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翻译中的显化现象研究

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摘 要:显化是译者在译文中挑明原文暗含信息的一种策略,而原文暗含信息可能是语言差异或语境缺失决定的。考察翻译文本发现,语言显化并不属于严格意义上的显化,而语境显化是译者的普遍冲动,有时容易导致“过度显化”,反而影响目标读者获得相当的语境效果。因此,译者如何把握语境显化的“度”是关键,关联理论衍生出的“推理空间等距原则”可资遵循。

关键词:显化;关联理论;语境;推理空间等距原则

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显化(Explicitation)概念最先由法国人 Jean-Paul Vinay 和 Jean Darbelnet 提出,指的是“将源语中暗含的,但可以从语境或情境中推理出的信息在译语中加以明示的方法”^[1],与之相对的是隐化(Implicitation)^[2]。这一概念在随后的翻译研究著述中被不同的学者冠以“策略”(strategy)、“技巧”(technique)或“方法”(process)等(见 Blum-Kulka 1986; Weissbrod 1992; Baker 1996; Olohan & Baker 2000; Pápai 2004),其外延和内涵不断拓展丰富,继而分化出两大阵营:语内显化研究(如 Blum-Kulka 1986, veras 1998)和语际显化研究(如柯飞 2005、胡开宝等 2009、胡显耀等 2009)。这些研究多半是基于语料库展开的,但是“显化本身不具备概念地位,导致语料库操作难以全面展开”^[3],因此仍旧采用传统研究方法,采集了 26 篇英汉对照和 37 篇汉英对照的文章,逐字逐句考察其中的显化现象,发现语言结构差异导致的显化并不属于严格意义上的显化,而其它情形的显化可以用 Sperber 和 Wilson(1986/1995)关联理论的“语境”概念予以统摄,并进一步揭示:译者进行语境显化的关键在于遵循“推理空间等距原则”,维持推理悬念,才能有节、有度。

一、语言差异显化

匈牙利学者 Klaudy 对显化进行了最为系统的分类,提出了强制性(Obligatory)、选择性(Optional)、语用性(Pragmatic)、翻译本身固有(Translation-inherent)四种显化类型^[3]。强制性显化源于不同语言在句法、语义方面等的差异所致(见 Barkhudarov 1975; Vaseva 1980; Klaudy 1993, 1994; Englund Dimitrova 1993),而其他三类显化则与文体、文化等相关。考察翻译文本发现,由于英、汉两种语言在形式特征上的差异,英汉互译中皆有强制性语言显化现象,显化主要表现在英语中被动语态的施事主语、省略、替代、句际衔接、笼统词义等方面。

(一)英语被动语态施事主语在汉译中显化

英语的被动语态往往隐含施事主语,但翻译为汉语主动句时要求有灵主语,因此在译文中都显化出相应的主语,如(例中英语斜体、汉语着重号皆为作者所加,起强调作用,下同):

1. Cherie's been told about a handy super-market where we can buy some food in Brindisi, a town on the southern east coast of Italy where we are headed.

有人告诉切莉,在我们前往的意大利南方东海滨小城布林迪西有个方便的超市,可以在那里买些食物。(摘自 Ian Dunwoodie 著 *Journey A by Train: Making Tracks in Europe* 张莉译)

原文“Cherie's been told”中隐含的被动语态施事主语“[by someone]”在译文中显化出主语“人”。

2. Perhaps there are dark alleyways where a Muscovite can buy the real thing—unseen, without fear of being labeled reactionary.

也许在小巷深处莫斯科人还可以买到真正的冰淇淋——那里没人注意,也不必担心别人说他反动。(摘自 Peter Richard 著 *Biking Through Russia* 南左敏译)

原文过去分词“unseen”、被动语态“being labeled”隐含的两处泛指主语“[by anyone]”在译文中显化。

(二)英语省略、替代显化在汉译中显化

英语行文尽量避免重复,因此常常使用省略和替代(借助代词、介词等),而汉语没有相应语言形式(代词他、她、它使用频率较英语低),而大多借助词汇重复来指称同一对象,如:

