

Strategies for webpage trans-editing: A Socio-cultural study

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Webpage trans-editing is a new trend in the study of translation variation. Based on previous research in news trans-editing and general translation studies, this paper firstly introduces some new types of trans-editing practice in order to redefine “trans-editing”. From a socio-cultural perspective, a contrastive analysis of source texts and target texts is conducted to explore several strategies for webpage trans-editing. At the lexical and phrasal levels, this paper discusses the following strategies: domestication, foreignization, deletion, conversion, and explanation. At the discourse level, strategies of heading, selection, and restructuring are elaborated upon. In order to analyze the potential social and cultural factors involved in the choice of strategies in trans-editing, examples are selected from the internet, ranging from the areas of culture and politics to entertainment.

Keywords: trans-editing, webpage, translation variation, social and cultural factors, strategies, adaptation

1 Introduction

In Translation Variation Theory, Huang (2002) defines translation variation as an activity that aims at “deriving the relevant contents of the original version by using the appropriate adaptations¹...in the light of specified readers’ needs under specified conditions” (p. 35). Huang (2002) goes on to identify eleven translation varieties² including trans-editing (TE). Huang (2000) defines trans-editing as a special form of translation variation that involves the simultaneous interaction of both *translating* and *editing*. The source text (ST) is trans-edited such that the

¹ These include: expansion, deletion, editing, commentary, condensation, combination, and reformation (for more information refer to Huang, 2000, 2002).

² The eleven translation varieties: selective translation, translation and editing, translated narration, condensed translation, translated summarization, translated commentary, summarized translation commentary, explanatory translation, translation rearrangement, translation and writing, reference translation (for more information refer to Huang 2000, 2002).

most valuable information (to the particular readership) is reorganized in a sequence that is logical and acceptable to readers of the target language (TL). The emergence of new technologies has dramatically changed translation such that traditional “full” translation methods no longer meet the demands of the translation market. Insofar that TE is an efficient and time-saving type of translation since it selects only the information that is highly relevant to readers, it has become the focus of much academic attention in the field of Translation Studies (TS).

Mossop (2006) points out that the technological history of translation can be divided into pre- and post-computer eras. Webpage translation demands special translation techniques that are different from those involved in traditional, full translation. Trans-editing responds to this demand in that it is a very flexible and efficient translation strategy.

There have been several historical trends or approaches developed in TS that have viewed translation from different vantage points: linguistics (Catford, 1965), culture (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1990), ideology (Leung, 2006) and sociology (Wolf & Prune, 2007). In meeting the demands of localization within the larger context of globalblization, trans-editing (and the trans-editing of webpages in particular) has involved more social and cultural adaptation.

This paper aims to analyze social and cultural factors in the choice of strategies for webpage trans-editing. Substantiated with examples from a number of official websites and the author’s teaching material, this paper investigates the relevant strategies applied at the lexical, phrasal, and discursual levels of translation. The findings are expected to inform real-life webpage trans-editing practice in English–Chinese and Chinese–English contexts.

2 Background

2.1 Trans-editing

Over the last decade, much of the research on trans-editing (Cheng, 2002; Huang 2000, 2002; Li, 2001; Sorby, 2008; Vuorinen, 1997; Xu, 1998) has focused on news trans-editing. Sorby (2008) conducts a comparative study of the complimentary versus derogatory word usage in the translation of news from English to Chinese. She points out that, while dealing with words that bear negative or positive connotation, translators usually transform the ST “through choosing the preferred meaning; changing behaviour, concept and mood; particularization; omitting or softening the critical tones” (p.25). In her article, “Bring the News Back Home: Strategies of Acculturation and Foreignization,” Bassnett (2005) defines *news translation* as being different from the general term

translation, or traditional full translation. She also claims that news translation displays a stronger tendency toward acculturation.³

Many scholars in TS from China have contributed to the research on news trans-editing from English to Chinese or the other way around. Among them, Liu and Huang (2001), and Xu (1998) have addressed the basic principles involved in TE; Chen (2009) has discussed the ideology-related norms in English–Chinese news trans-editing, and Zhang (2004) has analyzed the trans-editing process from a functional point of view. To the extent that much TE research has focused mainly on news and journalism, this paper will first attempt to address the trans-editing of other text types besides news.

