

to the recent issues in 1999. For a macro-structure of the article, both the earliest issues and the latest issues follow the traditional Chinese discourse pattern of *qui-cheng-jun-he*. For the micro-structure of the article, the sections of the earliest issues still follow the traditional model of *qui-cheng-jun-he*, while the section of the latest issues present different opinions for interaction and argument. The earlier issues, limited by the utterance of mono-phony voice, tend to be narrative and sentimental while the latest issues, full of polyphony voices, tend to be expository and argumentative. On the other hand, in the later issues of *Sinornama* the translators pay more attention to the “accuracy” and “readability” of English version for widespread prevalence. The transition of literal translation to both semantic and communication translation signifies the writer’s consciousness of his responsibility to integrate the readers with text. So, the readers can send the letters to the editors to express their opinions in the column “Letters to the Editor.” Undoubtedly, without the readers, without the existence of *Sinornama*; it is the editor’s consciousness that leads to the tendency of writer-responsible writing with increasing ages. This tendency contributes to a more communicative Chinese-English translation.

3.2 Translation as a Communicative Activity

Speech is the utterance of mind. Ordinarily, everyone was born with language acquisition device by which one was able to learn language. Lin (1998) sets a model for the process of translating, namely, analysis, transfer, restructuring and testing. Analysis is the first step to understand the original meaning of text. We can analyze the text from two levels: one is the analysis of semantics involving lexical meaning and

sentence meaning; the other is the analysis of syntax. The first level suggests that the meaning of one word should be analyzed in detail. For example, in Chinese we use Chiao-chang 校長 for the leader of elementary school, secondary school, college or university, but in English there are different terms for Chiao-chang 校長. The leader of elementary school or secondary school is called “principal,” while the leader of a college or a university is called “president.” The second level reminds us to notice the basic type of the sentence—S→NP + VP (S: sentence, NP: Noun Phrase, VP: Verb Phrase). If the word order of Chinese and English is similar, it is easy to restructure the sentences. If not so, we have to find what the true subject and predicate are. For example, in Chinese we say “他肚子餓”, we have to say “He is hungry” rather than “His stomach is hungry.” The subject 他肚子 in Chinese is equal to the subject “he” in English rather than “his stomach.” Besides, a good translation should be processed by testing. For example, in Chinese “不舒服” is often translated as “uncomfortable.” In this sense, if we say “我身體覺得很不舒服” in Chinese, it is correct to translate it into the English sentence as “I feel very uncomfortable.” But the case is not often like this. For example, if we translate “他不借我錢，我真的好不舒服” into English, we would say “He did not lend me any money. I felt very unhappy” rather than “He did not lend me any money. I felt very uncomfortable,” because physical pains are expressed in terms of “uncomfortable” and emotional dissatisfaction is expressed by the emotional term like “unhappy.” By doing so, we may ensure that semantic meaning is clear, syntax is correct and collocation of words is accurate.

Indeed, grammatical competence enables one to undertake translation. Either Chinese or English can be analyzed according to the parts of speech such as nouns,

verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, conjunctions, prepositions, interjections and so on. For example, the sentence "The old man and his small grandson took a walk leisurely in the park (這老人和他的小孫子在公園裡悠閒地散步)" can be segmented into the parts of speech like this: The (這)→Article, old (老)→Adjective, man (人)→Noun, and (和)→Conjunction, his (他的)→Pronoun, small (小)→Adjective, grandson (孫子)→Noun, in (在...裡)→Preposition, the→Article, park (公園)→Noun, leisurely (悠閒地)→Adverb, took(散)→Verb (past tense), a→Article, walk (步)→Noun. The deep structure of a sentence is NP(Noun Phrase)+VP (Verbial Phrase) or NP+VP+PP (Prepositional Phrase). In the process of translation, the deep structure of this sentence is NP (man, grandson) + VP (take a walk) + PP (in park), which is transformed into the surface structure as "The old man (Article + Adjective + N) " + "and (Conjunction)" + "his small son (Pronoun + NP)" + "took a walk(V + NP)" + "leisurely (Adv.)" + "in the park(P + NP)" (Lin, 1998).

