






Idiom Translation

Chapter Three

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Warm-up Exercises



编号: 20120121004714260357 汇图网(www.huitu.com) 半笔赋

Translate the following sentences into Chinese,
and pay attention to the italicized idioms
that have been used:

1. The crafty enemy was ready to launch an attack while holding out *the olive branch*.
2. His father's *as rich as Croesus*. He owns several houses in England and also has property in Italy.
3. The young man tried to tell police he had nothing to do with the theft, but when they looked in the trunk of his car he was *caught red-handed*.
4. Better get a hair cut before you go to that job interview tomorrow. You want to *put a best foot forward* because there are twenty other people after the same job.
5. What will it be when the increase of yearly production is brought to a complete stop? Here is the vulnerable place, *the heel of Achilles*, for capitalistic production.

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3. The young man tried to tell police he had nothing to do with the theft, but when they looked in the trunk of his car he was caught red-handed.

[译文]: 那个年轻人对警察说他与这宗盗窃案无关, 但警观察了他的汽车行李箱, 将其人赃并获。

[点评]: “**caught red-handed**” 原指手上沾满鲜血的杀人犯被逮个现行。在例句中译为“人赃并获”, 也指犯有任何罪行者当场被捉。

4. Better get a hair cut before you go to that job interview tomorrow. You want to put a best foot forward because there are twenty other people after the same job.

[译文]: 你明天去那个公司面试前最好去理下发, 你得给他们留一个好印象, 因为有**20**多个人都在争夺这个工作。

[点评]: “**put your best foot forward**” 原指全力以赴, 表现出最正确的一面; 在此例中译为“给某人一个好印象。”

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5. What will it be when the increase of yearly production is brought to a complete stop? Here is the vulnerable place, the heel of Achilles, for capitalistic production.

[译文]: 如果连年增长的生产突然完全停止会是什么情况呢? 这正是资本主义生产的致命弱点。

[点评]: “the heel of Achilles” 来自希腊神话, Achilles 年幼时母亲把他浸入 Styx 河中, 据说浸过后就会不为刀剑所伤。但因其踵部是母亲手握处, 没浸到水, 终因此处受剑伤而死。因此, “the heel of Achilles” 通常被译为
“致命的弱点”。

Translate another group of sentences to check your progress.

1. They offered me a good job at that company but I hear that the boss is as hard as nails: one little mistake and you're out on the street the next day looking for a new job.

[译文]:他们向我提供那家公司的一个很好的职位,但是我听说他们的老板是个很难相处的人:只要你犯一个小错,他马上把你一脚踢出公司大门,让你另谋生路。

2. They put their heads together and decided on a gift.

[译文]:他们经过碰头商量,最后决定选购一件礼物。

3. Among so many well-dressed and cultured people, the country girl felt like a fish out of water.

[译文]:跟这么多穿着体面而又有教养的人在一起,这位乡下姑娘感到很不自在。

4. For months after her husband's death, Joan simply ate her heart out.

[译文]:琼自从丈夫死后,好几月都悲哀欲绝。

5. Gorge was enjoying himself to the top of his head.

[译文]:乔治快乐到了极点。

E-C Cultural Contrast in Idiom Translation



Idioms

What flowers are to gardens, spices to food, gems to a garment and stars to heaven, such are proverbs interwoven in speech.

谚语美化语言，就像鲜花之于庭园、香料之于食品、
宝石之于锦绣、繁星之于天宇。

英汉文化差异在习语中的反映



地理生存环境的差异

比喻“花钱浪费，大手大脚”

[英语]: **spend money like water**

[汉语]: “挥金如土”

[点评]习语的产生与人们的劳动和生活密切相关。英国是岛国，四面临海，属温带海洋性气候，气候湿润，植被良好，适合航海和放牧，历史上航海业曾一度领先世界。所以产生了大量与航海或牧羊有关的习语；而汉民族在亚洲大陆生活繁衍，人们的生活离不开土地。因此，地理生存环境的差异促使习语在英汉表达上的差异。

地理生存环境的差异

英语中还有很多关于船和水的习语，在汉语中完全没有相同的对应习语。

e.g. to rest on one's oars

暂时歇一歇

to keep one's head above water

奋力图存

all at sea

不知所措

Being on sea, sail; being on land, settle.