3. I hardly ever eat ice cream at home, but became addicted to the Russian variety during a brief visit in 1978.

在美国,我几乎不吃冰淇淋,但在1978年对俄罗斯的一次短暂访问中却迷上了俄罗斯品种的冰淇淋。(摘自 Peter Richard 著 *Biking Through Russia* 南左敏译)

原文为了避免重复,用“variety”来指代“ice cream”,译文中却不得不遵循汉语表达习惯,恢复其指代的“冰淇淋”。

4. We detest abstract art and produce more of it than all the rest of the world put together.

我们对抽象艺术深恶痛绝;但所创作的抽象艺术品却超过世界上其它国家的总和。(摘自 John Steinbeck 著 *Americans: A Definition* 王

桂珍译)

原文用代词“it”来指代“abstract art”,但译文中也只能显化为抽象艺术品,否则不知所云。

(三)汉语隐含施事主语在英译中显化

汉语句子常常隐含施事主语,而且一个句子常常串联多个动词,有行云流水之感,译为英语时却不得不补上主语,根据动词适当断句,否则难以成句。如:

5. 干得很顺手,上汽车没到三分钟,一个钱包就到手了,鼓鼓囊囊的,看来钱不少。

Three minutes after he stepped on the crowded bus, he had succeeded in pilfering a very full money purse. (摘自祝承玉《钱包》何志范译)

原文几个小句均为“零主语”,翻译为英语时却不得不加上隐含的主语“他(he)”。

6. 故乡的风筝时节,是春二月,倘听到沙沙的风轮声,仰头便能看见一个淡墨色的蟹风筝或嫩蓝色的蜈蚣风筝。(摘自鲁迅《风筝》刘士聪译)

In my hometown, kites were flown in early spring. When you heard the whirring of wind-wheels and looked up, you saw a darkish crab-kite or one resembling a centipede of limpid blue.

译文显化了原文隐含的泛指主语“你(you)”和修饰名词“hometown”的隐含所有格“我的(my)”。

(四)汉语句际衔接关系显化

汉语句子的逻辑关系常常在语意中自含,少有连接词明示,文言文尤为如此;而英语译文受英语句法所限,两个语义相关的小句(clause)必须有连接词相连才能组成完整的句子(sentence)。如:

7. 知彼知己,百战不殆;不知彼而知己,一胜一负;不知彼不知己,每战必殆。

You can fight a hundred battles without defeat if you know the enemy as well as yourself. You will win one battle and lose on battle if you know yourself but leave yourself in the dark about the enemy. You will lose every battle if you leave both the enemy and yourself in the dark. [4]

原文句读明了,但文意暗含。译文将原文分句断为三个句子,每个句子都不得不添加了主语“you”和假设关系词“if”。

8. 燕子去了,有再来的时候;杨柳枯了,有再青的时候;桃花谢了,有再开的时候。

Swallows may have gone, *but* there is a time of return; willow trees may have died back, *but* there is a time of regreening; peach blossoms may have fallen, *but* they will bloom again. (摘自朱自清《匆匆》朱纯深译)

此例与例10类似,译文添加了三个“but”连接小句,同时挑明了转折关系。

(五)英汉语笼统词义在互译时显化

英汉语某些词汇的语义场有别。原文词汇更为笼统,而在译文中需要点明具体词义,翻译时相当于将上义词译为下义词,如:

9. They no longer have a *brother or uncle* or father or grandfather who has been involved on the farm.

他们不再有从事农场工作的兄弟、叔伯、父亲或祖父。(摘自Ed Haag著*When The Country Hosts The City* 卿润译)

原文含糊的“brother”和“uncle”在译文显化为“兄弟”、“叔伯”。

10. 于是在一片“识时务者为俊杰”、“浪子回头金不换”、“人文精神又回来了”的啧啧赞叹声中,亲戚们来往走动得更勤了。

And so to the tune of “the superior person is *he (she)* who knows the times,” “the profligate returned is worth *his (her)* weight in gold,” and “the spirit of humanity is revived” and so on, relatives come and go even more frequently. (摘自徐坤《亲戚们》朱虹译)