In practice we should pay attention to some points of translation. As Lin (1999) suggests, the words of translation should be well-formed, acceptable and idiomatic. Using general terms and high frequency words will be better than new coinages. The length of each sentence should be reasonable to keep the fluency of sentences. It is better to keep every paragraph not too big and in equal length. The translator has to examine the original carefully so that he won't distort the meanings. A faithful translation attempts to reproduce the precise contextual meaning of the original within the constraints of the TL grammatical structures. Communicative translation attempts to render the exact contextual meaning of the original in such a way that both content and language are readily acceptable and comprehensible to the readership. As an art of

representation, translating requests to attain a affective communication, in which the translator must have a good command of techniques in translation. A communicative activity may serve as the framework of translation to bring it into the real life situations and to induce the learner to do translations for a specific purpose.

Communicative activities reflect the different situations in daily life and lay a good foundation of being successful with communication. According to Grant (1987, p.14), "A communicative activity is any classroom exercise that helps the students to use the language they have learned in the classroom in real life." Frequent criticisms of translation are that it is not natural, wasteful and time-consuming. It is text-bound and not communicative because it involves no oral interaction. The materials for translation are too literary or scientific to be suited to the general needs of the language learner (Duff, 1989). Therefore in designing the activity of translation, the teacher should consider the materials to be contextual and practical in everyday life. Take *The China Post* for example, there is a column called "Trusty Translation" in it. This column is asked to write five linking sentences respectively in Chinese and English as a paragraph to express a complete idea and the writer of this column will make a comparison between the general translation and the trusty translation to let the readers know what standard English translation is. This is a contextualized way for students to practice translation. The level of translation is not limited to the level of the isolated sentences, however, it motivates the readers to translate Chinese into English in a meaningful way. Following are two examples from the column of "Trusty Translation" in *The China Post*:

Example One (1999, January , p.3):

1. 今天在路上我遇到一個外國人向我問路。
 - A. Today on the road I met a foreigner asked me the road.
 - B. On the street today, a foreigner stopped me and asked me for directions.
2. 他說英語的速度很快，我幾乎聽不懂他在說什麼。
 - A. He spoke very quick English, and I almost could not understand what he said.
 - B. He spoke English so quickly that I could hardly understand him.
3. 我太緊張了，以至於說不出完整的句子和單字。
 - A. I was too nervous to speak complete sentences and words.
 - B. I felt so nervous that I couldn't speak in complete sentences.
4. 這可能是因為平常使用英語的機會太少。
 - A. This was maybe because I don't have opportunities to use my English in everyday practice.
 - B. This may be because I have few chances to speak English in daily life.
5. 所以連這麼簡單的會話都說不好。
 - A. So not even an easy conversational English can be spoken by me.
 - B. As a result, I can't even get through a simple conversation.

Example Two (1999, March 21, p. 3):

1. 上星期日是我既忙碌又快樂的一天。
 - A. Last Sunday was my most happy and busy day.
 - B. Last Sunday I was very busy but also very happy.
2. 一大早我就起床做完所有的作業。
 - A. I woke up in the early morning and do all my homework.

B. I got up bright and early and did all my homework.

3. 整理過自己的房間後，我幫媽媽拖地。

A. After cleaned up my room, I helped mom to clean the floor.

B. After cleaning my room, I helped my mom mop the floor.

4. 下午我和妹妹搭乘捷運去淡水。

A. In the afternoon, I and my younger sister took the mass rapid transportation to Tam-sui.

B. In the afternoon, my younger sister and I took the MRT to Tamsui.

5. 晚上看過電視，我用其餘的時間來準備星期一的功課。

A. After watching TV at night, I used the rest time to do Monday schoolwork.

B. I watched some TV and then spent the rest of the night preparing Monday's schoolwork.

A number of examples like the above in *The China Post* are both practical and close to the lives of students. Teachers may divide students into groups, let them make a comparison between A and B translations and make an oral report. Teacher can offer some hints suggested in this column of *The China Post* according to the levels of students. After that, students playing the role of a Chinese and an American, may do a pair work to perform an oral interpretation in front of the class. On the other hand, the content of the text could be a situational dialogue in our daily life. Lin (1998, pp.14-15) gives us a meaningful example:

