent phenomenon or an ill performance by the translator but an essential nature of translation and thus a serious topic in Translation Studies which, however, has long been neglected. We believe that translation studies without a systematic and holistic study on variation would be a theoretical deficiency. Translational variation is understood herein as a process, a strategy and a product of the translational operation. As the process of translation, variation takes place at different translational levels, ranging from the micro linguistic elements to the macro levels of propositional content, text types, styles, and cultural aspects. As a strategy, variation is where creative methods are involved to overcome various types of intercultural communication obstacles. Besides, variation is the product which results from the variational process with creative translation strategies. The unity of these three aspects constitutes

the whole profile of a translational activity.

The present research is to argue that translation is in fact an adaptive variation. For this purpose, a theoretic framework accounting for translational variation is constructed on the basis of Verschueren's Adaptation Theory and his general pragmatic perspective. This framework is employed in the present research as a new general functional perspective on translational variation and will, hopefully, help perform a holistic study on translation.

It is easy to understand that the ultimate goal of translation is to achieve a successful communication in another language culture. However, in the process of translation, the translator is sure to come across various language and cultural barriers that block a successful communication due to different language systems and cultures. In order to overcome those barriers, the translator has to use the variational strategy to bridge the communicative gaps and satisfy the communicative needs in the target culture. In this sense, translational variation is motivated by adaptation to the translational context. Therefore, we can safely say that there is no translation without variation, or simply say: "no variation, no translation".

In this research, translation is promoted as a living organism that intends to adapt itself to the translational context and survive in the changed situation. In this sense, translation is motivated by adaptation. Therefore, translational adaptability is regarded as a universality of translation. We find that there are two types of adaptation: obligatory adaptation and optional adaptation. The former refers to the mandatory adaptation to the basic rules and principles of the target language system. The translator has no freedom to violate the baseline of those rules and principles, but just observes them. However, those rules and principles are flexible and various. The translator has freedom to choose

some rules and principles instead of others with adaptation to the translational context. The latter refers to the selective adaptation to the physical, social, cultural and cognitive contextual correlates in the translational context in terms of the degree of salience to a particular translator at a particular time and place in the process of translation. Therefore, translational variation is understood as a necessary means and creative strategy for the realization of adaptation.

Under this translation-as-adaptive-variation framework, translational context is a pivotal notion and a cognitive concept with a dynamic nature that includes all the potential linguistic and extralinguistic factors. However, not all possible factors can become the contextual correlates in the translational context; only those that enter the “line of vision” of the translator and are processed by him can be considered as contextual elements. Furthermore, the contextual correlates do not occupy an equal position in the process of translation. In a particular situation, some factors play very crucial roles, some play less important roles and some play no role at all. The importance of contextual factors in a specific situation depends largely on the mechanism of cognitive salience of the translator. These factors are not in a static hierarchical order but of a dynamic nature, that is, none of them can occupy the top position in the translational context at any time. Some factors that are usually considered less important may ascend to play decisive roles in a specific situation. It is these dynamic contextual factors that call for translational variation.

This approach to translation is a translator-centered one in which the translator is put at the center of translation activity. For one thing, the translator is the only agent who participates directly in the whole translation process. Other agents involved can only function indirectly through the translator. For another, the contextual factors influencing

the translation process will be processed by the translator. Those factors most salient to the translator in a particular translational context will affect the translator's decision making of translation strategies and translational choices, and other less salient or non-salient factors will be automatically filtered. Therefore, the translator has enormous freedom of making decisions, though his action of choice making is constrained by the translational context.

Under this approach to translation, three general guiding principles of translation are proposed, i. e. Adaptation Principle, Conditioning Principle and Variational Principle. The so-called controversial topics such as literal versus free, semantic versus communicative, formal versus dynamic equivalence, documental versus instrumental, covert versus overt, foreignization versus domestication are no longer theoretic problems of translation, but the optional strategies which can be adopted by the translator to overcome translation difficulties in different situations.

中文摘要

翻译变异(translational variation)是翻译中普遍存在的现象。可以说,任何翻译必然涉及翻译变异,或者说,没有变异就没有翻译。翻译变异贯穿整个翻译活动始终,包括翻译过程、翻译策略和翻译产品。作为翻译过程,翻译变异行为发生于翻译的各个层面,如语言要素的微观层面以及命题内容、文本类型、风格、文化因素等宏观层面;作为翻译策略,翻译变异是克服跨文化交际障碍的创造性手段;作为翻译产品,翻译变异是翻译过程和翻译策略产生的翻译产品的集合。可以说,翻译变异的上述三个方面构成了翻译活动的全貌。

