论翻译中的说服因素

——理论溯源与实例分析

张晓雪◎著

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Preface

From the perspective of Translation Studies and Rhetoric, this book focuses on the subject of "the persuasive aspect of translation", endeavors to provide a novel angle to look at the problems of translation and offers a framework for meaningful analyses of translation as persuasion. Generally speaking, the book consists of two major parts, namely, theoretical review and case analysis, to discuss in a relatively comprehensive and systematic manner the import of the view "the persuasive aspect of translation" as well as the illumination it can bring to the field of translation and translation studies. The theoretical part mentions many important western and Chinese scholars and their theories that cover subjects of linguistics, rhetoric, aesthetics, hermeneutics, poetics, philosophy, sociology and so on, to identify relevant views and contentions which can support the argument of "the persuasive aspect of translation". The cases part comprises analyses of particular examples concerning different areas and various text types, including literary works, advertisements, tourist texts and legal documents, while the analyses are done in regard to textual features, factors that may affect the power of persuasion and correspondent strategies to adopt, etc. to ensure the persuasive effects among target readers.

From the western angle, the ancient Rhetoric Theory of **Aristotle** is the starting point for us to establish translation as a human activity capable of persuading readers who are actually persuadees in the rhetorical sense. By analyzing translation in the aspects of *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos*, we get to understand the qualities and concerns required of a translator to make his translation more persuasive. **Tytler**, **Dryden and Dolet** have pointed out the guiding principles of translation, which are also the basic rules translators have to observe in the act of translating. Skills and techniques can be exerted to enforce persuasive power, but the rules function to regulate excessive maneuver that may violate the nature of translation. **George Steiner**'s hermeneutic motion approaches the matter from a more or less philosophical and psychological aspect with subjective concern, and may enrich our perceptions about translators' mental activities during the process of translation which is also a course of constructing persuasion. Meanwhile, it illustrates again that translation as a human activity to understand and interpret things can never be prejudice-free or avoid subjective attachment as it relates not only to personal experiences and individual traits but also to social, cultural and historical backgrounds and conditions. **Eugene Nida** makes clear the differences between formal equivalence and functional equivalence and the significance for a translator to make the right choice of translation strategy. To produce an agreeable and natural translation with concern for receptors will endow the work with strong persuasive power. **Peter Newmark** reveals that the act of translation as a way of persuasion is fundamentally to produce the best preferred interpretation of the original that dispels all other less persuasive alternatives, likened to the part-and-whole relationship of semantic and communicative translations. **Speech Act Theory** works from the linguistic point of view to look at translation as a piece of speech act embodying dimensions of locution, illocution and perlocution with potential frames that construct both explicit meanings and implicit connotations. In particular, it helps

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us realize the persuasive effects of translation achieved at different levels. **Skopos Theory** has obvious advantages over other previous translation theories and seems most applicable to my arguments, though it still possesses inherent limitations which may be overcome by the rhetorical view of translation as persuasion.

From the Chinese angle, some scholars pursue in aesthetic activities the supreme ideal of natural and truthful representation which is demonstrated by 'the Theory of *Ching-chieh*' ("境界说") and the idea 'to accord with what is nature' ("合于自然") mentioned in *Jen-Chien T'zu-Hua* (《人间词话》) of **Wang Guowei** (王国维), and concepts of 'true beauty' ("真美") and 'natural aspiration' ("自然英旨") in *Categories of Poems* (《诗品》) of Zhong Rong(钟嵘). These views are enlightening as they point out the ultimate goal to achieve for a translation to reach the state of consummation, which also represents the highest level of persuasion, in other words, to be persuasive, a translator should strive to produce cogent renderings that read natural and delightful. Then, it touches upon **Yan Fu** (严复)'s criteria of 'faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance' ("信、达、雅") which seem to coincide with Tytler's principles to a great extent. He laid out the laws for translators to observe, which can also be understood as the rudiments of translation to regulate the degree of creativity and extent of persuasive handlings. Besides, **Fu Lei** (傅雷)'s view of 'spiritual conformity' ("神似"), **Qian Zhongshu** (钱钟书)'s 'sublimed adaptation' ("化境") as well as **Si Guo** (思果)'s opinion about translation 'like salt melted in water without any trace' can be understood in Nida's sense of functional equivalence, which all point out the special quality of translation that can help achieve favorable effects among receptors, or make the work more persuasive. **Daoan**(道安)'s 'five kinds of losing original features' and 'three kinds of being not easy' ("五失本,三不易"), **Qian Zhongshu**'s notion of 'error' ("讹"), **Fu Lei**, **Qian Gechuan**(钱歌川) as well as **Yu Guangzhong** (余光中)'s related comments serve to reveal the inevitability of alteration in translation which actually asserts the necessity of persuasive dealings by translators, convergent with Nida and Newmark's relevant views. Similar to the suggestion of Steiner's hermeneutic motion and Newmark's theories, many Chinese scholars, such as **Lin Shu**(林纾), **Guo Moruo** (郭沫若) and **Fu Lei**, were aware of the subjective elements that are bound to be involved in any translation, which in essence concerns the matter of individuals' subjectivity dominating the persuasive activity of translation. Moreover, the Chinese always value the idea of harmony and Doctrine of Mean, and therefore, they propose in translation unity of plain words and elegant forms, or concern for both substance and style, which ensures adequate representation and balanced degree of manipulation in persuasion. **Hui Yuan**(慧远) early mentioned this view in translation of Buddhist scriptures and later, **Liu Xie**(刘勰) elaborated further in his work *The Literary Mind Carves Dragons* (《文心雕龙》) on this point, which seems remotely echoed, as it were, by Nida's opinions to a certain extent. Finally, we find some Chinese scholars and translators, such as **Xuan Zang**(玄奘), **Lin Yutang**(林语堂) and **Ba Jin**(巴金), were highly concerned with choice of translation strategies and advocated compromise and balance in actual translation, which according to the view of this paper, not only suggests the favorable condition of persuasion, but also serves a prelude, so to speak, to Newmark's illustrations about semantic and communicative translation.