2.2 Webpage trans-editing

With the advent of the Internet, translation has become an activity that is closely linked to computer networks. Scholars of information technology tend to tackle technological problems in their research on translation, while those from the translation field itself focus on the theoretical and strategic aspects of network translation. Tang and Gentzler (2008) point out that translation has become a network-supported commercial process because of globalization. At the same time, webpage translation, such as that of government portal websites or the websites of multinational corporations, needs to be localized in order to provide target readers translations that they find highly acceptable.

Webpage translation is a diverse enterprise, which covers an array of topics including (among others) economics, politics, science, technology, culture, and entertainment. Consequently, the translation of webpages requires knowledge of various fields and translation strategies to cope with different text types. However, due to the constraints of time and space as well as regulatory constraints, webpage translation has unique features. For example, unlike full translation, less relevant information (relative to the readership) can be omitted. The layout of a webpage can also be redesigned to cater to the target culture, and information can be reshuffled for the convenience of target readers.

³ Acculturation is the eradication of traces of “otherness” in a text so as to reshape the text for domestic consumption in accordance with the norms and expectations that prevail in the target culture. It brings a text more completely into the target culture since that text is effectively aimed at readers with no knowledge of any other culture (Bassnett, 2005).

2.3 The definition of trans-editing

Huang (2000) groups trans-editing (originally named “translation and editing”) together with another ten translation varieties (see footnote 2) as a major type of translation variation. TE has gone far beyond the field of news. Based on a review of the literature, I have come across the following types of trans-editing:

- i. webpage trans-editing (see section 2.1.2),
- ii. classical works trans-editing, such as the adapted versions of Shakespearean works or Bible stories for children,
- iii. summary reports, such as synopses of academic papers in TL for general readers,
- iv. chart trans-editing, such as transcribing graphical business information into statements in the TL, and
- v. movie reviews trans-edited from reviews in the SL, which may even include the translator’s own opinion of the movie.

In this way, trans-editing can be redefined as a variety of translation, which involves the deployment of various adaptation skills to select and restructure information, to transform text types, and to edit culturally sensitive issues in order to cater to the needs of various readerships. Trans-editors, who have been likened to tailors, act as editors or filters to pick up or trim off information in order to adapt a social or cultural reality in the ST into a corresponding reality in the target text (TT). Compared with fully translated texts, trans-edited works are free in style and form, and satisfy the particular needs of a target readership.

3 Methodology

This paper investigates strategies applied in webpage trans-editing and aims to identify socio-cultural factors that may impose constraints on the choice of trans-editing strategies. All the English data are selected and retrieved from the following websites: *The New York Times*, *British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)*, *The Daily Telegraph*, and *eBeijing*. The Chinese versions are from *People’s Daily Online*, *Sohu*, or from students’ revised work. Most of the examples are displayed first in the source language, then in the target language. The Chinese versions have been augmented with glosses. For the convenience of contrastive analysis, different translation versions and back translation versions (hereafter: BT) are also provided. The analysis mainly focuses on socio-cultural factors, such as cultural traditions, historic events, political attitudes, and logical sequencing.

As Venuti (1995) says that translation processes are mediated by the cultural values of the TL in a hierarchical order, the analysis here is conducted first at the

lexical and phrasal levels, and then at the discourse level. Note that these levels interact with each other within the larger external social-cultural frame.

Since trans-editing at the discourse level involves different versions of source texts, all the texts are attached in the appendices. Due to the focus of the analysis and the length of the target text, back translation is not provided for the full Chinese text but for the title and subtitles, which are vital to restructuring.

4 TE Strategies at the three levels

Strategies for webpage trans-editing have undergone many adaptations from the traditional translation strategies since the advent of online networks. What are the strategies frequently taken by webpage trans-editors? Chen (2009) points out that cultural particularity, target readership, and ideology may have effects on the choice of trans-editing strategies. What is the influence of socio-cultural factors on the choice of strategies in webpage trans-editing? How are the strategies carried out in the practice of TE? Previous research has addressed strategies but has done so without systematic categorization or practical exemplification. For example, strategies at the discourse level have been theoretically proposed by Huang (2000, 2002) and Xu (2003), but without detailed illustration. The following discussion is conducted at the lexical, phrasal and discourse levels to exemplify what the different strategies are and how those strategies are applied in webpage trans-editing.

