

Unit 1

Introduction: Translation and Translation Techniques

单元要点概述

实用翻译训练英译汉: Proverbs in Latin American Talk

实用翻译训练汉译英: 谚语

- I. 翻译的重要作用
- II. 翻译的性质和范围
- III. 翻译的原则和标准
- IV. 直译与意译
- V. 翻译技巧种种

本单元为全书的绪论,简要回顾了我国的翻译史,阐述了翻译的重要性,举例说明了翻译不当所造成的问题,界定了翻译的性质和类别,对翻译的原则及标准、直译与意译等问题展开了讨论,并就翻译技巧与实践的关系做了阐述。

翻译标准是衡量译文质量的尺度,也是指导翻译实践的准则。本单元首先从不同角度探讨了严复的“信、达、雅”标准,将翻译的标准简要概括为“忠实、通顺”。接着就直译与意译问题作了讨论,提出无论是直译还是意译,均须以理解原文为前提。在处理手法上,直译要近情理,便于读者理解、接受,否则就会变成硬译、死译;意译应当注重事实依据,不能无中生有、随意杜撰,否则就会变成曲译、胡译。最后就翻译的种种技巧方法与翻译实践之间的关系作了论述。

Practice of the Relevant Skill

1. E-C Translation

Proverbs in Latin American Talk

Proverbs are the popular sayings that brighten so much Latin American talk, the boiled-down wisdom that you are as apt to hear from professors as from peasants, from beggars as from *élégantes*. Brief and colorful, they more often than not carry a sting.

When a neighbor's dismally unattractive daughter announced her engagement, Imelda remarked, "You know what they say, Senora: 'There's no pot so ugly it can't find a lid.' " And when her son-in-law blustered about how he was going to get even with the boss who had docked his pay, Imelda fixed him with a cold eye and said, "Little fish does not eat big fish. "

One afternoon I heard Imelda and her daughter arguing in the kitchen. Her daughter had quarreled with her husband's parents, and Imelda was insisting that she apologize to them. Her daughter objected, "But, Mama, I just can't swallow them, not even with honey. They talk so big until we need something; then they're too poor. So today when they wouldn't even lend enough to pay for a new bed, all I did was saying something that I've heard you say a hundred times: 'If so grand, why so poor? If so poor, why so grand?' "

"Impertinent!" snorted Imelda. "Have I not also taught you, 'What the tongue says, the neck pays for'? I will not have it said that I could never teach my daughter proper respect for her elders. And before you go to beg their pardon, change those trousers for a dress. You know how your mother-in-law feels about pants on a woman. She always says, 'What was hatched a hen must not try to be a rooster!'"

Her daughter made one more try, "But Mama, you often say, 'If the saint is annoyed, don't pray to him until he gets over it.' Can't I leave it for tomorrow?"

"No, no and no! Remember: 'If the dose is nasty, swallow it fast.' You know, my child, you did wrong. But, 'A gift is the key to open the door closed against you.' I have a cake in the oven that I was making for the Senora's dinner. I will explain to the Senora. Now, dear, hurry home and make yourself pretty in your pink dress. By the time you get back, I will have the cake ready for you to take to your

mother-in-law. She will be so pleased that she may make your father-in-law pay for the bed. Remember: 'One hand washes the other, but together they wash the face.'

Notes and Explanations

1. the boiled-down wisdom 浓缩的智慧
2. *élégantes n.* [法语]风雅的人;淑女
3. more often than not carry a sting 往往无不带刺; *sting n.* 刺,讽刺
4. *dismally unattractive* 直译: 难看得令人忧虑; *dismally ad.* 沉闷地, 忧郁地; 根据上下文, 此处可考虑译作“丑陋的”、“其貌不扬的”
5. There's no pot so ugly it can't find a lid. 直译: 世上没有丑得找不到盖子的罐子。(暗示: 丑女不愁嫁。)
6. *senora n.* [西班牙语]夫人; 太太
7. get even with the boss who had docked his pay 找克扣了他工资的老板算账; get even with 扯平, 进行报复, 算账; dock *v.* 剪掉……; 扣……工资
8. I just can't swallow them, not even with honey. 我就是受不了他们那一套, 哪怕是拌了蜜也咽不下呀! swallow *v.* 咽, 吞下, 忍受
9. talk big 吹牛, 说大话
10. If so grand, why so poor? If so poor, why so grand? 既然那么阔, 干嘛要叫穷? 既然那么穷, 干嘛摆阔气? *grand a.* 壮观的, 显赫的, 摆阔的
11. I will not have it said that... 我可不愿意让人家说……。 (注意 have something done 结构的译法)
12. What was hatched a hen must not try to be a rooster! 直译: 孵出来是母鸡就别想冒充公鸡!
13. If the saint is annoyed, don't pray to him until he gets over it. 直译: 要是圣徒恼了, 在他消气之前不要向他祈祷。