在海上就航行，在陆上就安居。

(注：类似于“随遇而安”)

Between the devil and the deep sea.

在船缘和深海之间。

(注：类似于“进退两难”，这里devil是指船舷上的缘，即gunwale)

历史文化的差异

- * 习语具有独特的民族渊源和历史积淀。
- * 汉语的习语典故多出自《四书》、《五经》或神话传说，如“叶公好龙”、“东施效颦”等。
- * 英语的习语典故多来自《圣经》、希腊罗马神话或《伊索寓言》等。

e.g. The Trojan horse

特洛伊木马

The sword of Damocles

达摩克利斯之剑，喻指临头的危险

to keep an ear to the ground

保持高度警觉

历史文化的差异

Give somebody the sack.

解雇某人

[点评]十八世纪，资本家开办手工业工厂，雇佣工人时要求自带工具，解雇时，资本家便给他们一个袋子，把工具放在里面带走，于是便有了：**Give somebody the sack.** (解雇某人)。



民族习俗的差异

- Good **dog** deserves a good bone.
 - Every **dog** has his day.
 - Help a lame **dog** over a stile.
 - A dumb **dog**
 - Old **dog** will not learn mew tricks.
 - sick as a **dog**
 - **dog**-tired
- 有功者受赏。
 - 凡人皆有得意时。
 - 帮助别人度过难关。
 - 沉默不语的人。
 - 老人学不了新东西
 - 病得厉害
 - 累极了

Translation Methods



习语

- 习语是一个民族经过长期使用而定型化的短语、短句，包括成语、俗语、谚语、歇后语、格言等；
- 具有结构严谨、形式简练、含义精辟、形象鲜明、表达生动等特点；
- 由于习语翻译的好坏直接影响译文的质量，翻译过程中必须注意不同民族语言的差异，防止死译、硬译。

英汉习语的翻译方法



直译法

这里的习语“**armed to the teeth**” 形象生动，一直都译为“武装到牙齿”，已用得很习惯了；如意译为“全副武装”，语气反而变弱。

直译法

以下英语习语可以用直译法在汉语中找到对等的习语翻译:

- dig one's own 自掘坟墓
- a thorn in the flesh 肉中刺、眼中钉
- new wine in old bottle 旧瓶装新酒
- packed like sardines 挤得像沙丁鱼
- Blood is thicker than water. 血浓于水

同义习语借用法

英语有些习语在内容和形式以及色彩上与汉语都非常相近，翻译时可以借用其同义习语。有的比喻的事物虽不同，但含义根本一致，同样可以借用。

e.g. Well, it's too late to hide now. I must try to avoid suspicion by throwing them off the scent.

英语习语“to throw (put) sb. off the scent”与汉语成语“金蝉脱壳”形象虽不同，但喻义很接近，都含有“用计脱身”的意义，在这里可以借用，不会产生误解。

[译文]如今即使赶着躲，想罢也躲不及了，少不得要使个金蝉脱壳的法子。

同义习语借用法

意译法

当原文的思想内容与译文的表达方式有矛盾而不宜采用直译法处理时，就应根据上下文采用意译法处理较为恰当，但可以不拘泥于原文的形式。意译也要求译文能比较准确地表达原文的内容。

e.g. After I finished my work, he said that he wanted to give me a hand.

I thought that his idea was just to carry coals to Newcastle.

原文中“to carry coals to Newcastle”外表意义是“把煤运到纽卡索”。这是英语中的一个典故，纽卡索是英国盛产煤炭的中心地，把煤炭运到纽卡索是一件多余的事。所以这个典故只能采用意译，汉语“多此一举”正合原意。

[译文]我完成任务后，他说他想帮我。我认为他的想法是多此一举。

意译法

以下英语习语的翻译也可用类似的方法：

throw / fling mud at	诽谤，中伤
hold the baby	干苦差事
smell a rat	疑心其中有诈
see the light	突然明白，顿悟

The dog that will fetch a bone will carry a bone.
对你说别人的坏话的人，也会说你的坏话。

We still love each other very much, but we fight like cat and dog.
我们常吵吵闹闹，但仍很相爱。

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