4.1 Lexical and phrasal levels

At the lexical and phrasal levels, translators (and especially trans-editors) need to be aware of connotative and symbolic meanings since these are the components of pragmatic meaning (Sophia, 2000). Based on the research of Huang (2000, 2002) and my own previous research, I will discuss the following trans-editing strategies frequently adopted at the lexical and phrasal levels: domestication, foreignization, deletion, conversion, and explanation.

4.1.1 Domestication vs. foreignization

Venuti (2008) has discussed two translation strategies: foreignization and domestication. The former, which is more salient in translationese,⁴ retains the “foreign” features of the ST while the goal of the latter is to reproduce the ST author’s intended meaning in an idiomatic and natural style appropriate to the TL.

(1)

七夕
(*qi xi*)

Gloss: seven night

Translation 1: Chinese Valentine’s Day

Translation 2: Double Seventh Day

In the culture section of the official Beijing Government website there is an article introducing the traditional Chinese festival “七夕(*qi xi*),” which is held on the seventh day of the seventh month of the Chinese lunar calendar. “Qi xi” is translated as “Chinese Valentine’s Day,” which is a typical example of domestication (from the perspective of the target readership). Since the purpose of the website is to attract tourists and provide some basic cultural information, the partial mapping between the traditional Chinese festival and the Valentine’s Day of the West will help the target readers respond to the text in a similar way as Chinese readers do. In that way, the otherwise unfamiliar Chinese festival will be brought closer to the target audience because it has been acculturated to suit its readership.

Conversely, “Double Seventh Day” is an example of the use of *foreignization* to attract the target readers’ attention to the unfamiliarity of Chinese culture, and thereby pique their interest. In this way, this strategy can prompt readers to further explore relevant Chinese customs, as well as idioms and sayings developed out of the festival.

⁴ Translationese: Translations exhibit their own specific lexico-grammatical and syntactic characteristics. These “fingerprints” left by the translation process were first described by Gellerstam and named translationese (Alexander, 2010).

4.1.2 Explanation

To bridge the cultural gaps between the SL and the TL, trans-editors can provide explanations by adding further details within brackets or footnotes, or by transplanting cultural aspects into the translation itself. However, they must be cognizant of the acceptability of the translation and the patience of target readers: the explanation needs to be precise and concise, and avoid providing detailed background information.

(2)

中秋节
(*zhong qiu jie*)

Gloss: mid autumn festival

Translation: *Mid-Autumn Festival: A Time for Reunion*

In the same article from the Beijing Government website, the term 中秋节(*zhong qiu jie*) is translated as “Mid-Autumn Festival: A Time for Reunion.” The translation has adopted the strategy of explanation. The phrase following the colon is additional information compared with the source term. For those who are unfamiliar with Chinese culture, the word “mid-autumn” conveys nothing but the concept of time. However, the added “a time for reunion” pinpoints the significant feature of this traditional Chinese festival. The added information can help target readers bridge the cultural gap between the SL and TL, and induce a similar response to the target readership. In this way, the explanation assists the target readers’ understanding of the source information.

4.1.3 Deletion

Information loss is inevitable in translation because of cultural gaps. A target text may lack certain culturally relevant features that are present in the source text; therefore, loss in translation is “due to the fact that the backgrounds, shared knowledge, cultural assumptions and learnt responses of monolingual TL speakers are inevitably culture-bound” (Rastall, 1994, p.40). Deletion is adopted when no culturally corresponding terms exist or because of sensitive political issues. As Seidman (2006) points out:

“...[T]ranslation is necessarily also a political negotiation, it appears not strictly as a linguistic exercise but also in a variety of relational modes: translation as colonialist, imperialist, or missionary appropriation but also translation as risk, as assimilation, as treason, as dislocation, as survival.” (p.9).

Translation has long been perceived as a political act. To work within the constraints of publishing rules and governmental regulations, and to avoid sensitive issues or to soothe targeted readers, trans-editors usually take political factors into consideration. Trans-editors are different from traditional translators because they enjoy more freedom even though they have to trans-edit according to the requirements or needs of the readership.

(3)

At that time, China was in the throes of Chairman Mao Zedong's bloody Cultural Revolution.

Even though the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976) has brought serious nation-wide disaster and turmoil in modern Chinese history, Chinese people are still grateful to and respectful of Chairman Mao for his extraordinary contributions. Therefore, the original word choice “bloody,” which is derogative, will not be emotionally accepted in the Chinese context. Searching Google, there is no such combination “Mao Zedong,” “bloody” and “the Cultural Revolution” in Chinese. Therefore, when trans-editing the original sentence, trans-editors may delete “bloody” from their texts to soften the tone and to avoid irritation among the target readership.