2. C-E Translation

谚 语

谚语是广泛用于民间的短小、精悍的格言, 通常经口头流传下来, 大都反映了劳动人民的生活实践经验。谚语类似成语, 但口语性强, 通俗易懂, 因而很有感染力。

谚语往往多少能反映一个民族的地理、历史、社会制度、社会观点和态度。比如, 有些民族住在沿海一带, 靠海为生, 他们的谚语往往涉及海上航行、经受风雨、捕鱼捉蟹。像阿拉伯人这样的游牧民族的谚语则多涉及沙漠、草原、羊、马、骆驼和

豺狼。尊敬老人的社会就会有颂扬老人足智多谋的谚语。妇女地位不高的社会就有许多轻视、贬低妇女的谚语。

人们的经历和对世界的认识在不少方面是相似的。因此,尽管中国人和讲英语的人文化背景不同,但在英语和汉语中有很多相同或相似的谚语。

Notes and Explanations

1. 经口头流传 pass down by word of mouth
2. 有感染力 appeal to
3. 游牧民族 nomads
4. 足智多谋 resourcefulness
5. 轻视、贬低 despise or disparage

I. Important Role of Translation

Translation means a conversion of one language to another, i. e. the faithful representation in one language of what is written or said in another language.

As a means of communication, translation plays an important role in human civilization. In the West, literary translation can be traced back to 300 BC, while in China, recorded translation activities are even earlier, dating from the Zhou Dynasty (1100 BC). However, not until recent centuries, especially by the end of the 19th century did systematic study of translation get underway. In the past decades translation theories and activities have developed fast both at home and abroad.

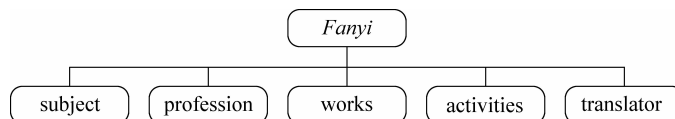
A modern society sees an extensive use of translation on various occasions. If a foreign language is generally accepted as a tool of life, translation then obviously serves as a dynamic means of employing this tool. A proper and dexterous translation helps to promote mutual understanding between peoples of different cultural and social backgrounds, whereas a misunderstanding or improper rendering of words or expressions may lead to confusion, even cause disasters. The importance of translation is highlighted by the mistranslation of the Japanese telegram sent to Washington just before the bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, when *mokasutu* was allegedly translated as “ignored” instead of “considered”, and by the ambiguity in UN Resolution 242, where “the withdrawal from occupied territories” was translated as *le retrait des territoires occupés*, and therefore as a reference to all of the occupied territory to be

evacuated by the Israelis. Another example is the rendering of “Renaissance”. The original word refers to the period in Europe between the 14th and 17th centuries, when the art, literature, ideas of ancient Greece were discovered again and widely studied, causing a rebirth of activity in all these things. It is commonly known as “文艺复兴” in Chinese via translation—although we know today this movement extended far beyond literature and art circles, and the connotation of “Renaissance” is much more profound than that of the Chinese term. Similar fallacies also occur in C-E translation. For example, a popular Chinese brand of lipstick “芳芳” is translated as “Fangfang”, a hideous image in English—the English word “fang” happens to have two disagreeable definitions: a. a long, sharp tooth of a dog; b. a snake’s poisonous tooth. Similar translation blunders are not rare in domestic affairs. For instances, rendering “五讲四美、三热爱” into “five stresses, four beauties and three loves”; “抓紧施肥” into “grasp manure”; “街道妇女” into “street women”... Had the translators had sufficient translation knowledge, such translation blunders would have been avoidable.