本研究拟实现以下三个目的:第一是元理论目的。本研究首先对现行的翻译研究进行了反思,试图解释目前翻译研究由于不同研究路向而导致的分歧和悖论。第二是理论目的。本研究试图以翻译变异为研究的出发点,以 Jef Verschueren 的顺应论和语用综观论为理论基础,建构一个翻译适应变异论的理论框架,旨在解释翻译中的变异现象。该理论认为翻译是受其适应性所驱动,翻译变异是实现翻译适应性的必要手段和策略,翻译产品是翻译变异的连续体。此外,本研究还试图揭示翻译语境因素影响翻译选择的运作机制。

翻译适应变异论认为,翻译是人类跨语言、跨文化交际的必然产物,是人类适应新环境的一种交际行为。由于人类交际行为的延伸,语言、文化障碍势必限制了人类交际行为的拓展,因此,跨越语言、文化障碍的翻译就成为了适应新的交际环境的必要手段。在翻译过程中,为了适应变化了的交际环境,作为翻译操作者的译者

必定采取某些变异性策略，在宏观和微观层面上对原文进行某种程度上的改造，以适应新的翻译语境的需要。由于翻译语境是动态变化的，适应的结果必然产生不同的翻译变异。也就是说，不同的翻译语境呼唤不同的翻译产品。因此，任何一种翻译产品均是翻译变异集合中的一种变异形式，也就是说，任何一种翻译只是翻译变异集合这一连续体中的一种表现形式。

翻译适应变异论包括以下相互关联的几个核心概念：译者中心论；翻译认知语境；意识突显；翻译适应性；翻译变异性。

翻译适应变异论认为，译者是翻译活动的中心，是翻译行为的唯一操作者和执行者。一切影响翻译的因素都是通过译者进入翻译过程的，也就是说，翻译语境中的任何相关因素只有通过译者才能对翻译过程施加影响。

翻译认知语境理论上涵盖一切潜在的语言与非语言因素，但并非一切潜在的语言与非语言因素都可构成现实的翻译语境要素。在具体的翻译活动中，翻译语境的构成要素是变化的。只有那些进入译者的视域线(*lines of vision*)，被译者大脑加工的要素才能成为真正的翻译语境要素。因此，翻译语境的概念是动态的认知概念。

意识凸显(*salience*)是翻译语境要素的选择机制。由于翻译是一个极为复杂的人类行为，影响翻译的因素纷繁复杂，在翻译过程中，译者面对如此众多的因素如何处理呢？显然，穷尽所有的因素并求得它们的平衡是不可能的，缺乏心理现实性；只注重一个或几个重要影响因素进行静态分析，往往会失之片面。翻译适应变异论认为，翻译语境中的相关因素在翻译过程中分别占据不同的地位。有些因素起着决定性作用，有些因素起着次要作用，有些因素甚至不起作用或被译者忽视。但在不同的情况下，语境相关因素的地位会发生变化。并非某些因素天生总是起着重要的决定性作用。某一因素在某一具体情景下可能起着决定性作用，但在另一情景下可能不起作用会被译者忽视。只有那些进入译者大脑并引起译者高度重视的那些意识突显程度极高的语境相关因素才会对翻译过程产生决

定性作用。

翻译适应性是翻译的本质特性。在翻译过程中，为了逾越跨语言、跨文化交际障碍，满足交际需要，翻译必然要适应翻译语境中的相关语境因素。翻译过程实际上是译者不断适应翻译语境的过程。

翻译变异性是翻译的普遍特性。翻译在适应翻译语境的过程中，译者必须对原文进行适当的变通，采取一定的变异策略，以达成翻译交际成功。翻译产品的最终形式只是适应翻译语境的一种变异形式。针对同一原文，不同的翻译语境导致不同的翻译变异形式，从而构成一个翻译变异连续体。翻译适应性是翻译变异的动因，变异是翻译适应的必要手段和策略，翻译变异是翻译适应的结果。

翻译适应变异论认为，存在两种不同的适应性：强制性适应和选择性适应。前者指翻译必须无条件地适应目标语系统中的基本构建规则和原则。译者没有自由打破这一底线，只能遵守。当然，目标语系统中的基本构建规则和原则也是灵活和多样的，译者有自由根据需要进行选择不同的规则和原则。后者指在翻译过程中，翻译根据语境相关因素对某一具体译者的意识突显程度选择译文的可能性。

翻译适应变异论提出了三个指导性的翻译原则，即适应性原则、条件性原则和变异性原则。

总之，本研究从翻译变异这一翻译中普遍存在的现象入手，并以此为证据追溯整个翻译过程，挖掘翻译变异的动因，力图论证“翻译即是一种适应性变异”这一论点。

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