

## Review

# A critical study of encyclopedia of translation studies in China (1995-2001)

Fan Min<sup>1\*</sup> and Zhao Wei<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>School of Translation and Interpretation, Qufu Normal University, Rizhao, Shandong, 276826 China.

<sup>2</sup>School of Translation and Interpretation, Shandong University, Weihai, Shandong, 264209 China.

Accepted date 17 November, 2010

**It is generally assumed that the research of encyclopedia of translation studies (ETS) as a historical and cultural fact is inevitably influenced and manipulated by the cultural background. Toward this goal, this article gives a critical analysis of three ETS published in China (1995-2001) based on some compilation principles, so as to show the international audience what kind of translation knowledge and terms/concepts have been encoded in Chinese ETS. In this paper, a critical, dynamic and communicative review of the proper organization and content of the three ETS in China is provided. The criticism and review are both lexicographical and translational. It is hoped that this research will provide some useful suggestions to future dictionary makers and translation scholars.**

**Key words:** ETS research, entry inclusion and explanation, translation studies, ETS reception.

## INTRODUCTION

The latter half of the 20th century, especially the years since the 1970s, witnessed the breath-taking development of translation studies as a worldwide independent discipline. Many terms and topics have arisen to describe types of translation approaches which represent various stages in translation history. The accumulation of the literature of translation studies calls for the birth of dictionaries of translation studies (DTS). And the surge of the compilation of encyclopedia of translation studies (ETS) did not begin until the 1990s.

In recent years, with the proliferation of terms or topics relating to translation theory in the present information age, it would be more useful, and academically and intellectually more rewarding, to explain in an accurate manner these terms or topics that will soon become a part of the language that we use in our work. Many encyclopedias of translation studies have been published, namely, *An Encyclopedia of Translation: Chinese-English, English-Chinese* (1<sup>st</sup> edition, 1995; 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 2001); *A Companion for Chinese Translators* (1997), and *Aspects of Translation* (1999) in China. The ETS published outside China mainly include: *Routledge*

*Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (1998) and *An International Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (2004).

The successive publication of ETS signals the growth of translation studies worldwide, and the availability of such a broad range of materials in translation studies greatly help individual scholars, college teachers and students to build up their own knowledge and understanding of the subjects, and contribute to the development of translation studies as a discipline in universities and colleges. At the same time, the theoretical research of ETS has also born some fruits (Fan, 2007, 2009; Huang, 2005; Lin, 2003; Tan, 2004; Zhang and Han, 2005). These articles with the form of dictionary principles, dictionary methods, dictionary comments and dictionary typology scattered far and wide in journals or magazines. These articles argue that the ETS research gradually becomes a field whose endeavors are informed by the theories and practices from disciplines such as terminography, lexicography, encyclopedia work as well as disciplines of linguistics, corpus studies, culture and sociology, which provide the broader setting for the ETS research and making. However, there still exist a lot of aspects that the articles do not deal with, such as, the critical and descriptive review of ETS compilation in China.

The following study of the three ETS will be based on five principles: authority, accuracy, adequacy, systematicity

\*Corresponding author. E-mail: fanminxy@yahoo.com.cn.  
Tel: 15065586395.

and acceptability. These five criteria are regarded as the rulers in judging a good ETS from a bad one, and it must be admitted that these five criteria are not considered as isolated items, but interconnected ones within a system. The authority is one of the symbols of high quality ETS. As to how to guarantee the authority of information in ETS, we should focus on the following two issues: Who will write and edit the work? What kind of materials will it be based? Accuracy is concerned with association of an expression with a well-defined area of knowledge space. It is a measure of the quality with which knowledge and intention are represented in a text. Adequacy refers to the extent to which the structure and information presented in ETS are adequate and comprehensive. It must be noted that adequacy is a relative term. This is because although claims to comprehensiveness of coverage are common in dictionary advertising materials, yet it is clear that no reference work can hope to be completely exhaustive and no dictionary is entirely "adequate" in terms of time and space, and the real extent of a dictionary's coverage is very difficult to determine and comparisons of coverage across dictionaries are often unchangeable. Systematicity is an important feature of judging the acceptability of ETS. This particularly reflects in the systematic entry arrangement and interpretation. Acceptability is closely related with the user's reception. As what Hartmann has stated, one of the principal advances in lexicography in recent years has been the "focus on the user perspective, that is the realization that different users have different reasons for using a dictionary, and that the dictionary can, and should, respond to these (Hartmann and James, 2000: F18)".