II. Nature and Scope of Translation

What is translation? Some people believe it is a science, others take it as an art; and yet many consider it a craft, or rather, a skill.

Of these varied opinions, which one holds true for our purpose? The answer depends on how we understand or interpret the word “translation”, for the very word “translation” itself is ambiguous, and the Chinese equivalent “*fanyi*” sounds even fuzzier. *Fanyi* in Chinese, may either stand for a subject in the curriculum, a job or profession people are engaged in, a piece of literary work, or the translating or interpreting activities or profession. Sometimes, “*fanyi*” may even refer to the translator or interpreter himself/herself, as illustrated in the following diagram.



If the word “translation” refers to a subject, namely, the study of translation theory and skills, it is no doubt a science, just as any subject is, with its own rules

and principles for translators to abide by; however, if it refers to some specific pieces of translation, then it is more like an art, with each piece manifesting its own charms and style by the creative work of the translator; whereas, if it refers to a process, in which something is translated, then we may regard it as a craft or a skill. For unlike any branch of natural science, the process of translation has its peculiarity, and none of its rules and principles is universally applicable. Besides, it entails a lot of practice—particular craftsmanship and skills are displayed by the touches of different translators.

Translation covers a very broad range. In terms of languages, it can be divided into two categories: from native languages into foreign languages and *vice versa*. In terms of working mode, it can be divided into oral interpretation, written translation and machine translation. In terms of materials to be translated, there is translation of scientific materials, translation of literary works such as novels, stories, prose, poetry, drama, etc., translation of political essays such as treatises on social problems, reports, speeches, etc., and translation of practical writing such as official documents, contracts and agreements, notices, receipts, etc. In terms of translator's disposal, it can be either full-text translation(全文翻译), abridged translation(摘译) or adapted translation(编译).

III. Principles or Criteria of Translation

The so-named principles and criteria of translation are actually two aspects of the same thing. The former lays emphasis on the translator, who should follow these principles while translating; while the latter on the reader or critic, who may use the criteria to evaluate translation works. Whenever principles or criteria of translation are under discussion in China, Yan Fu's (严复) "three-character guide", which was first proposed in 1898, would be mentioned, namely, the principle of "信、达、雅" (faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance).

In the past decades, Mr. Yan's principle of translation has been generally regarded as a yardstick to measure the professional level of translation and a goal for translators to strive after. However, in the application of this principle, many scholars come to see its limitations and at the same time, put forward some new standards instead.

Some scholars maintain the original three characters, and in the meantime adds some new concepts to the character "雅". According to them, "雅" means far more

than the English word “elegance”. Apart from the traditional interpretation, it also means classicism, the adherence to the original style and flavor. On the other hand, other scholars argue that the word “雅” is out of place in translation. While adopting the first two characters of Mr. Yan Fu’s principle, they discard the character “雅” and replace it with some other criteria. Noticeably, there are such revisions as “信、达、切” (faithfulness, expressiveness and closeness), “信、达、贴” (faithfulness, expressiveness and fitness), etc. Besides, some scholars disagree with Yan Fu’s principle on the whole. By casting away the three-word guide, they propose some new principles or translation criteria of their own. Of the various popular theories “spiritual conformity” (神似) and “sublimed adaptation” (化境) are most influential in the translation circles. The former, proposed by Fu Lei (傅雷), emphasizes the reproduction of the spirit or the flavor of the original, while the latter, advocated by Qian Zhongshu (钱钟书), focuses on the translator’s smooth and idiomatic Chinese version for the sake of the Chinese reader.

Despite the variety of opinions, two criteria are almost unanimously accepted, namely, the criterion of faithfulness/accuracy (忠实/准确) and that of smoothness (流畅). We may also take these two criteria as the principles of translation in general. By faithfulness/accuracy, we mean being faithful not only to the original contents, to the original meaning and views, but also to the original form and style. By smoothness, we mean not only easy and readable rendering, but also idiomatic expression in the target language, free from stiff formula and mechanical copying from dictionaries.