4.1.4 Conversion

With respect to complimentary and derogative language in Chinese, Sorby (2008, p.19) notices “single English words which may have a positive or negative connotation, depending on their context, are translated into Chinese using separate terms.” For example, the simple English word “die” can be translated into Chinese complementarily as “牺牲(*xi sheng*—sacrifice one’s life; die a martyr’s death; lay down one’s life)、献身(*xian shen* – give one’s life to; devote one’s life to)、仙逝(*xian shi* – pass away),” or derogatively as “毙命(*bi ming* – violent death)、暴毙(*bao bi* – sudden death)、蹬腿儿(*deng tuier* – kick the bucket).” Sorby goes on to point out:

“[C]omplimentary and derogatory terms play such a large role in the Chinese language, it is very important for translators to make the correct judgment when using the strongly connoted words in their translation in order to avoid either creating an unexpected effect or leading to serious misunderstandings” (p. 23).

In TE, trans-editors may change the original complimentary/derogative feature of the lexical term in order to cater to the ideology of target readers.

(4)

China ‘patriot’ sabotages auction

Translation: 佳士得巴黎拍卖圆明园兽首 神秘中国买家竞拍成功
(*jiashide bali paimai yuanmingyuan shouhou, shenmi zhongguo maijia jingpai chenggong*)

Gloss: Christie Paris auction the Imperial Summer Palace animal heads mysterious Chinese buyer auction success

BT: Christie auctioned the Chinese Sculptures in Paris. A mysterious Chinese successfully got the bid.

Example (4) is the translation of the title of a report from the BBC’s website. The story concerns the auction of two Chinese sculptures held by Christie’s Auction House in Paris, which was won by a Chinese bidder. “Sabotage” is a rather sensitive word. According to online Oxford English Dictionary, “sabotage” means “the malicious damaging or destruction of an employer’s property by workmen during a strike, any disabling damage deliberately inflicted, especially which carried out clandestinely in order to disrupt the economic or military resources of an enemy.” It is “malicious” and “clandestine.” To achieve a better title for the TT, the trans-editor needs to be clear about the story of this auction, as it is stated in this report: “[The sculptures] were originally taken by British and French troops from the Imperial Summer Palace in October 1860 towards the end of the Second Opium War. China had tried to stop the sale, and later threatened the business of Christie’s in China for having gone ahead.” To most Chinese given this context, the behaviour of the Chinese bidder is patriotic since it stops the illegitimate auction and enables the return of the looted sculptures. Hence, “sabotage” is not translated derogatively as “破坏 (*po huai* – destroy)” but as “竞拍成功 (*jingpai chenggong* – auction success),” which means a successful bidding.

4.2 The discourse level

4.2.1 Restructuring

One of the shortcomings of webpage information is that some articles are not carefully edited due to time constraints. To reproduce the source message in the target text, trans-editors need to restructure the text and omit irrelevant or

redundant information in order to meet the particular needs of target readers. For example, Bible stories or simplified versions of Shakespearean works are published for children. Irrespective of whether the task involves intra-textual or inter-textual trans-editing⁵, trans-editors need to restructure or reorganize the TT such that the TT is consistent with the ideology of the TL. The Appendices A and B together provide a good example of inter-textual trans-editing.

Appendix A consists of three articles in memory of Gerald Ford from *The Daily Telegraph* and *New York Times*. Appendix B is the TT trans-edited from Appendix A, with reference to students' translation practice along with a trans-edited article from the website www.people.com.cn. The STs have been systematically restructured into a Chinese text (Appendix B(i): "The Legendary Life...") with four clearly named sub-sections (B(ii-v)). Various aspects of Ford's life have been selected from the three articles and grouped into the four different sections which are headed by distinct titles: (ii) the Unprecedented, (iii) the Embarrassing, (iv) the Lucky, and (v) the Controversial aspects of his life story. The following examples illustrate the treatment of each of the four section titles in Appendix B.

