

天主教輔仁大學英國語文學系學士班畢業成果
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT, FU JEN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY
GRADUATION PROJECT 2019

指導教授：李桂芬老師

Prof. Gretchen Lee

真善美聖

English-Chinese Translation (II) : Error Analysis

SANCTITAS BONITAS

PULCHRITUDO

VERITAS

學生：蔡秉燁 撰

Benny Ping Yeh Tsai

Benny Tsai 404110263

Professor Gretchen Lee

Learning Outcome Demonstration

15 March 2019

Learning Outcome Demonstration Reflection

For my learning outcome demonstration project, I translated the introduction and the first half of the fourth chapter of the book *Health Psychology: Biopsychosocial Interactions Eighth Edition* for the second time in my senior year. I first had the valuable opportunity to translate the text in my freshman year from my aunt, who is a clinical psychologist. She co-translated the older version of the book several years ago and wanted to give me an opportunity to practice my translating when the publisher was planning to publish the new version, although I have not received any formal translating training then. Even though I did not know much about translation skills and translation as the whole at that time, I knew my translation was lousy, and I was dissatisfied with my work.

After taking many courses in the FJU graduate institute of translation and interpretation for two years and encountering the department's requirement to do a LOD project to graduate, I immediately came up with the idea to translate the text again. And to prove that I have indeed improved, I used the error analysis theory to analyze the errors in the original target text and how I corrected those errors in my

new target text. Below I provide you with the definition of binary and non-binary errors (Pym 4). Pym explained that, “For binarism, there is only right and wrong; for non-binarism there are at least two right answers and then the wrong ones (4).” In other words, binary errors make us shout out “it’s wrong!”, while non-binary errors lead to discussions starting with “it’s correct, but... (Pym 5)”.

After defining binary and non-binary errors, the next step is to have a module to apply them to my LOD project. According to Li, an English lecturer in the Xi’an Research Institute of Hi-Tech, error analysis can be done by following the five steps: introduction, exercises and quiz, evaluation, correction (32). In a few words, the introduction is to introduce the error analysis to the students; exercises and quiz are to have the students do some hands-on translations; evaluation is to evaluate and analyze the errors that the students made, and correction is to correct the errors. Since I already have the theory in mind and translated the text before starting the LOD project, I skipped the first two procedures and focused on evaluation and correction.

Next, I present to you the result of the error analysis of my original translation text. I recorded the counts of different errors in the form below, and I will analyze the errors and how I correct them by each category.

Non-binary error: verbose sentence (句子太長、冗長)	19
--	----

Binary errors: mistranslation	13
Non-binary error: front modifier too long (前飾過長)	12
Non-binary error: unnecessary passive voice (被字句)	7
Non-binary error: Translationese (翻譯腔、西式中文)	6
Non-binary errors: vague, unclear (語意不清)	4
Non-binary errors: others	39

I. Non-binary error: verbose sentence: Chinese phrases normally are shorter than English phrases. Chinese separates a sentence with commas into many phrases while English has many subordinate clauses and appositive phrases in a single sentence. If a complex English sentence is translated into Chinese without being broken into several phrases, it becomes verbose.

Examples:

A. I originally translated “These events killed more than 200,000 people and left even more injured and homeless” into “這兩場災難奪走了超過 20 萬條性命甚至產生了為數更多的傷者和無家可歸者。” This sentence has 33 words,

and that is far too many for a nice Chinese sentence. I revised it into “無情天災奪走了超過 20 萬條性命，更摧毀了數百萬名傷者的家園。” By simply adding a comma, the sentence looks much better.

B. Another example is translating “Some evidence suggests that women receive less support from their spouses than men do and seem to rely heavily on women friends for social support” into “有些證據顯示女性相較於男性從伴侶身上獲得較少支持並且極度依賴女性朋友以獲得社會支持。” Again, I did not break the sentence, and thus wrote this lengthy sentence of 41 words. I revised it into “若干證據顯示女性從配偶得到的支持比男性少，因此相當依賴同性友人的社會支持。” Not only has the sentence become easier to read, but the causation of the phenomenon has also been indicated more clearly.

II. Binary errors: mistranslation: I mistranslated several times in the first version.

The cause of such mistakes was that my English was not good enough to understand the source text. Looking back at the mistranslations, I could not believe that I misinterpreted the source text.