The working method of the description is mainly based on the critical approach, and the strong and weak points of the three encyclopedias are discussed respectively. The criticism covers, whatever possible, the essential features of entry inclusion, entry interpretation, entry arrangement, secondary access structure and appendix design as well as secondary properties of dictionary components and structure, etc. According to Hartmann (2001: 4), "If we are seriously interested in advancing our knowledge about dictionaries and in making progress across the whole field of lexicography, we need to find out what the facts are". When necessary, the well-known encyclopedia published outside China *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (Baker, 1998) will be referred to for the sake of comparison. The description is both lexicographical and translational: Lexicographical in that it will look to dictionary theories for theoretical consultation; and translational when it comes to the presentation of field knowledge.

### Three encyclopedias of translation studies published in China (1995-2001)

Generally speaking, the Western ETS, such as *Routledge*

*Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, and the ETS published in China are both by and large adequate in entry inclusion, covering multifaceted aspects of translation studies: Practice and theory, the past and present, Western and Chinese, native and borrowed, etc, for example, they both touch on machine translation, machine-aided translation, and such like, keeping in close touch with the latest development in the field. However there also exist great differences in terms of entry inclusion and interpretation between them. Delivering a thoroughly revised and updated version of the most authoritative reference work in the field, the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* draws on the expertise of over ninety contributors from all over the world, providing an unparalleled global perspective which makes this volume unique. Including approximately more than one hundred entries, this encyclopedia presents a genuinely comprehensive overview of the rich and complex academic discipline of translation studies, and consists of two sections which cover the following key areas: (1) The conceptual framework of the discipline, including a wide variety of research topics, theoretical issues and practices, and (2) The history of translation in major linguistic/cultural communities, and a range of new entries, including the Irish, Korean and South African traditions. With all entries alphabetically arranged, extensively cross-referenced and including suggestions for further reading, this text combines clarity with scholarly accuracy and depth, defining and discussing key terms in context to ensure maximum understanding and ease of use (Baker, 1998). Comparatively speaking, in the ETS in China more Chinese translators and translated works than western ones are introduced. Particularly in the two ETS published in mainland China, with all entries Chinese Pinyin arranged, not only translation concept and terms are included, but also the translation event, translation and intercultural contact, publications on translation, translation institute and translation publishing organization are dealt with. As to the ETS published in HK, *An Encyclopedia of Translation: Chinese-English, English-Chinese*, all entries are written in English and alphabetically arranged. For disciplinary, the universalist topics adopted heavily depend on the goodwill of European and North American experts in translation, including leading theorists. But many topics are absent for some reasons. Provided below is a chronological documentation and detailed analysis of the three ETS in China following the aforementioned basic principles specified.

### ***An encyclopedia of translation: Chinese-English and English-Chinese***

Compiled by Chan and David (1995), the first edition of *An Encyclopedia of Translation: Chinese-English and English-Chinese* was published by The Chinese University

Press in 1995, and the revised edition was republished in 2001. The contributors are all renowned in translation world or their field of interest such as Bassnett, Neubert, Lefevere, Newmark, Nida, Snell-Hornby, etc., which ensures the quality of the dictionary.

On the one hand, the authoritative staff is very important for the quality of ETS. This lies in the fact that the desire to “maintain a certain level of intellectualism in dictionaries by means of sophisticated diction can probably be attributed to the social values of the dominant class (Bowker, 2006: 52-53)”, and the language of the “classical authors is considered to be the language that dictionaries should uphold” (Bowker, 2006: 52-53). In this way, as “Landau (1985: 269) claims, by recognizing one particular set of values over another, dictionaries give those values stability and authority (Bowker, 2006: 60)”. With such authority and necessity comes great power. This is because when defining specialized terminology or topics in translation studies, the editor must have a thorough knowledge of the translation field and have a good fund of general knowledge. The specialist of translation studies has received advanced training and has greater theoretical and practical experience than the generalist, and therefore writes from the viewpoint of a professional rather than as an informed amateur.

On the other hand, these entries are contributed by the experts in translation field who have different ways of expounding a theoretical issue. And less frequently the encyclopedia allows some overlap in developing areas where views tend to differ widely. It will also be noticed that “entries vary greatly in length, and the length is not strictly proportionate to the notional importance or magnitude of the subject (Chan and David, 1995: 12)”. In this way, the synonyms or different views upon the same terms in translation studies can help us understand the concept from different perspectives and gain a comprehensive understanding of the concept. In other words, through descriptive approach, this encyclopedia provides a kind of profile of the way the discipline of Translation Studies as a whole has been evolving.