IV. Literal Translation and Free Translation

The process of translation consists of two phases: comprehension and expression. Generally speaking, comprehension is of foremost importance, and expression is the natural consequence of thorough comprehension. However, in the practice of translation we may find that now and then some words in their usual senses are very difficult to deal with because of the disparity between the English and the Chinese languages. In this case, we have to resort to some special means of translation. Literal translation and free translation are two alternative approaches to tackle this problem.

Literal translation does not mean word-for-word translation. Superficially speaking,

it means “not to alter the original words and sentences”; strictly speaking, it strives “to keep the sentiments and style of the original”. It takes sentences as its basic units and takes the whole text into consideration at the same time in the course of translation. Furthermore, it strives to reproduce both the ideological content and the style of the original works and retains as much as possible the figures of speech.

For example, the concept of “death” may be expressed as follows: breathe one’s last(断气), go to one’s eternal rest(安息), the long sleep(长眠), pass away(去世), see God(见上帝), see Marx(见马克思), see one’s ancestors(见祖先), go west(归西), go to heaven(进天国), kick the bucket(蹬腿儿了) etc. Actually, quite a lot of successful literal translations have been adopted as idiomatic Chinese expressions. For example, crocodile tears(鳄鱼的眼泪), be armed to the teeth(武装到牙齿), chain reaction(连锁反应), gentlemen’s agreement(君子协定), and so on. Similarly, some Chinese words and expressions may also find their English counterparts through literal translation. For example, “三教九流”(the three religions and the nine schools of thought), “四书五经”(the Four Books and the Five Classics), “纸老虎”(paper tiger), “一国两制”(one country, two systems), and so on.

Free translation is an alternative approach generally used to convey the meaning and spirit of the original without trying to copy its sentence patterns or figures of speech. This approach is most frequently adopted when it is really impossible for the translator to translate the original meaning literally. For example:

- Adam’s apple 喉结
- rest room 公用厕所, 洗手间
- stopwatch 秒表, 跑表
- white wine 白葡萄酒
- It rains cats and dogs. 大雨滂沱。

The above illustrations can not be translated literally, otherwise, the Chinese rendition would either cause confusion or simply make no sense at all, let alone the original meaning.

More often than not, literal translation and free translation may be alternately used in the process of translation, as illustrated by the following examples from Practice of Relevant Skill of this unit:

- There’s no pot so ugly it can’t find a lid.

Literal translation: 再丑的罐儿也不愁配个盖儿。Or: 罐儿再丑, 配个盖儿不犯愁。

Free translation: 再丑的姑娘也不愁找不到婆家。Or: 丑女不愁嫁。

- Little fish does not eat big fish.

Literal translation: 小鱼吃不了大鱼。

Free translation: 胳膊拧不过大腿。

- What the tongue says, the neck pays for.

Literal translation: 舌头说话,脖子还账。

Free translation: 舌头闯祸,脖子遭殃。

- What was hatched a hen must not try to be a rooster!

Literal translation: 孵出来是母鸡就别想冒充公鸡!

Free translation: 生就是个女人就别想冒充男人!

- A gift is the key to open the door closed against you.

Literal translation: 礼物是打开把你关在门外的房间的钥匙。

Free translation: 大门把你关在外,礼物送到门自开。

The above illustrations show clearly that literal translation and free translation are relative concepts. In other words, there is no absolute “literal”, nor entirely “free” version in the practice of translation, and overemphasizing either of them would result in ridiculous consequences. Let’s scrutinize the following two samples of literature translation.