After sketching out the theoretical framework, the author tries to identify relevant theories that can guide our translation of particular text types, and analyzes the features of different texts, decides upon the factors that may affect the persuasive effect of each case, and points out the strategies that can help enhance the power of persuasion among target groups. Specific to the features of literary works as exemplified by Yang Xianyi's translation of Lu Xun's work *A True Story of Ah Q*, we have observed that factors of language, culture, tradition, environment and history, etc. should be seriously considered in translation, and the issues of style and tone are also important to determine the final effect on readers. The language in literary translation should be lucid, expressive and artistic. Then, due to the diversities in language, culture, tradition, history, as well as the general public psychology and emotion of different countries and peoples, in translation of ads we have to consider many factors and adopt various strategies to ensure successful communication and cogent advice. The advertising language is usually manifest and brief to offer sufficient information, novel and creative to affect audiences, and melodious and impressive to be memorable and long-standing. In tourist translation, the aim is to transfuse information and attract tourists, and thus the translator has to pay close attention to the linguistic and cultural differences between Chinese and English tourist writings, so as to produce comprehensible and desirable versions of translation that can work well to persuade and appeal. Besides, the tourist language is usually plain for public consumption, informative to offer sufficient information, and appealing to grab people's attention. Since the Chinese and English legal discourses bear inherent differences, the translator will mind the linguistic and cultural factors in legal translation with special concern for terminologies, conventions and forms of expression standardized in the source and target languages respectively, so as to employ suitable strategies and materialize proper transfers. Besides, the language in legal translation must impress the readership as being accurate, logical and forceful to facilitate comprehension of and enforcement upon the addressees.

Based on the above presentation, the book concludes by summarizing several important features of translation that may guarantee successful persuasion, i.e. logic, appropriateness, artfulness, and balance. This of course may have direct implication for a qualified translator to be, as is briefly mentioned on the last pages of the book.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

This book is intended to interpret translation as an act of persuasion which provides a novel perspective to investigate and understand the matters involved in translation and translating activity.

According to Oxford and Webster dictionary definitions, to "**persuade**" means to win approval or support for something by arguing or reasoning; or cause somebody to adopt a certain position, belief, or course of action; or to twist somebody's arm. Being "**persuasive**" can indicate tending or intended or having the power to induce action or belief, or capable of convincing. Therefore, "**persuasion**" suggests the act of persuading (or attempting to persuade), communication intended to induce belief or action, or a personal belief or judgment that is not necessarily founded on proof or certainty.

Therefore, we realize, the act of persuading entails several dimensions, i.e., to influence, to convince, and to twist. To persuade somebody means to change or influence his opinions or stance, to make him believe in something, and possibly to use artifice or tricks in order to induce a certain effect or achieve a certain purpose. However, persuasion also allows contrived or unruly facts imprinted with subjective traits of personal manipulation.

Translation is a process connecting two texts — the original text and the translation, among three parties — the author, the translator and the target readers, which can be described in the following way:

Author — Text — **Translator** — Translation — Readers

The translator as an intermediate figure acquires a double identity, first as the reader and interpreter of the original text, and then as the reporter and producer of translation to convey messages to target readers. In a sense, he is first persuaded by the original text and author, and then endeavors to persuade target readers by his translation. However, either his reading of the original or interpretation through translation can be biased, as the literary theorist Stanley Fish has argued, that in real life we each carry with us a kind of story — that is, a set of experience, conclusions, values, interpretations, and rules that constitute the way we perceive and evaluate and these determine our own actions, or performances. A modern philosopher and critic Kenneth Burke has also proposed similarly in this century that we are all characters in a drama, persuading and interpreting, using the partial knowledge that is at our proposal. (Fish, 208)

Concerning the relationship between the author, the translator and the readers, Mr. Yu Guangzhong, a renowned Chinese scholar and translator, has had the following opinion expressed in an article "The Art of Accommodation"(《变通的艺术》):