B. ii.

史无前例：未经选举当上副总统和总统
(shì wú qián lì wéi jīng xuǎn jǔ dāng shàng fù zǒng tǒng hé zǒng tǒng)

Gloss: history no previous example: no election be vice president and president

BT: Unprecedented: President and Vice-president without Election

B. iii.

尴尬往事：摔下“空军一号”
(gāngǎ wǎng shì shuāi xià kōng jūn yī hào)

Gloss: embarrassing past events: falling off Air Force One

BT: Embarrassing: Falling Down from Air Force One

⁵ Intra-textual and inter-textual trans-editing are two major trans-editing types classified by Huang (2002). The former refers to trans-editing of a single text while the latter refers to multi-text trans-editing.

B. iv.

福星高照：躲过两次暗杀
(*fuxing gao zhao duoguo liangci ansha*)

Gloss: lucky star shine high: escape over two times assassinations

BT: Lucky: Surviving Two Assassinations

B. v.

成也“水门”，败也“水门”：赦免尼克松丢总统宝座
(*cheng ye shuimen bai ye shuimen shemian nikesong diu zongtong baozuo*)

Gloss: success be Watergate, failure be Watergate: pardon Nixon lose president throne

BT: Controversial: Watergate – Pardoning Nixon and Losing the Presidency

4.2.2 Headings

Headings, or titles, which may constitute the front page of a website, are similar in function to journalistic headlines. A news headline, if effective, must meet the requirements of capturing the essence of the event and attracting readers' attention.

To illustrate this strategy, the following examples from different websites were chosen from various subject areas like economics, health, and entertainment.

(5)

Mum Doesn't Live with Us Any More

(More than 150,000 UK mothers live apart from their children as courts increasingly give custody to fathers, Catherine Bruton reports on the rise of 'mothers apart.'...)

Translation: 离婚率攀升，“超级奶爸”涌现
(*lihun lv pansheng chaoji naiba yongxian*)

Gloss: divorce rate increase, super daddy spring up

BT: Increase in Divorce and Popularity of “Super Nanny Daddy”

The source headline focuses on the absence of mothers and the lead (i.e., the most important structural element of a story) elaborates on the phenomenon that more children are living with their fathers. The headline in the TT combines the information from the headline and the lead from the ST, and supplies the term “super nanny daddy.” As a title on a webpage, “super nanny daddy” (coined from “super nanny”) is very eye-catching to the target Chinese readership.

(6)

Anne Hathaway to play Judy Garland on film, stage

Translation: “公主” 踏上 “绿野仙踪”
(*gongzhu tashang lvyexianzong*)

Gloss: “princess” steps on “green field and celestial track”

BT: “Princess” on her way to “Wizard of Oz”

The actress, Anne Hathaway, is remembered by the audience for her performance in the movie *The Princess Diaries*. Judy Garland is the actress who starred as Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*. Ms. Hathaway is going to portray Ms. Garland in both film and on stage. The creative adaptation in the headline has greatly increased the acceptability of the TT because the masterpieces of the two actresses are more provocative than their exotic names to the target Chinese readers.

4.2.3 Selection

To restructure the ST, trans-editors need to know how to select the most important information from it.

(7)

福特总统的传奇人生
(*fute zongtong de chuanqi rensheng*)

Gloss: Ford president -de legendary life

BT: The Legendary Life of President Ford

The title in the TT “福特总统的传奇人生 (*fute zongtong de chuanqi rensheng*)” suggests that the TT’s perspective is that of Ford having lived an eventful life. The four subtitles in the TT are guideposts for trans-editors’ selection of only those points that are closely relevant to what each subtitle suggests.

Section one, which is centered on Ford's political life, covers information about his Presidency, Vice-Presidency, and overall political contribution to the U.S.A. Section two is about his embarrassing experiences and negative views of him due to the military withdrawal from Vietnam and dismal economy. The third part is about his personality and his luck. The last section is about the key issue of Ford's life: his controversial act of pardoning Nixon, which directly resulted in his loss of the Presidency. By selecting and reorganizing the major relevant information, trans-editors can produce a TT that is appropriately organized for its audience.

This paper will not discuss other aspects of webpage trans-editing, such as webpage design, layout, or animation since these aspects are not the concern of translators but of webpage designers and administrators.

5 Conclusion

Websites reflect much of the social and cultural aspects of and among societies. To ensure the efficient and successful transmission of information, translators have adopted trans-editing in response to market demands for time-effectiveness and localization of target texts. At each of the lexical, phrasal, and discourse levels, the choice of trans-editing strategies is influenced by socio-cultural factors such as the particular needs of the readership including its conventions, political and cultural norms, and ideology.