Original English 1 : I love *tiger cat*. . . British movies on public television, fluffy blouses, the *nuclear family*. . . (Helen Snow, *My China Years*)

Chinese Version A: 我爱虎猫……(爱)电视上放映的英国影片,有绒毛的短衫,核心家庭……

Chinese Version B: 我喜欢豹猫……喜欢公共电视台播放的英国电影,喜欢蓬松柔软的棉毛衫,喜欢一夫一妻制的家庭……

Comment: Apparently, both of these two Chinese versions leave much room for improvement. In the first place, version A and B literally render “*tiger cat*” respectively as 虎猫 and 豹猫. Actually, this species of wild animal has nothing to do with the family life. Consulting an English-English dictionary may shed light on the answer: tiger cat, a striped or sometimes blotched tabby cat (虎纹家猫/豹斑家猫)。

Second, the phrase “nuclear family” is rendered as “核心家庭” by version A and “一夫一妻制家庭” by version B respectively. The former seems a bit too stiff, for most of the Chinese readers have hardly any idea of “核心家庭”. The latter, in contrast, seems to have gone too far as to distort the author’s original intention.

Therefore, neither of the above versions is desirable. A close examination of its

definition in an E-E dictionary may reveal its true meaning: nuclear family, a family group that consists only of father, mother and children. Therefore, the proper rendering of the phrase should be worded to this effect: a cozy small family, namely, the Chinese equivalent “小家庭”.

Revised Version: 我喜欢虎纹家猫……爱看公共电视台播放的英国影片, 爱穿蓬松的罩衫, 向往小家庭生活……

Original English 2: Mao Tse-tung was well bred, but inside he was made of steel, of hard resistance, of tough tissue—the kind of tissue the Boxers thought they had by magic, and bared their solar plexuses to foreign bullets. (ibid.)

Chinese Version A: 毛泽东有很好的教养, 内部是钢, 有坚强的抗力, 是由坚韧的材料制成的: 这是义和团设想的由于神力具有的、可以把腹部袒露给外国人的子弹的那种材料。

Chinese Version B: 毛泽东教养有素, 精神支柱铁铸钢打, 不怕高压, 是由坚韧的组织构成的。这种组织, 就是义和团认为他们通过魔法得到的那种组织——袒胸露体, 刀枪不入。

Comment: The word “tissue” can hardly be rendered into Chinese either in literal translation or free translation, nor could the metaphor “inside he was made of steel” be properly rendered without grasping the essence of the whole sentence. As we may see from the above, the former is freely rendered as “材料” and “组织”; the latter is rendered as “内部是钢” and “精神支柱铁铸钢打”—both fail to reflect the connotation of the original. By adopting translation skills such as amplification, omission, conversion and restructuring, we may revise the above Chinese versions as follows:

Revised Version: 毛泽东外表温文尔雅, 实际上却是钢筋铁骨, 坚韧不拔——从他身上可以看到当年义和团自信所具有的那种神力, 面对洋枪洋炮也敢袒胸露怀。

From the above analysis, we come to the conclusion that there is no obvious distinction between literal translation and free translation, nor is it necessary to distinguish one from the other. The key point for a translator to grasp is to comprehend the original thoroughly, and then put it into idiomatic Chinese. In the process of translation, specific approaches such as literal or free translation may be of some help, but we should avoid the two extremes. In the application of literal translation, we should endeavor to rid ourselves of stiff patterns and rigid adherence to translation

rules, trying to be flexible; while in the practice of free translation, we should be cautious of subjectivity, avoiding groundless affirmation or arbitrary fabrication. Whatever the circumstances are, we may alternate or combine these two approaches when it is necessary.

V. Translation Techniques

When it comes to translation techniques, we differ from those who tend to ignore them, or dismiss them lightly as something inconsequential. On the other hand, we should not exaggerate the function of “translation techniques”, and in no circumstances should we take them as almighty remedies.

Different kinds of materials to be translated require different stresses in their rendition. Scientific materials stress their preciseness; novels and stories, their plots and characters; poetry, the emotion; document translation, the form and wording, etc.