> "如果说,原作者是神灵,则译者就是巫师,任务是把神的话传给人。翻译的妙旨,就在这里:那句话虽然是神谕,要传给凡人时,多多少少,毕竟还要用人的方式委婉点出,否则那神谕仍留在云里雾里,高不可攀。译者介于神人之间,既要通天意,又得说人话,真是'左右为巫难'。读者只能面对译者,透过译者的口吻,去想象原作者的意境。翻译,实在是一种信不信由你的'一面之词'。"(Yu,55)

(*If we consider the author as a god-figure, then the translator is just like a priest whose task is to convey words of God to ordinary people. The mystery of translation lies in the fact that the "holy oracle", so to speak, has to be expressed felicitously in an adaptive way so that the mortals can understand. The priest, as a translator* *sandwiched between God and human beings, should be able to fathom the intent of God and then rearticulate it in human language, a job that taxes one's ingenuity. As readers can only face what is offered by the translator and then imagine the original on that basis, translation is but a sort of one-sided discourse, believe it or not.*) ①

Most readers have no way to access or comprehend directly God's words, so they merely judge whether the translator talks like God in the way they can accept upon fairly subjective criteria. On the part of the translator, his job is to transfer the oracle to understandable human language through various means, and in order to convince, he may use strategies like omission, shift or addition, which can be regarded as "art of persuasion".

Peter Newmark, a most influential British linguist, translator and translation theorist of the 20th century, also mentioned in his book *Approaches to Translation*:

> "*There is a parallel in the relationship between the text's persuasive and informative function and the translator's subjective and textual levels. The stronger the persuasive element in the text the more the translator is likely to stretch his imagination, to exercise his choices, unconsciously to let internal images, memories of sense-impression, records or activities imbued with feelings suffuse his language. The translator is at his most creative when he is handling the persuasive function.*" (Newmark, 133-134)

What Newmark says here means (1) a text has a certain persuasive function and (2) the translator aims at being persuasive in the text he is dealing with by exerting his personal imagination and creativity.

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① Unless otherwise explained, translations of Chinese quotations into English in this book are mine.

Basically, this book would adopt the approach of combining theories with cases to illustrate the views and reach conclusions. The theoretical part consists of many important western and Chinese scholars and their theories that cover subjects of linguistics, rhetoric, aesthetics, hermeneutics, poetics, philosophy, sociology and so on. For the purpose of study, it tries to identify among them relevant views and contentions which can support the argument about "the persuasive aspect of translation", and also has elaborate discussions about their pertinence. The part of case studies comprises analyses of particular translation examples concerning different areas and textual types, such as literary works, advertisements, tourist texts, legal documents and so on, while the analyses may be done in regard to textual features, cultural elements, factors that may affect the persuasive effect and correspondent translation strategies to adopt, etc. Theories serve to rationalize the hypothesis that "translation is a type of persuasion", and exploration of practical cases can further substantiate the views in a more perceptible way to see how "the persuasive aspect of translation" may guide our acts and choices in different cases of translation, and what kind of strategies and skills can ensure the persuasive power and positive effects on receptors. Then, it concludes, the view of "translation with a persuasive aspect" is not only justifiable, but also instructive, in the sense that it can on the one hand broaden the theoretical horizon of translation studies, and on the other, function as guidance to translation practices. Moreover, this view may also bear some innovative and pioneering values, and is likely to inspire deeper insights and further exploration into the subject.

The theoretical part of the book includes a brief review of the following theories and notions of western and Chinese scholars together with discussion about their implication for the argument.

From the western angle, the ancient Rhetoric Theory of **Aristotle** is the starting point for us to establish translation as a human activity capable of persuading readers who are actually persuadees in the rhetorical sense. By analyzing translation in aspects of *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos*, we get to understand the qualities and concerns required of a translator to make his work more persuasive. **Tytler**, **Dryden and Dolet** have pointed out the guiding principles of translation, which are also the basic rules for translators to observe in their act of translating. Skills and techniques can be exerted to enforce the persuasive power, but the laws function to regulate excessive maneuver that can violate the nature of translation. **Hermeneutics** approaches the matter from a more or less psychological and subjective angle, and may enrich our perceptions about translators' mental activities during the process of translation which is also a course of constructing persuasion. Meanwhile, it illustrates again that translation as a human activity to understand and interpret things can never be prejudice-free or avoid subjective attachment as it relates not only to personal experiences and individual traits but also to social, cultural and historical backgrounds and conditions. **Eugene Nida** makes clear the differences between formal equivalence and functional equivalence to point out the significance for a translator to make the right choice of strategy in translation. To produce an agreeable and natural version with concern for receptors will endow the work with strong persuasive power. **Peter Newmark** reveals that the act of translation as a way of persuasion is fundamentally to produce the best preferred interpretation of the original by dispelling all other less persuasive alternatives, likened to the part-and-whole relationship of semantic and communicative translations. **Speech Act Theory** works from the linguistic point of view to look at translation as a piece of speech act embodying dimensions of *locution*, *illocution* and *perlocution* with potential frames that construct both explicit meanings and implicit connotations. In particular, it helps us realize the persuasive

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