The encyclopedia targets a well-defined readership. This is perhaps related with the intention of the encyclopedia which aims to help strengthen the academic footing of Hong Kong translation studies, and serves as a “dual concern in addressing both local and universal concerns: The language-specific entries relate to the interaction between the Chinese-speaking and English-speaking worlds, while Western knowledge and experience are also drawn on for topics general to all translation studies (Chan and David, 1995: 12)”. The result is driven by market laws and include both theoretical and practical entries in general topics or specific terms. This encyclopedia is very similar to “Baker’s *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*” in entry inclusion, but is widely different in the way these entries are defined, that is, it is based on English-Chinese translation examples and gives prominence to

traditional Chinese culture.

The encyclopedia is basically complete and systematic in component parts. Regarding dictionary structure, introduction section includes the standard title page, contents, editor’s preface, acknowledgement and a list of contributors. After the introduction section is an alphabetical index of all the proper names in the dictionary, including figures, works, organizations, etc. Regarding entry inclusion and interpretation, it has altogether 65 entries, all general topics covering a diversity of facets of translation: Theory and practice, native and borrowed concepts, Chinese and Western scholarships, traditional and current ideas and some entries of great translation events and celebrated translators. All these entries are complete and systematic in themselves as a lengthy academic paper, with titles and subtitles, narration and comments and bibliography at the end. An example is like Yuan Zaju (杂剧), which has four subtitles of Introduction: Characterization of Yuan Zaju, early English versions of Yuan Zaju, English translations of the modern period, prospects and bibliography. The whole entry looks in every way like a research paper that can stand by itself. The practical entries are explained under different text types or subject matter, many of them neglected in other encyclopedias of translation studies. In practical entries, the emphasis is on the textual features and corresponding translation methods with illustrative examples. In addition, the greatest degree of accuracy is also achieved by means of systematic and transparent designations of translation concepts and by the avoidance ambiguity at every level of expression, just like what Zgusta has firmly stated: “Nor should the lexicographic definition contain words more difficult to understand than the explained word itself (Zgusta, 1971: 257)”.

The encyclopedia provides the authoritative references at the end of each academic paper. This is essential and important for the ETS users, not only for finding the relevant and reliable translation materials they need, but also for having rapid access to accurate succinct background information to supply the necessary context for the translation or a helpful explanation for the user. It is only by frequent use of an authoritative and well-stocked bibliography of translation studies that the advanced translation researchers can precisely and efficiently search the translation information they need. This is because in the process of assembling one’s own translation research approach, bibliographies of translation studies provide the starting point and serve as a compass to keep one on course. And authoritative sources which particularly draw from classical works, internationally-known periodicals, famous academic seminars and relevant dictionaries can guarantee the high quality of translational dictionaries.

However, there exist some shortcomings. For example, the entry inclusion is not very adequate. Although the encyclopedia includes both translation theory and

practice, yet “some topics were dropped from the inventory because of contributors failing to deliver; others planned never found contributors at all; some gaps were filled late in the day, but at the cost of keeping waiting those who had delivered their manuscripts promptly (Chan and David, 1995: 12). Another example, there are no cross-references and suggestions for further reading. For instance, in an encyclopedia of only 65 entries, both discourse analysis and textlinguistics make their noble appearance and are defined in their own distinct identity without any reference to each other. Also some of these entries sound a little old and need to be updated.

All things considered, the encyclopedia is the first one of its kind. Given their preference for articles of sufficient length to deal with their topics in some depth and detail, the editors have had to choose from among the great variety of translation activities and seek to achieve a balance between interesting cases and disciplinary principles. Hence, the encyclopedia has every chance to be original in determining the exact ratio between theoretical and practical entries and explanation methods to be used.

### ***A companion for Chinese translators***

Compiled by Lin Huangtian and published in 1997 by Hubei Education Press, *A Companion for Chinese Translators* is the second large-scale, all-field dictionary for theoretical research of translation. The dictionary boasts a great editing committee involving 28 contributors, all famous translators or translation theorists like Ma Zuyi, Tan Zaixi, Liu Miqing, Yang Zijian, Li Nanqiu, Zhang Jin, etc, which ensured the high quality of the dictionary.