女权意识在汉语中的影响或体现并不大,因此不存在有标记的泛指词汇,而英语却要兼顾两个性别,泛指时“he”和“she”必定出双入对、形影不离,故原文中“俊杰”和“浪子”都显化出性别“he (she)”。

上述例子中的显化都源于语言系统的异质性,并不是原文作者有意隐含某些信息,而译者在翻译时貌似“增添”了一些语言成分,也并非有意“增益”意义,此类显化其实并不能称作严格意义上的显化。笔者发现,更多情形下,显化是译者出

于交际冲动,主动在译文中添加连接词或解释性成分以增强连贯性。这一现象可通过关联理论加以解释。

二、关联理论与语境显化

根据关联理论,人类交际是一个明示—推理(*ostensive-inference*)的过程,成功的交际便是交际双方实现最佳关联(*optimal relevance*):说话者的明示可以让听话者通过适度的努力(结合语境进行推理)领会说话者的本意,同时说话者的本意也的确值得听话者付出相应努力,即产生足够的语境效果(*contextual effects*)。

关联理论里的语境是一个心理概念,指的是听话者对世界的假设,也就是理解言语时使用的一组假设(*the set of premises used in interpreting utterance*)^[5]。因为翻译促成了原文作者与译语读者间的“二次交际”(secondary communication)^[6],翻译的语境基本囊括读者阅读译文时的所有认知储备和心理准备,即上下文和背景知识。译者的任务就是在译文中建立新的最佳关联潜势,达成新的明示—推理平衡,显化即是弥合读者语境缺口的一种策略。

(一)上下文显化

上下文显化主要包括衔接关系及言外之意的显化,使行文更为流畅,如:

11. Sitting on a log, I unwrapped a sandwich and surveyed the rugged scenery. Two turbulent streams joined to form a clear, deep pool before roaring down a heavily wooded canyon.

坐在根圆木上,一边打开三明治,一边欣赏着山间的景色。只见两条湍急的小溪汇流在一起,先是形成一个清澈、幽深的水潭,接着又沿草木丛生的峡谷奔泻而下。(摘自Glenn Wasson著*A Wing and A Prayer* 冯国华、吴群译)

原文的“and”表示前后动作在时间上的连续,但相较译文中的“一边……一边”更为含蓄;而后文的“before”表示时间上的先后,译文中的“先是……接着”显然更为直白。而“只见”是无中生有,起过渡作用,但并未增益原文的含义。如若隐去,于语意无碍。

12. But that was the summer and ten years ago. Now the winter had come again. The ducks were supplemented by seagulls fleeing from the

coast. The soft green of the trees had changed to wiry branches that snapped in your face as you pushed through them.

这一切都是夏日的往事了,过去十年了,现在又是冬天了。河里,鸭子有飞来的海鸥做伴。岸上,树木已经叶落枝枯,穿行在树丛中,拨开刮在身上的枯枝,听到的是枯枝噼噼啪啪的折断声。(摘自 Michael Bartlett 著 *Good-bye* 冯国华、吴群译)

译文平白增添了“河里”和“岸上”,将空间关系挑明。如果按下不表,译文仍旧通顺。

13. After several minutes I became aware of a slight movement near my feet. A broken but still living bee was feebly emerging from the sand.

功夫不大,我感觉脚旁什么东西动了一下,低头一看,发现一个遍体鳞伤的蜜蜂挣扎着从沙土里钻了出来。(摘自 Glenn Wasson 著 *A Wing and A Prayer* 冯国华、吴群译)

原文没有明示“低头一看”,只是根据“脚旁”自然的推理。对原文无伤大雅,对译文饶有裨益。

14. 秋并不是名花,也并不是美酒,那一种半开、半醉的状态,在领略秋的过程上,是不合适的。

Unlike famous flowers which are most attractive when half opening, or good wine which is most tempting when one is half drunk, autumn, however, is best appreciated in its entirety. (摘自郁达夫《故都的秋》张培基译)

原文的隐含意思:名花半开、名酒半醉“最为美妙”,而赏秋则必须“完全领略”为宜,在译文中分别显化为“most attractive”、“most tempting”、“in its entirety”