1. A: 好久沒看到你了。

2. B: 啊，我一個禮拜都忙著觀察慧星。

3. A: 你看到什麼嗎？
4. B: 是的，我看到銀河，當然也看到慧星。
5. A: 對了，剛才導師正在找你。
6. B: 他現在在那裡？
7. A: 我想他在教師休息室。
8. B: 但是上課鈴響了，我得去洗個手。
9. A: 還有，我們的工友要向你借照相機。
10. B: 沒問題，我借給他。

1. A: I have not seen you for a long time.
2. B: Oh, I have been busy with observing the comet during the whole week.
3. A: What have you seen?
4. B: Yes, I have seen the Milky Way. Of course, I have also seen the comet.
5. A: By the way, our adviser was just looking for you.
6. B: Where is he now?
7. A: I think that he is in the lounge.
8. B: But the bell is ringing for class. I have to go to wash my hands.
9. A: Moreover, our custodian wants to borrow your camera.
10. B: There is no problem. I will lend it to him.

Basically, the materials for Chinese-English translation should be communicative in some degree, which would create a context to support learning in the process of translation. The teachers may structure the situation so that learners have to overcome an information gap or solve a problem. On the other hand, facing the reality

of translation and oral-interpretation often encountered outside the classroom, teachers should regard language not only a functional instrument, but also a form of social behavior. The practice of translation may base dialogues and role-plays on school experience. Improvisation and large-scale simulations activities may serve as challenging tasks in the actual life. Following are three communicative activities of translation adapted from Duff's *Translation* (1989) for teachers' reference:

1. Role play: An interview

Preparation:

- (1) Take a brief Chinese transcript of an interview from radio talk or the website as the task sheet.
- (2) Make up enough task sheets for the whole class.

Procedures:

- (1) Ask the students to work on the Chinese transcript in groups of four to six. They discuss how they would translate the expressions into English.
- (2) Tell the students to imagine that they have been asked by the editor of the local newspaper to translate the talk or interview. According to the interview, ask a pair of students in each group to perform the role playing in English in front of the class. Ask the others to note down suggestions.
- (3) Conduct a class discussion with all the groups together. Find out from the students which expressions are most difficult to be translated.

2. Simulation

Preparation:

(1) Chosen the dialogues passages from the popular film. Prepare Chinese transcript as the task sheet.

(2) Make enough copies for the whole class.

Procedures:

(1) Teacher briefly introduces the situation for simulation according to the plot of the film.

(2) Ask the students to work in groups doubling the number of roles in the dialogue passages. Each group discusses and translates the dialogue into English.

(3) Half of the members in a group perform the dialogue passages of the film in Chinese. The other half performs the dialogue passages of the film in English.

(4) Compare the dramatic effects between Chinese performance and English performance from the perspective of translation.

(5) Teacher may prepare the videotapes of the film voiced respectively in Chinese and English and let students to see the films for making a comparison.

3. Information gap: Reverse translation

Preparation:

(1) Choose two passages of ten to fifteen lines, one in English and the other in the mother tongue Chinese. The texts should be preferably be self-contained, that is, easy to understand even out of context.

(2) Prepare a task sheet for each and make copies for half the class.

Procedures:

(1) Divide the class into two even groups, A and B. Give Group A a task sheet A,

Group B, task sheet B. Out of class, the students translate their respective texts.

Group A from English to Chinese, Group B from Chinese into English.

(2) Each student chooses a partner from the opposite group. They exchange translations but not original texts. Their task is to translate the translation they have been given, either back into English (Group B) or back into Chinese (Group A). A strict time-limit of 20 minutes should be set for writing to be done on the spot.

(3) Next, ask each student to rejoin his or her partner, and:

- a. Discuss any difficulties they have had. They should refer only to the translations, not to the original text.
- b. Read through each other's work.
- c. Exchange the original texts and compare them with the reverse translation.