The encyclopedia targets a widely-read usership. With about 4,000 entries in total, the dictionary aims at “...bringing together all concepts, ideas and theories of translation and translation studies, however widely different they are from one another, for the prosperity of translation cause (Lin, 1997: 8)”. Take the entries of translation people, for example. Not only translators, but more significantly, translation scholars and makers of reference books of translation are included (Chan and David, 1995: 12). The encyclopedia text can be divided into two parts: comprehensive entries and individual theories, each arranged according to Chinese Pinyin. Under comprehensive entries are nine categories: translation theory, translation technique, translation term, translation theorist, translation event, translation and intercultural contact, publications on translation, translation institute and translation publishing organization. Individual theories collect personal thinking on translation of about 100 translators in and outside China.

The encyclopedia is structurally complete. Introductory content includes the names of the board of advisors,

title leaf, contents, prefaces, editor’s note, user’s guide, and a list of entries. After the main body are seven appendixes: major translation events in China, major translation events outside China, titles of Chinese literary classics: Chinese-English (in part), titles of foreign literary classics: English-Chinese (in part), an index of articles on translation studies, an index of English-Chinese film titles, UN organizations, titles and positions and world documents and treaties. After these appendixes is an index of entries arranged according to Chinese character strokes, which is a varied formal arrangement, but no semantically arranged index is provided. The encyclopedia is for the most part consistent in dictionary layout and, as is seen in the user’s guide. If a person has more than one byname, for example, the most widely-used will make the primary entry word and the less known listed elsewhere as a cross reference pointing to the primary entry word.

Regarding entry arrangement, it is deficient in both lexicographical and translational terms. As was mentioned in brief earlier, the dictionary has two parts: comprehensive entries and individual theories, each arranged according to Chinese pinyin. Division is meant to distinguish a haphazard collection of entries into semantically-based types for the benefit of dictionary user, but this comprehensive versus individual division, besides its inherent overlap, is too crude for an all-field encyclopedia of this scope. On page 234, for example, are listed in pinyin order the following entries: 戈宝权文学翻译奖 (Ge Baoquan literary translation awards), 戈瓦 (Ge Wa), 《哥达纲领批判》最早的中国译本 (the earliest Chinese version of Critique of the Gotha Programme), 哥伦比亚文学在中国 (Columbia literature in China), 歌德作品在中国 (Goethe works in China), 歌剧翻译原则 (opera translation principles), 格尔墨斯海姆应用语言和文化学校 (Germersheim applied linguistics and cultural college), 格雷厄姆谈译诗 (Graham’s talks on poetry translation), etc. The drawback of this arrangement is that there is no semantic relationship whatever between them. And if following the current entry typology in the lexicographical world, the aforementioned entries belong to translation award, translation figure, translated literature, translation technique, translation institute and translation theories, etc.

Regarding entry inclusion, the encyclopedia is by and large adequate, covering multifaceted aspects of translation studies: practice and theory, the past and present, Western and Chinese, native and borrowed, etc. Traditional terms, Western and Chinese, are included, such as 案本 (text), 德莱顿翻译三分法 (the three division methods of John Dryden’s translation), etc. Current

terms, although in minority, have touched on interpretation theory, translation teaching, machine translation, machine-aided translation, and such like, keeping in close touch with the latest development in the field then. Since the early 1980s, linguistics-oriented translation theories entered China and exerted an immediate influence on entry inclusion, which featured an overwhelming majority of linguistics terms. An overwhelming majority here means not merely in terms of the number, but also the systematicity of the linguistics entries included: They form a well-defined knowledge system from uppermost topics down to the major branches within the discipline and their particular concepts at the bottom. In addition, this encyclopedia included, although small in number and limited in scope, some terms from other neighboring disciplines of philosophy, thinking science, aesthetics, psychology, literature studies and even mathematics. Many of these disciplines featured only general topics with a scattering of lower terms chosen at random. Examples are 思维单位 (thinking unit), 抽象思维 (abstract thinking), 翻译思维 (translation thinking) under 思维科学 (thinking science).

However, the encyclopedia has many overlaps in entry inclusion. The dictionary type and scope determines that the overlap in entry inclusion is unavoidable, which can be divided into several kinds. Overlap comes first at the uppermost level, that is, between major entry types. An example is 萨瓦利论翻译原则 (Savary principle) under comprehensive entry group and a 萨瓦里 (Savary) in individual theory group, the two entries not only repetitious to some degree but also inconsistent in naming the same person. Similarly, there is 纽马克 (Newmark) under comprehensive entry group and 纽马克的《翻译理论和翻译技巧》 (Newmark's The Theory and Craft of Translation) in individual theory group; under the comprehensive entry group are two entries 马建忠 (Ma Jianzhong) and 马建忠请设翻译书院 (Ma Jianzhong's application to establish translation college), but the individual theory group give still another entry 马建忠 (Ma Jianzhong), the three terms standing on their own without any cross-reference showing their connection. A second kind of overlap is at a much lower level, that is, between bottom entries, which are caused by the separate entries that are closely related. In this encyclopedia this kind of overlap very often happens between translation theorists and their punch theories. Some other examples, for instance, 玄奘 (Xuanzang) and 五不翻 (five principles of transliteration), 许渊冲 (Xu Yuanchong) and 诗词翻译的创新论 (on originality of poetry translation), 诗词翻译的三化论 (on three