15. 你以为当官的都活得挺舒坦?没有那事儿。官场不好混。左右逢源,上下照应,按下葫芦起来瓢,没有金刚钻还真揽不了这瓷器活儿。

An official's life is not a bed of roses! Steering through official waters, placating right and left, attending to the high and the low. It's no joke, I'm telling you I get rid of one thorny problem and another crops up. It's not any diamond that can work on such delicate china. (摘自谌容《活着的滋味》朱红译)

原文的俗语比喻“按下葫芦起来瓢”指棘手问题此起彼伏,在译文中直接显化为本意“get rid of

one thorny problem and another crops up”。

(二)背景知识显化

背景知识一般为文化承载词(culturally-loaded words),是源语读者共享而译语文化缺失的历史、地理、文艺、币制等特有知识。背景知识的显化是为了“便利不懂外文之读者,如不懂外文之读者读之不懂,翻译者不能说尽到责任。”^[7]。

16. When Constantinople, the last survival of antiquity, was captured by the Turks, Greek refugees in Italy were welcomed by humanists. Vasco da Gama and Columbus enlarged the world, and Copernicus enlarged the heavens.

[十五世纪中]君士坦丁堡为土耳其所占。自希腊罗马之衰,古文化残存于世,仅君士坦丁堡一地。既陷,寓居于君士坦丁堡之希腊学人,相率流亡意大利,意大利倾慕希腊人文之学者,迎为上宾。达迦玛绕好望角抵印度,哥伦布西行发现新地,而世界为之扩大。哥白尼立日中心之说,而宇宙为之扩大。(摘自 Bertrand Russell 著 *A History of Western Philosophy* 许国璋译)

原文暗含许多西方历史知识,如达迦玛绕好望角抵印度、哥伦布发现新大陆、哥白尼创立日心说。如若不了解相关背景,则理解原文都相当困难,因此译文将之显化在词句中,使之更加简明易懂,连贯通顺。

17. 我同书籍,即将分离。我虽非英雄,颇有垓下之感,即无可奈何。

Soon I'll part with my books; I'll have to, the way the ancient hero Xiang Yu parted with his favorite lady Yu Ji at Gaixia. (摘自孙犁《书籍》刘士聪译)

垓下“霸王别姬”为中国百姓熟知的历史典故,但译为英语时必须补出背景知识,否则译语读者难以理解。

18. “只在此山中,云深不知处,”要找到你决心要回的那一封,耗费的时间和精力,往往数倍于回信本身。

As the poet was told about the recluse he was looking for: “I know he's in these mountains, but in this mist I can't tell where.” The time and energy you would spend to find the letter you have decided to answer would be several times that needed to write the reply it self.

(摘自余光中《尺素寸心》David Pollard 译)

原文涉及汉语的诗文出处,因此需点明诗文的背景,便于读者将其与上下文联系起来。

19. 这时你会真心佩服昔人所造的两个字“麦浪”,若不是妙手偶得,便确是经过锤炼的语言的精华。

One is here reminded of the Chinese expression *mai lang* meaning “*rippling wheat*” and cannot help admiring our forefathers’ ingenuity in coining such a happy phrase. It must have been either the brainwave of a clever scholar, or a linguistic gem sanctioned by long usage. (摘自茅盾《白杨礼赞》张培基译)

原文“麦浪”以汉语拼音形式音译到英语中,因此在照搬的同时需加上解释。

20. As a painter, his vision was almost always advanced. He favored subjects from daily life in natural poses, although his execution was often tight and linear to the *point of academicism*.

他喜欢从自然形态的日常生活中寻找题材,虽然他的画法常常与墨守成规的传统主义观点紧密相连。(摘自 *Gustave Caillebotte (1848 — 1894): Square in Argenteuil (Early 1880s)* 易莹译)

对于书画界外行而言,西方的艺术流派知之甚少,译文明示“传统主义观点”(the point of academicism)的特点——墨守成规,有助于读者理解文中主人公的作画风格。

21. 彼时故宫门票刚从五角涨到十块,事先没得到通知的吾辈小无产阶级知识分子导游一下子被打得措手不及,只好在带亲戚团出游到了门口时,买好门票把他们都恭请进去,然后以“有事”为名把自己留在了故宫院墙外边。

