

TRANSLATION TRANSFORMATIONS AND TRANSLATION STUDIES IN CHINA

The main **aim of translation** is to achieve adequacy.

Adequate translation is defined as a translation rendered at a necessary and sufficient level to convey the invariant content plane respecting the relevant expression plane, meaning following the norms of the language.

Adequacy is the rendering of the semantic content of the source text and its full functional-stylistic correspondence.

In order to achieve adequacy translators use different translation transformations. Each of them is represented by different language level units.

Formal transformations involve changes in linguistic form during the translation process under the condition that the semantic content of the source text is retained. At the phonetic level, they first of all include phonographic transformations (such as):

1. transcription as 'a phonemic conversion of the source lexical unit using the phonemes of the target language';
2. transliteration as 'a letter-by-letter conversion of the source lexical unit using the alphabet of the target language';
3. conventional phonographic substitution; and
4. a combination of the transformations mentioned above.

Unsuccessful and incorrect results of transformations are considered as translation errors. Nevertheless, the usage of the prosodic pattern (rhythmic-melodic pattern) change of the verse through formal transformation is acceptable in poetic translation.

At the word-formation level, formal transformations are represented by:

1. derivational calquing (as a morpheme-by-morpheme translation of units),
2. word constituent inversion.

The lexical level of linguistic form changes during the translation process is primarily represented by target language equivalents with identical semantic content (dictionary equivalents with the same contextually actualized sememic composition).

At the morphological level, formal transformations are represented by:

1. categorial substitution with retained semantic content of the linguistic units (e.g., changes in translation affecting gender, case, verb voice (active to passive), or degree of comparison),
2. part-of-speech substitution,
3. substitution of morphological means with lexical ones retaining the same semantic content,
4. elimination or occurrence of transposition of grammatical number, tense, manner of action, etc., compared to the source text during the translation process.

At the syntactic level, formal transformations are represented by substitution of phrases by single words and vice versa, of syntactic relations within phrases and sentences,

involving anaphora and ellipsis, and sentence combining and splitting without changing the semantic content. The omission and addition of linguistic units and constructions can also be formal transformations, if they do not change the semantic content of the target text fragments.

Conversely, **formal-semantic** transformations involve changes in linguistic form and semantic content changes, conditioned by the specific characteristics of the source and target language systems and contextual and pragmatic factors. At the phonetic level, such transformations are mostly represented in poetic texts by the change in prosodic structure (rhythmic-melodic structure) of the verse, leading to modification of the text's conceptual plane. At the lexical level the second type of transformation has two planes, where the meaning of linguistic units is represented: the denotative and the connotative. Within the denotative plane, which manifests the conceptual-logical core of meaning, during the translation process this type of transformation is presented by lexical equivalents of lexemes that in the target language, activate a sememic set non-identical to the one of the source unit, when actualized by the communication context.

At the morphological level, formal-semantic transformations can be divided into: categorial substitutions involving semantic change (e.g., changes in grammatical number, aspect, manner of action, degree of comparison, voice, tense, person; loss or emergence in target equivalents of the category of collectivity, etc.), part-of-speech substitutions accompanied by semantic modification, substitution of grammatical means with lexical means involving semantic change, etc.

At the syntactic level formal-semantic transformations are substitution of words by phrases and vice versa, involving semantic modification, phrases, sentences or inter-sentential relations restructuring, as well as omission, permutation and addition of sentence or text elements, which also determine the semantic change.

Formal-semantic transformations with a pragmatic component involve changes in linguistic form and semantic content of textual units or fragments, in order to balance the pragmatic effect of the translation on the target reader.

- Figurative
- Phraseological
- Conceptual
- Megatextual
- Translation is the best mean for explanation and understanding between people from different parts of China, thus it serves to establish order and peace in the country.
- Chinese translated Buddhist sutras from Sanskrit (148 - 1127).
- As European missionaries, travelers, and merchants started arriving in China, the acquaintance process with Chinese philosophy, history, and literature has begun (mid-17th century).
- The level of translation theory was limited to debates about how the sutras should be translated: literally or by meaning.
- Year 1894 - Ma Jianzhong suggested retaining both the semantic content and the spirit of the source text, attempting to achieve a high degree of their unity during the translation process.
- Yan Fu's translator's foreword to J. Huxley's book "Evolution (The Modern Synthesis)" stated: "There are three difficulties in translation: accuracy, norm, and style."

- Yan Fu suggested 3 standards for good translation: 信 (xìn) - faithfulness, 達 (dá) - expressiveness, 雅 (yǎ) - elegance.

- Qu Qiubai also expressed other translation ideas. He wrote that the translation should accurately and fully convey to the Chinese reader the semantic content of the source text, so that the ideas that the Chinese reader receives correspond to the ideas of the English, Russian, Japanese, French reader from reading the source text. In his opinion it is also necessary to write in báihuà, the colloquial language, which is spoken by the Chinese.

- Su Ling, with whom Qu Qiubai had a discussion about translation, also expressed some interesting thoughts. He wrote: "Any translation must simultaneously take into account two aspects: it must, of course, be understandable and preserve the 'appearance' of the source text. But this retaining often comes into conflict with understanding, because it looks unusual to everyone. To make the source text pleasing to the eye, you only need to change its clothes, but you should not shorten its nose or cut out its eyes".

- Acknowledging that it is quite challenging to build a clear line between literal and word-for-word translation on the one hand, and semantic and free translation on the other, Lin Yutang suggested differentiating two translation levels: 'individual Chinese characters (words) level translation' and 'sentence-level translation'.

- Hú Shì is known as the initiator of the introduction of báihuà into the formal business style, and its recognition as a written literary language.

- Yuen Ren Chao is a well-known expert in the field of linguistics, author of the great work "A Grammar of Spoken Chinese".

- Since 1957, China has been working on machine translation. In 1958 for the first time, an experiment was successfully carried out to translate 20 sentences from Russian into Chinese on a conventional Chinese-made digital machine.

- In the 70s and 80s of the 20th century - Chinese translation studies went through a period of self-awareness, the 90s were a period of global adjustment of the accumulated knowledge, borrowing and exchange of experience, and now the stage of comprehensive construction and gradual movement towards maturity has begun.

REFERENCES

1. [https://eprints.cdu.edu.ua/2918/1/filologiya_8%20\(3\)-13-22.pdf](https://eprints.cdu.edu.ua/2918/1/filologiya_8%20(3)-13-22.pdf)
2. https://essuir.sumdu.edu.ua/bitstream-download/123456789/97450/1/Smolianinova_mag.rob.pdf
3. Dunbar, Adrian (2022-11-30). "The Outdated Xin Da Ya Chinese Translation Theory". *CBL*. Archived from the original on 2025-03-02. Retrieved 2025-03-02.
4. Zhong, Weihe. "Translation in China". *www.translationjournal.net*. Archived from the original on 2024-11-18. Retrieved 2025-03-02.
5. <https://research-repository.st-andrews.ac.uk/bitstream/handle/10023/30374/Cai-2024-Lun-Xun-heteromodal-ModLangQ-AAM-CCBY.pdf;jsessionid=A5A099EB8638B69CF80896A97F6CE76A?sequence=1>