transformations of poetry translation), 诗词翻译的三美论 (on three beautifications of poetry translation), 诗词翻译的三元论 (on three triangular theory of poetry translation) and so on. Between these entries only some are cross-referenced. Lin Huangtian, the editor-in-chief, has pointed out: "Entry inclusion is the most arduous part of the undertaking. In many cases the entry words are different in name but identical in content, which very likely incurs repetition; in some other cases the entry words are not decent enough, which may harm the authority of the dictionary. Some of the entries are condensed articles on translation and still some come from the chapter summaries of good monographs, all of them good in the way they were but uneven when presented as dictionary entries. Culling entries from the translation publications is good in that the entries based on the translation works are rich and encompassing, but on the other hand some entries are not often presentable enough as dictionary entries. In one word I did not take all these factors into account when making the dictionary and therefore the dictionary as a whole is not scientific enough" (Sun, 2005: 40)".

Besides, the encyclopedia is also "unbalanced" in entry inclusion, a problem of another kind but again in relation to the status of translation studies as well as the craft of dictionary making. This problem is manifested mostly in the uneven coverage of one aspect in disregard of another. In this encyclopedia, translated literature and translation techniques take up too much space while the so-called theoretical entries are much less and defined in a perfunctory manner. The entries within these major types are also unbalanced. Translated literature, for example, is devoted to literary work, disregarding social and human sciences in general. On closer observation, translated literary works are unbalanced within themselves in terms of direction of translation, that is, more translations are from Chinese than into Chinese. Lack of balance is more often found at the bottom level, that is, between specific entries. An example is the inclusion of 归化 (domestication) alone without its sister entry 异化 (alienation).

Regarding translation interpretation, theoretical terminologies are mostly composed essays while practical entries are mostly quoted literature; definition style and the language are widely different from entry to entry. Secondly, some entries are very often defined in the non-dictionary text style of, say, in-depth deduction, trivial textual criticism, close review, copious argumentation, endless enumeration, overstatement, assumption, connotation, suggestion and lyric outburst, etc. For example, is given on page 251, 近些年来, 我国广告语言发生了很大的变化, 开始出现了一些引人入胜、刻意求新的广告语, 但也不乏有一些译文质量低劣的广告, 其症结就在于以这习惯于采用直译的方法, 原文有什么,

译文就有什么，原文怎么表达，译文也就怎么表达。

Also practical entries are mostly based on English-Chinese translation or vice versa but some involve a third language of Russian or French, which would not find a suitable target readership. And some borrowed terminologies are defined as in their mother discipline rather than in relation to translation studies, which is a common problem with specialized dictionary of multi-disciplinary or inter-disciplinary nature. An example is on page 332.

借代辞格之一。指一个事物或概念的名称被一个与它密切相关的词代替，或者由原来的词暗示出来。借代的基本条件是甲乙两词要具备一定关系，说话者或作者为了一定的目的借甲词代替乙词，如借原因代替结果，借具体代替抽象(如借“坟墓”这一具体物体代替“死”这一抽象概念)，借种代类，以部分代全体，以工具代功能等等。借代具有创造生动的形象代替一般化的效果，广泛适用于文学作品之中。

(许钧)

A theoretical terminology in an encyclopedia of this type and multitude should have given, if possible, a brief definition, theorist concerned, disciplinary background, significance or influence in the translation world, limitations, related terms and bibliography.

As the first all-field theoretical encyclopedia in mainland China, many problems are bound to come up in the dictionary making. It can be inferred from the analysis above that the dictionary, although not without defects in some other aspects, is for the most part more academic than referential. And the dictionary making is not enlightened enough in a lexicographical perspective. In other words, the dictionary maker is very well equipped with field knowledge but not as well trained in the art and craft of dictionary making, a fact pointing to the urgency of the combination of the two if a new generation of dictionary is to come out in better quality. This speaks again and forcefully for the fact that field expertise alone is not enough to make a good specialized dictionary and that the old way of making dictionary from experience needs to be reinforced with dictionary theories.