Generally speaking, the basic translation techniques that merit our attention and are to be applied in E-C and C-E translations include: (1) Diction (选词用字); (2) Amplification (增词法); (3) Omission (省略法); (4) Repetition (重复); (5) Conversion (转换); (6) Restructuring (词序调整); (7) Negation (正反交替); (8) Division (长句拆译). Of course, there are different opinions on the labels of translation techniques. For example, some consider subordination a technique, assuming it to be an inseparable link in the process of comprehension; others do not consider repetition itself as a technique, categorizing it as amplification; while quite a few scholars add the disposal of the passive voice, the rendering of technical terms, the rendering of long sentences, etc. to translation techniques, which, however, in the eyes of others, are not techniques at all but methods or approaches in tackling specific problems. Regardless of these controversies, this textbook aims at taking all these practical means of translation into consideration. Besides, it also offers a brief comparative study and analysis of E-C and C-E translation. And in the following units we are going to elaborate these translation techniques and methods one by one.

Last but not least, translation techniques alone cannot guarantee faithful and smooth rendition—we may make use of them, but should not rely completely on them. Apart from translation techniques, a mastery of general knowledge and

knowledge of the subject matter is of vital importance. In many cases, we can hardly do our translation well unless we have acquired adequate knowledge of the subject matter and the relevant background. As an experienced senior translator has pointed out: “The importance of the translator’s store of general knowledge—and of his/her knowledge of the subject matter can not be overemphasized, and it can almost be accepted as a rule that, given the required language proficiency, the greater the translator’s knowledge of the subject matter, the less arduously understanding occurs, and the more accurate his/her representation in the target language.”

In order to expand his/her scope of knowledge, a conscientious translator should always do two things on his/her own: (1) constantly exposing himself/herself to various reading materials on all subjects relevant to his/her work; (2) conscientiously consulting relevant background materials or reference materials on the subject dealt with so as to keep up with the latest developments of the branch of knowledge he/she works in.

Reflections and Practice

I Discuss the following questions.

1. What is the definition of translation? What kind of role does it play in our society?
2. What is the nature of translation? Do you agree with the author’s point of view? Why or why not?
3. How is translation generally categorized? Which of the categories are you familiar with?
4. How do you understand Yan Fu’s three-character guide “信、达、雅”? What’s your opinion on the principles or criteria of translation?
5. What is literal translation? What is free translation? What principles should a translator abide by when applying them to translation?
6. What do you know about translation techniques? Name a few of them and try to cite some examples.

II *Put the following sentences into Chinese, using either literal or free translation.*

1. Every life has its roses and thorns.
2. I'll have Lisa where I want her.
3. He carried his age astonishingly well.
4. She'd never again believe anything in trousers.
5. He was a dead shot. However, he met his Waterloo this time.
6. Nixon was pleased by the distinction, but not overwhelmed.
7. Yet China was a land of constant surprise and shifting impression.
8. After the failure of his last novel, his reputation stands on slippery ground.
9. Mrs. Sawyer looked radiant, too, and for the first time gobbled up her dinner like a little pig.
10. He walked at the head of the funeral procession, and every now and then wiped his crocodile tears with a big handkerchief.
11. It is the same old story of not being grateful for what we have until we lose it, of not being conscious of health until we are ill.
12. When we are in buoyant health, death is all but unimaginable. We seldom think of it. The days stretch out in an endless vista. So we go about our petty tasks, hardly aware of our listless attitude toward life.
13. It was the best of times, it was the worst of times; it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness; it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity; it was the season of the Light, it was the season of Darkness; it was the spring of Hope, it was the winter of Despair; we had everything before us, we had nothing before us; we were all going to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way.
14. A greeting card can warm a heart, hold a hand, lend an ear, pat a back, light up a face, tickle a funny bone, dry an eye, surprise a child, woo a sweetheart, toast a bride, welcome a stranger, wave a good-bye, shout a bravo, blow a kiss, mend a quarrel, ease a pain, boost a morale, stop a worry and start a tradition.