Because the admission fee has risen *twenty times* from fifty fen to ten yuan, and we the proletarian intelligentsia were caught by surprise. All we could do was to buy tickets for the host of relatives on our hands and leave them at the gate with the excuse that we had business. (摘自徐坤《亲戚们》朱虹译)

原文涉及外国人不熟知的中国币制,译文中解释了“角”与“块”两个货币单位的关系(译文中添加了“twenty times”),显化了故宫门票涨幅之

大。

可见,语境显化取决于译者对读者语境的预设,可酌情为之、灵活机动。然而,译者的自由裁度偶尔也会导致“过度显化”,反而破坏了明示—推理平衡,无法达成最佳关联。

三、翻译中的“过度”显化

翻译的显化体现了的译者主体性,而译者一旦“忘情”,将自己对原文进行推理得出的语境效果直接纳入译文,剥夺了译文读者推理的权力和乐趣,无异于越俎代庖,多此一举。如:

22. “Don’t you know that I only love you in the world — you, *who are a stone to me*.”

“你难道不知道我爱的只有你?你对我就象石头一样冥顽不灵。”^[8]

原文暗喻的喻体“stone”,即汉语“石头”,在两种语言文化中都有冰冷、坚硬的涵义,都可以比喻人与人之间冷酷、无情,而译文中将“stone”的喻义显化为“冥顽不灵”不但有失偏颇,而且多此一举。

23. He decided, in his bed at the hospital, to end it all.

Looking out the window, staring up at the stars, he wished them out of existence, and they weren’t there any more. Then he wished all other people out of existence and the hospital became strangely quiet even for a hospital. Next, the world, and he found himself suspended in a void. He got rid of his body quite as easily and then took the final step of willing himself out of existence.

Nothing happened.

耶和华躺在医院的病床上,决意了断一切。他凝望着窗外,瞪着天上的星星,想要它们消失。得,星星消失了!接着,他要医院里所有的人都消失。于是,本来就很清静的医院一下子变得无声无息,静得出奇了。随之,他又想要整个世界都消失,整个世界也就消失了。这时,他觉得自己在虚空中缥缈,轻而易举地就游离到了体外。最后,他想让自己也消失,却没能如愿以偿。(摘自 Fredric Brown 著 *The Solipsist* 冯国华、吴群译)

原文步步铺垫,最后一句“Nothing happened.”另起一行,单独成段,与前一段拉开距离;其意“什么都没发生”,与前文接二连三的“消失”

对比,形成意外反差,产生讽刺效果。译文却不动声色将之并入前一段,并直表隐含意义“他没有如愿”,从布局和文意两个方面都消除了悬念,令讽刺效果大打折扣。依循原文另起一段,将之直译为“什么动静也没有”,保持悬念,也许更为妥当。

24. Black people have all too often found the *American Dream* a nightmare.

黑人们经常发现所谓的美式民主自由等等不过是恶梦一场^[9]。

美国的强势文化借助好莱坞影视作品的“包装”渗透全球,相信中国读者对于所谓“美国梦”耳熟能详,译文将之显化,不但低估了读者的背景知识,也破坏了“美国梦”与“噩梦”相呼应的修辞效果。

25. Japan's financial sector is troubled, the political system is fragmented and confused, and the recent economic measures are like a *band-aid*, when major reconstructive surgery is needed.

日本的金融部门遇到了麻烦,政治体制四分五裂而且混乱,最近的经济措施只像是一片邦迪牌创可贴,而实际需要的却是重大的修整外科手术。(摘自 S. P. Seth 著 *The Japanese Muddle* 于华译)

“Band-aid”是美国强生公司旗下的知名品牌,创立于1920年,汉语译为“邦迪牌”,开始特指该品牌的止血消炎绷带——邦迪牌创可贴,但此处原文用的是小写“band-aid”,泛指所有品牌的创可贴,为汉语读者所熟知,译文中没有必要再明示“邦迪牌”。

26. They must think of it as planting trees. A tree takes a *generation* to reach maturity.

应该认识到,育人就像种树一样,需要一代(二十到三十年)时间才能使树木长大成材。(摘自 Sandra J. Bean 著 *Educating Girls and Women: A Moral and Spiritual Imperative* 王彦熙译)

无论英语还是汉语,“a generation”和一代人所指的时间一样,所以译文没有必要解释“二十到三十年”。

可见,显化是译者为了重建明示—推理动态平衡,实现最佳关联而对预期的读者语境缺失进行补偿的策略,而偏离这个宗旨的显化,都为失职。那么,如何才能保证语境显化有节有度、不越

雷池呢?