### **Aspects of translation**

A team headed by Sun Yingchun, 'Aspects of Translation' was published by China Esperanto Press in 1999. It is the third all-field theoretical ETS in China, with a word stock of 1,660 entries. The purpose of the encyclopedia is two fold: ...to make contributions to the disciplinary construction of translation studies in China on the one hand and collect a diversity of technical literature for the benefit of translation scholars in their theoretical research or for their general improvement (Sun, 1999: Preface)".

For this purpose, the encyclopedia upheld five

principles in dictionary making: To be descriptive, comprehensive, theoretical, practical, and open-ended. The encyclopedia adopts a conceptually classified entry arrangement. The encyclopedia text was presented in nine major types, each arranged phonologically. These nine entry types are terms and theoretical concepts, translation methods and techniques, analysis of translated literature, renowned scholars in translation field, selected introduction of translation monographs, selected introduction of famous translated works, translation examples: English-Chinese and Chinese-English, translation institutes and periodicals and Chinese-English translation terminologies.

The encyclopedia is incomplete in component parts. Before the encyclopedia text are title leaf, two honorary prefaces, editor's preface and a semantically classified list of entries. After the main body are two appendixes: five major periods in Western translation history and major translation events. A user's guide and a phonological index are missing, which are indispensable to an all-field dictionary of this type and magnitude. Moreover, the encyclopedia does not follow a consistent format throughout. Only two out of the nine entry types-selected academic works and selected translated works have an independent index attached to them. Selected translated works are further classified into selected translated works: Chinese-English and selected translated works: Foreign-Chinese in the dictionary text, the latter of which, however, is nowhere to be found in the list of entries. Definition is even more problematic. Entries of the same type are not defined in the same pattern, not to say entries of different types. The major entry types, terms and theoretical concepts are mostly quoted literature, but some of the entry texts contain source of information and some do not; some provide English equivalents for the introduced items, while some do not.

Regarding the entry word, customary entry word goes hand in hand with reverse entry word of identical entries.

Examples are 翻译的过程 (translation process) and 程序论 (翻译的) [procedure (translation)], each defined in great depth: A long essay quoted from Tan Zaixi and Liu Miqing respectively about the process of translation. As was said earlier reverse entry word is employed to highlight the word of distinctive value and improve the accessibility of the dictionary. But when entries of identical meaning appear together without cross-reference to each other, there will come what is previously mentioned overt overlap, which is very harmful to the dictionary system. Examples are 审美主体 (翻译的) [aesthetic subjectivity (translation)] and 翻译的审美主体(translation aesthetic subjectivity).

The two entries are identical in terms of content in almost every way except the source of information: One from Liu Miqing's monograph in 1990 and the other from his journal paper in 1986. The difference in the source of

information alone, however, hardly justifies their inclusion in one and the same encyclopedia. Another pair of 审美客体 (翻译的) [aesthetic objectivity (translation)] and 翻译的审美客体 (translation aesthetic objectivity) are faulty in the same way. As a consequence, encyclopedia coverage is wasted and quality damaged. Although this is not the rule of the encyclopedia, it impairs the encyclopedia all the same and therefore should be avoided as much as possible. The solution is to have one entry empty, that is, an entry in name pointing to its reversed entry word that is really defined so as to avoid repetition, save space and improve accessibility.

The encyclopedia is unsystematic. Most entry words in terms, theoretical concepts, translation methods and techniques are defective in that they are either random word combinations or individual coinages without a constant central meaning like 拟古笔法 (archaistic method), 拙劣与工巧 (clumsiness and handicraft), 异曲贵在同工 (employ different methods with equal success), 适如其所译 (appropriate translation), 汉语之神摄方法 (Chinese approaches of similarity in spirit), etc. And still some are very verbiage and wordy in language that they do not make presentable entry words. Examples are 准确和传神有无矛盾 (if there are some conflicts between accuracy and similarity in spirit), 找出典故的来历 (to find out the origin of allusion), 怎样做到神似 (how to achieve similarity in spirit), 字典上难以查到的产品名称的英译 (the English translation of products which can not be found in the dictionary), 欣赏才能再现 (reproduction after appreciation), etc. The above entries do not live up to terminological principles in both language and content.