III *Compare the following different Chinese versions with the English text, paying attention to literal translation and free translation.*

1. Motto

All other things above
Are liberty and love;
Life would I gladly tender
For love: yet joyfully
Would love itself surrender
For liberty. (Petöfi: Liberty and Love)

译文 A

我一生最宝贵：
恋爱与自由。
为了恋爱的缘故，
生命可以舍去；
但为了自由的缘故，
我将欢欢喜喜地把恋爱舍去。

译文 B

生命诚可贵，
爱情价更高；
若为自由故，
二者皆可抛！

2. Evolution and Ethics

It may be safely assumed that, two thousand years ago, before Caesar set foot in southern Britain, the whole countryside visible from the windows of the room in which I write, was in what is called "the state of Nature." Except, it may be, by raising a few sepulchral mounds, such as those which still here and there, break the flowing contours of the downs, man's hands had made no mark upon it; and the thin veil of vegetation which overspread the broad-backed heights and the shelving sides of the coombs was unaffected by his industry. (Huxley: Evolution and Ethics, 1893)

译文 A《天演论》

赫胥黎独处一室之中,在英伦之南,背山而面野。槛外诸境,历历如在几下。乃悬想二千年前,当罗马大将凯撒未到时,此间有何景物。计惟有天造草昧,人功未施,其借征人境者,不过几处荒坟,散见坡陀起伏间。而灌木丛林,蒙茸山麓,未经删治如今日者,则无疑也。

译文 B《进化与伦理》

可以有把握地想象,二千年前,当凯撒到达不列颠南部之前,从我正在写作的这间屋子的窗口可以看到整个原野是一种所谓“自然状态”。也许除了若干突起的坟墓已在几处破坏了连绵的丘陵的轮廓以外,此地未经人工修葺整治。薄薄的植被笼罩着广阔的高地和峡谷的斜坡,还没有受到人的劳动的影响。

Unit 2

Diction

单元要点概述

实用翻译训练英译汉: Olympics Close With a Bang and a Double-Decker Bus

实用翻译训练汉译英: 我们的历史伟业

- I. 英汉词字层次上的对等关系
- II. 英语词义辨析法
- III. 英语词语翻译技巧
- IV. 汉译英的选词用字

本单元阐述了翻译中的遣词用字问题,首先用对比的方式归纳了英汉词字层次上的5种对应情况:(1)词字对等;(2)多词同义;(3)一词多义;(4)词义交织;(5)无对等词语。

接着从4个角度探讨了如何判断某一英语词语的准确含义,即(1)根据构词法;(2)根据指代关系;(3)根据上下文或词的搭配;(4)根据不同学科或专业门类确定词义。

在词义辨析的基础上,本单元归纳了英语词语翻译的8种常用技巧:(1)推演法;(2)移植法;(3)引申法;(4)替代法;(5)释义法;(6)合并法;(7)图形法以及(8)音译法。

汉译英的遣词用字问题与英译汉的情况有所不同。英译汉时我们输出的是自己所熟悉的汉语词汇、语法结构,而汉译英则需要在大量不那么熟悉的词语中做出取舍,然后再去套用语法规则,因此往往会显得力不从心——这就是为什么我们往往会感到汉译英比英译汉难度大的原因所在。

Practice of the Relevant Skill

1. E-C Translation

Olympics Close With a Bang and a Double-Decker Bus

With another dramatic fireworks display on Sunday evening at the National Stadium here, the Beijing Olympics came to a dazzling close, ending two weeks of spectacular athletic performances during an Olympic competition that was surprisingly free of protests or the disruptions that some, including Beijing, had anticipated.

Unlike in the opening ceremony, with its orderly parade of countries and their athletes, the closing ceremony brought flag bearers congregating in the middle and athletes filing in somewhat haphazardly and many dressed less formally.

In the handover ceremony for the 2012 London Games, a red double-decker bus entered the stadium just after 9 p. m. , followed by three cyclists. The bus then opened into a stage with Jimmy Page, the Led Zeppelin guitarist, performing “Whole Lotta Love” with the British singer Leona Lewis, and David Beckham, the soccer star, taking a soccer ball from a young Chinese girl, handing the games off to London.

Beijing had staked everything on the Games, galvanizing the nation, spending billions to rebuild the ancient capital, erecting fantastic stadiums and producing the kind of opening and closing ceremonies that can only be created in China, with tens of thousands of performers dazzling a global television audience the vibrant displays of color and mass synchronization.