四、显化的推理空间等距原则

译语读者和原文读者一样都是结合文本明示和自身语境,通过推理达到最佳关联。因而,译者在翻译显化时应当遵循推理空间等距原则,力求“保存假设集合,通过演绎和对比确定这个假设集合中的假设对译文读者的可及程度(accessibility)和对原文读者的可及程度一样”^[10],通过译文的显化“再现原作者对其意向读者所做出的假设,让译文读者能够与原文读者一样在推理原作者的信息意图时具有同等的推理空间”^[10]。如下例:

27. Often, when we found ourselves up against a seemingly insuperable difficulty, he would stand up, put his pipe on the table, and say in his quaint English, “*I will a little tink*” (he could not pronounce “th”). Then he would pace up and down, twirling a lock of his long, graying hair around his forefinger. (摘自 Banesh Hoffmann 著 *My friend Albert Einstein* 冯国华、吴群译)

对于原文“I will a little tink”(he could not pronounce “th”)原文读者的假设推理如下:

- (1)“t” and “th” are pronounced differently but confusingly;
- (2)Accented people may pronounce “th” as “t”;
- (3)He could not pronounce “th”;
- (4)He pronounces “think” as “tink”;
- (5)He has an accent;
- (6)He sounds a little funny in doing that.

译文:不少时候,我们遇到看似无法攻克的难关,爱因斯坦就总是站起身来,把烟斗往桌上一放,操着别有韵味的英语说道:“让我来显一显。”因为发音不准,他把“想一想”说成了“显一显”。说完“让我显一显”,他就不停地踱起步来,一边踱着步还一边用食指缠绕着额前一缕花白的头发。

译文读者假设推理:

- (1)“想”和“显”读音不同但类似;
- (2)有口音的人会把“想”念成“显”(如闽南口音);
- (3)他不会发“想”的音;
- (4)把“想”念成“显”;
- (5)他有口音;

(6)他带口音的话有点滑稽。

原文提及英语读音“th”(/θ/),属于特殊语言形式,汉语无法照直翻译,只能代之以汉语的发音“想”与“显”的类似,并将“he could not pronounce ‘th’”显化为“发音不准”,语境含义化为语言明示,保存了读者的假设集,也即维持了明示—推理的动态平衡。

五、结语

虽然显化研究开展时间不长,却是目前翻译领域中得到最为全面研究的现象之一。通过考察

具体的翻译文本,发现显化是翻译中译者的普遍冲动,因此无论语言、语类、语域如何,“译文总是比原文更为冗长”^[11]。但是,不同语言系统(如英语与汉语)异质性导致的词汇补偿应与译语文本连贯性要求的语境显化划清界限。同时,由于译者对译文读者语境的预期往往是“推己及人”,较为主观,为避免“过度”显化,译者应遵循“推理空间等距原则”,抑制其主体性过度彰显,不可随意将语境效果直接显化。

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An Empirical Survey on Explicitation in Translated Texts

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Abstract: Explicitation is a strategy of making implicit information in the original text overt in the target version. The implicit information is attributed to either linguistic incongruities or contextual gaps. An investigation on translated texts revealed that linguistic explicitation can be justifiably excluded from explicitation proper, while contextual explicitation is a universal impulse on part of the translator. It was also noted that explicitation is sometimes overdone, thereby hindering the target readers from achieving equivalent contextual effects. The translator is therefore supposed to follow the principle of equal inferential distance in light of Relevance Theory to maintain the “appropriateness” of contextual explicitation.

Key words: explicitation; relevance theory; context; the principle of equal inferential distance