Major entry types conflict each other. Analysis of translated literature and translation examples: English-Chinese and Chinese-English are very much identical entries and take up too much space (482,460 words in total). Specific entries repeat themselves, too. Entries on Nida, for example, are as many as six: “等效翻译”的局限性 (the limitations of equivalence translation) and 等效翻译的主要原则 (the main principles of equivalence translation) on page 14, 动态对等 (dynamic equivalence) and 动态对等与形式对等 (dynamic equivalence and formal equivalence) on page 18; 奈达翻译思想 (Nida's translation thoughts) on page 79 and 奈达 (Nida) on page 569. They make what is mentioned overt overlap. Covert overlap is everywhere. Under translation methods and techniques, for example, is 中英语言、文化之别 (the differences between Chinese

and English language and culture), which gives seven common translation techniques proposed by Liu Miqing: Conversion between parts of speech, conversion between negative and positive, conversion between sentence patterns, conversion of voice, conversion of mood and conversion between noun and pronoun. Exactly the same techniques appear again under the name of transference and similar entries in terms and theoretical concepts.

Entries are not presented as a hierarchical system. Linguistics entries are down to specific terms of a sub branch; aesthetics entries, in comparison, give only disciplinary introduction and stop at that; still some other entries are at sub area level only, without a general upper term to cling to. The examples of the latter case are 翻译理论的职能 (the functions of translation theory) and 翻译理论的指导意义 (the guiding significance of translation theory), two lower terms presupposing an umbrella term of 翻译理论 (translation theory), which, however, is absent. Similarly, there are 翻译学的途径 (approaches to translation studies) and 翻译学的问世 (the birth of translation studies) without a 翻译学 (translation studies) to nestle under. There are gross omissions in entry inclusion. In this encyclopedia, nine large entry types which together touch on practical as well as theoretical aspects of translation are discussed. Translation figures under Chinese family name Hu include 胡风 (Hu Feng)、胡汉亮 (Hu Hanliang)、胡品清 (Hu Pinqing)、胡山源 (Hu Shanyuan)、胡仲持 (Hu Zhongchi) but unfortunately in default of 胡适, an omission that, consciously or unconsciously, is not to be excused, for Hu Shi is a person of great influence in both translation practice and theory.

The entry explanation is inconsistent. A considerable number of entries are pure quotations from other sources with only one noteworthy addition: The source of information at the end of the entry text. This descriptive documentation of existing literature is an ancient lexicographical legacy that can be found in both China and West. For example, Pliny (23-79) of Ancient Rome made his great encyclopedia *Natural History*, which was a collection of great books written by 473 writers up to his time. The Chinese encyclopedias (*Leishu* 类书), likewise, are reference books consisting of extracts from source literature extant at the time of compilation. By the time of Ming dynasties, many well-known examples of *leishu* were published, e.g. *Yiwenleiju* (艺文类聚), *Taipingyulan* (太平御览) and *Yongledadian* (永乐大典). As a long cherished method of making a dictionary, this descriptive documentation has as many merits as demerits: On the one hand it helps preserve source data as they are and in

this sense is strictly descriptive; on the other hand it is restricted by the theoretical dimension available and for that matter is prone to narrowness of mind and hardly in keeping up with the latest development of translation studies.

A complete terminological entry should give, if possible, a brief introduction, initiator, evolution, influence, existing problems and prospects, etc. All these are wanted in the above definition in the name of the descriptive collection of the raw materials. The result is the fragmented and ambiguous quotation out of the original context. The problem is that a straight quotation as such, that is, without any comment or note, is too crude and deficient in depth of discussion. Another obvious weakness of a quoted dictionary is that it has immediately influenced the entry word, which is mostly the original title of a book, article or chapter and as such is not presentable enough as entry word.

In this encyclopedia, most borrowed entries, that is, entries from other related disciplines did not provide source of information at the end and look more like written definitions. The same problem happened in the preceding work: These borrowed entries are defined in their original sense without any reference to translation studies. An example is given on page 8,

词典学 (Lexicography) 应用词汇学的一个分支，研究词典编纂的原则和实践，即对词项进行搜索、比较、注释和分类，编纂成书。

Some native entries of translation studies are defined in a sloppy way, too, as the example on page 175.

语内翻译 (intralinguistic translation) 语内翻译是指同一种语言的不同语言变体的翻译，如把古汉语写的《三国演义》译成现代汉语，把不同职业的行话亦称全民族通俗语言等。

At first glance, the definition is insufficient in many ways. It did not give a basic concept, initiator, disciplinary background, significance, influence, problems, and other related concepts such as 语际翻译 (interlinguistic translation) and 符际翻译 (intersemiotic translation), nor the source of information, which are all indispensable for a dictionary of this type and scope.