The 29th Olympiad was supposed to be China’s coming out party, a show of its rising economic and political power and its reemergence as a global power. And in many ways it was. But the Games also turned into a dramatic show of this country’s athletic power, with China hauling in 51 gold medals, enough to top the gold medal tables and unseat the United States, which won 36.

With Chinese fans chanting “*Zhongguo Jiayou!*” or “Go China!”, and hundreds of millions of people tuning in everyday by television, some of the biggest audiences in television history, the games served to strengthen pride in the country at a time of rising nationalism.

Grave concerns about pollution and athletes donning masks disappeared after the fifth day, after heavy rains cleansed the skies and sun broke through for the opening of the track and field events. Whether China's weather tamperers really seeded clouds and created rains that were perfectly timed to clear up the weather is still unclear.

Notes and Explanations

1. close with a bang 隆重闭幕; with a bang [美] 进行得非常顺利, 非常成功
2. free of protests or the disruptions 没有出现抗议或干扰活动
3. orderly parade 井然有序的列队游行; parade *n.* 游行, 列队行进盛况
4. Led Zeppelin 齐柏林乐队
5. "Whole Lotta Love" 直译: "全部的爱"; Lotta <口> = lot of 许多
6. stake everything on 在……上竭尽全力; stake *vt.* 以……为赌注; 拿……担保
7. galvanizing the nation 激发了全国热情; galvanize *vt.* 通电流于, 刺激, 使兴奋
8. the vibrant displays of color and mass synchronization 活力四射、五彩缤纷、整齐划一的演出
9. coming out party 崭露头角的聚会
10. unseat *vt.* 剥夺……席位; 使失去资格 un + seat
11. donning mask 戴防毒面罩; don *vt.* 披上, 穿上, 戴上
12. tune in 调整频率(以接收)
13. tamperer *n.* 填炮眼工, tamper + er, 此处可意译为“气象技术人员”

2. C-E Translation

我们的历史伟业

从19世纪中叶到20世纪中叶的100年间,中国人民的一切奋斗,都是为了实现祖国的独立和民族的解放,彻底结束民族屈辱的历史。这个历史伟业,我们已经完成了。从20世纪中叶到21世纪中叶的100年间,中国人民的一切奋斗,则是为了实现祖国的富强、人民的富裕和民族的伟大复兴。这个历史伟业,我们党领导全国人民已经奋斗了50年,取得了巨大的进展,再经过50年的奋斗,也必将胜利完成。

Notes and Explanations

1. 历史伟业 great historic cause

2. 19 世纪中叶 the mid-19th century
3. 祖国的独立和民族的解放 independence of our country and liberation of our nation
4. 彻底结束 put an end to...once and for all
5. 民族屈辱 national humiliation
6. (实现)民族的伟大复兴 (make) the nation immensely rejuvenated

By “diction” we mean the proper choice of words and phrases in the process of translation to fit their context.

In the practice of translation, it has always been an arduous task for the translator to find the right equivalent to the target language. Great care is called for in the translation of “familiar” English words into Chinese, as their meanings vary with the change in collocation or context. Take the following simple sentence for example:

- Tension is building up.

Without context, both “tension” and “build up” may have various explanations. Thus this English sentence may be translated into different Chinese expressions accordingly:

- 形势紧张起来。
- 张力在增大。
- 电压在增加。
- 压力在增强。

.....

As a noted linguist has observed, “the meaning of a word is its use in the language”, and “each word, when used in a new context, is a new word”. The above example is a good illustration of this saying. More examples may be found in the above Practice of the Relevant Skill, such as “close with a bang”(隆重闭幕), “stake everything on”(竭尽全力), “galvanizing the nation”(激发了全国热情), “fantastic stadiums”(一座座美轮美奂的体育场馆), “the vibrant displays of color and mass synchronization”(活力四射、五彩缤纷、整齐划一的演出), “coming out party”(崭露头角的聚会), “unseat the United States”(将美国队拉下金牌榜第一的宝座), “China’s weather tamperers”(中国气象技术人员), seeded clouds(施行人工降雨), and so on.

In comparison with Chinese, English words are generally more flexible both in form and in meaning; therefore, it is often a hard task for a translator to find their