Examples:

A. I translated “What specifically does social support provide to the person?” into “社會支持提供給人們的有什麼特別之處呢?” I mistranslated “specifically” as “特別之處。” I revised the sentence into “社會支持給予了什麼具體幫助呢?”

B. I translated "... individuals received more social support following stressful events than at less stressful times" into "一開始就認為自己有高度社會支持的人，在這兩週當中確實得到較多的支持。" The correct meaning of the original source should be "學生在經歷壓力事件後得到更多社會支持。"

III. Non-binary error: front modifier too long: Chinese puts the modifier in front of the noun. However, having a modifier too long is not considered good Chinese. In this case, the translator has to split the modifier into many parts.

A. I translated "**Two cataclysmic events riveted the world's attention within a year of each other**" into "兩場發生在一年之內的劇烈災難..." I split the modifier into two parts and revised the sentence into "兩場重大災難一年間相繼侵襲世界..."

B. I translated "These variations often result from psychological and social factors that seem to modify the impact of stressors on the individual" into "這種變異常是來自修緩壓力對個人之衝擊的心理與社會因素。" I revised the sentence into "這些變化源自各類心理和社會因素，是壓力源的衝擊修緩後產生的結果。"

IV. Non-binary error: unnecessary passive voice (被字句): Compared with English, Chinese uses much less passive voice. As a result, using passive voice too often in Chinese is regarded as bad Chinese.

A. I translated "This chapter discusses issues introduced in Chapter 3 ..."

into “這一章要探討的是在第三章被介紹過的問題。” I revised the sentence into “本章節將探討前一章所提出的議題。”

B. I translated “People with social support believe they are loved, valued, ...” into “擁有社會支持的人相信他們是被愛、有價值的。” I revised the sentence into “擁有社會支持的人相信自己是有人愛且受到珍視的。”

V. Non-binary error: Translationese (翻譯腔、西式英文): When the translator is influenced by the original text and subsequently produce a target text that is unnatural by Chinese standard, it is called translationese.

A. I translated “... had a good relationship with his family” into “和家人有著良好的互動。” This is translationese because Chinese usually uses verbs instead of nouns. I revised the sentence into “和家人關係親近。”

B. I translated “... examines in more detail the effects of stress on health.” into “針對壓力對健康的影響做更細節的檢驗。” Using a weak verb such as “做” and add a nominalize verb, in this sentence “檢驗,” after it is a prevalent problem of translationese that many people make nowadays. I revised the sentence into “深入檢視壓力對健康造成的影響。”

VI. Non-binary errors: vague, unclear (語意不清):

A. I translated “as when people give or lend the person money ... in times of stress” into “把錢送給或借給他人...” I revised the sentence into “給錢或借錢給

經濟困難的人。” By specifying the recipient of the money, the meaning is much clearer.

B. I translated “People’s reactions to stress vary from one person to the next and from time to time for the same person.” into “人們對壓力的反應因人而異，並且即使同一個人也會因時而異。” I revised the sentence into “人們對壓力的反應因人而異，而個人每次的反應也不盡相同。” The second sentence repeats “反應” in the second part of the sentence, and that makes the sentence easier to understand for the readers.

VII. Non-binary errors: others:

A. I translated “... patients with less serious chronic illnesses” into “較少長期嚴重不適感的患者。” However, the correct translation should be “輕微慢性病患者。”

Reflection and conclusion: Although the new version of my translation is far from perfect, I did see my improvement by comparing it with the original version. The improvement of my Chinese allowed me to break the wordy sentence and avoid long front-modifiers. Moreover, I also stopped using excessive passive voice in Chinese and revise the translationese sentences into proper Chinese. On the other hand, the enhancement of my English made me see the mistranslations in the original target text. All in all, I am glad that I see my progress in translating through doing this

learning outcome demonstration project.



Works Cited

Li, Lan-Jie, et al. "The Application of Error Analysis Theory in Translation Module Teaching to Non-English Majors." *DEStech Transactions on Social Science, Education and Human Science*, no. emse, 2017, doi:10.12783/dtssehs/emse2017/12735.

Pym, Anthony. "Translation Error Analysis and the Interface with Language Teaching." *Teaching Translation and Interpreting*, Jan. 1992, p. 279., doi:10.1075/z.56.42pym.