As was mentioned in brief earlier, this encyclopedia discussed adopted a hybrid entry arrangement: Semantic + phonological, which could meet basic reference needs when the dictionary user is familiar with the classification and the entry class of his reference target. The problem is that under each large entry class all entries are arranged in order of Chinese pinyin, without any supplementary access structure, not even an index of phonologically-rearranged entries to facilitate the consultation process.

Another fault is that between many closely related entries no cross-reference system is found, which is unacceptable in any dictionary of this genre and magnitude.

### Significance of the study

In this paper, a critical thinking is used to clarify goals, examines procedures, discerns hidden values, evaluates evidence, and assesses conclusions of three ETS in China. "Critical" in this context does not mean "disapproval" or "negative". There are many positive and useful uses of critical thinking, for example, in formulating a workable solution to a complex personal problem, or analyzing the assumptions and the quality of the methods used in scientifically arriving at a reasonable ETS dictionary product. In other words, using strong critical thinking we might evaluate the dictionary product as worthy of acceptance to the users. Critical thinking can occur whenever we judges, decide, or solve a problem in ETS compilation and production.

As the saying goes in China, things at their birth are bound to be imperfect. The ETS published in China are indeed imperfect, for example, these three encyclopedias do not include suggestions for further reading, and need further improving. But they nevertheless prepared the ground for a new ETS family in a much elevated profile, and for that matter are all trial-blazing in their distinctive way. For a new ETS generation to appear in a refined shape, we first have to face up the problems, however gross and embarrassing. This is the motive of the criticism of the three ETS in China. The study discussed in the above informs us that ETS in China still leaves much to be desired in presenting translation studies to the expectation. The problems are both translational and lexicographical.

Translatologically, ETS in China are somewhat defective in providing a systematic inventory of entries, inadequate in giving scientific definition and insufficient in standardizing field terms and presenting disciplinary framework. Some of the problems relate to particular developmental stage of translation studies and the final solution has to wait until after translation studies develop into a more mature state. Take entry inclusion for example. In the earliest period, one of the most striking malpractices is that linguistic terms considerably outnumber native entries of translation studies. This is not difficult to understand if we consider that translation studies then and there were regarded as a sub discipline of linguistics. Less serious problems of the similar nature occurred between the component parts within translation studies: traditional and modern, Western and Chinese, practice and theory, and applied and theoretical theories, etc. These problems were largely inevitable because translation studies itself then was still in its infancy and the language used in the field still taking shape.

Some other problems, however, happened because the



compilers refused to listen to the theoretical scholarship of modern lexicography. These problems are more lexicographical than translational, such as bad dictionary structure, poor accessibility and improper treatment of statistical and encyclopedic information. Still some problems are both lexicographical and translational, like unsystematic entry words and unscientific entry definition.

To sufficiently solve these problems, the compilers have to learn from the successful compilation practice of specialized dictionary in general and take into account the disciplinary nature of translation studies in particular, with more attention to the latter. Landau observed, "...it is much more important that the editors of a specialized dictionary know the principles of lexicography than that they be experts in the subject of the dictionary. Long before they have finished editing the dictionary they will be expert enough in the terminology, but if they have not begun with an understanding of lexicography, they will not learn it from their editing, and the dictionary will suffer as a result (Landau, 2001: 387)".

This means that if the specialized lexicography is to be of real help to ETS compilation, it has to combine its general principles with the status quo of translation studies. Field knowledge will see to it that the knowledge in the dictionary is up to date, true to the fact and arrayed in interesting variety, while lexicographical sense will warrant that all the information be presented in a way that is user-friendly and systematic.

## CONCLUSION

The main objective of the study was to investigate the presentation and content of three encyclopedias of translation studies published in China. The encyclopedias of translation studies discussed above are indeed the documentations and creations that reflect social values and beliefs in China as well as propagate and preserve them. The situational factors, such as the development of translation studies, the intentions and academic capability of compilers and contributors influence the compilation and production of ETS, and vice versa. For example, the issues of what entries to include and what to delete in the process of ETS compilation are largely determined by the encyclopedia makers as individual perceivers and interpreters of the translation field. The chances, therefore, are that there are perhaps absence, or overlap, of not only some particular entries but also of an entire entry type. Alma Graham (1975: 165) has said, "The dictionary is an ideological creation. It is a mirror of society and of the dominant ideology. As an indisputable

authority and a cultural tool, the dictionary plays a part in establishing and preserving not only language, but also attitudes and ideology (Bowker, 2006: 60)".

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This article is sponsored by China Education Ministry Research Program "Computer-aided Translation (CAT) Teaching: Theory and Practice (09YJA740072)". Thanks to Joni Strohm for helping to edit the paper.

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