At the lexical and phrasal levels, similar to full translation, information can be added or deleted, and the complimentary or derogatory characteristics of a word or phrase may be changed in accordance with the ideology of the target readership. At the discourse level, trans-editors may use strategies of restructuring, adding headings, or selection to efficiently and successfully convey the source information. Hopefully the strategies that have been discussed and illustrated here can inform the work of trans-editing practitioners and student translators.

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Appendix A

i. **The man who healed wounds of Watergate**

(Harnden, 2006)

Gerald Ford, who died on Boxing Day aged 93, was hailed by President George W Bush yesterday as a "man of complete integrity" who helped to bring America together after the Watergate scandal.

Mr Ford was unexpectedly thrust into the United States presidency and worked to heal what he called the "poisonous wounds" left by Richard Nixon's resignation. He had done so "with common sense and kind instincts", Mr Bush said.

In his 895-day presidency he pardoned Mr Nixon – an act that probably cost him the presidency in 1976 when he was narrowly defeated by Jimmy Carter – and ended US involvement in Vietnam.

"On August 9, 1974, he stepped into the presidency without ever having sought the office," Mr Bush said. "He assumed power in a period of great division and turmoil. For a nation that needed healing and for an office that needed a calm and steady hand, Gerald Ford came along when we needed him most."

Mr Bush said his fellow Republican "reflected the best in America's character" and helped restore confidence in the integrity of the presidency through the "honourable conduct" of his administration. One of his unexpected legacies was the rise to prominence of several politicians who came to shape Mr Bush's presidency.

Both Vice-President Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld, who recently resigned as defence secretary, served as Mr Ford's chief of staff.

The only White House occupant never elected either to the presidency or the vice-presidency, Mr Ford became the longest living former president. A former congressman, his highest ambition, he said, had been to become Speaker of the House of Representatives.

His greatest contribution during his presidency, he believed, was to help unify his country after the Nixon era. At his inauguration he declared that "our long national nightmare is over" and vowed to "bound up the internal wounds of Watergate, more painful and more poisonous than those of foreign wars".

His most controversial act was his first one – the pardoning of Mr Nixon "for any crimes he may have committed". There were accusations this was part of an arrangement with his disgraced predecessor but Mr Ford maintained: "There was no deal, period, under no circumstances." Even his most bitter critics later acknowledged that the pardon was an honest, necessary and politically brave act. Senator Edward Kennedy, the senior Democrat who opposed it, later said it was "an extraordinary act of courage that historians recognise was truly in the

national interest".

Mr Ford became vice-president in December 1973 after Spiro Agnew resigned following bribery allegations. Eight months later, he became president when Mr Nixon stepped aside rather than face a Senate trial on charges connected with the burglary of the Democratic National Committee headquarters. While president, he survived two assassination plots within 17 days, but still maintained a White House notable for its openness and informality.

Mr Ford was a high school football star from Grand Rapids, Michigan, who described himself as a "moderate in domestic affairs, an internationalist in foreign affairs and a conservative in fiscal policy".

As president, he seemed the epitome of an ordinary American. The day after his inauguration he made his own breakfast. But his everyman persona became fodder for ridicule. He was lampooned as a clumsy dolt and in June 1975 fell down the steps of Air Force One. Six months later he wiped out on the ski slopes. President Lyndon Johnson was widely quoted as having stated that Congressman Ford was "so dumb he can't walk and chew gum at the same time". In fact, the jibe was crueler and coarser – Johnson had actually said "fart and chew gum".

Bob Hope, who like Mr Ford was a golfing enthusiast, once joked: "It's not hard to find Jerry Ford on a golf course – you just follow the wounded."

The Vietnam War ended in ignominy for America during his presidency. After the fall of Saigon in April 1975, Mr Ford, an early supporter of the war who urged heavier bombing, said: "Today, America can regain the sense of pride that existed before Vietnam. But it cannot be achieved by re-fighting a war that is finished as far as America is concerned."

Damaged by an ailing economy and a fierce primary election challenge from Ronald Reagan, he lost the Oval Office to Jimmy Carter.

Betty Ford, who announced her husband's death, was a divorcee and dancer when they married 58 years ago. She admitted to alcoholism and addiction to prescription drugs while First Lady and later founded the Betty Ford Centre for alcohol treatment and drug rehabilitation.

She said yesterday that despite suffering a series of health scares in recent years, her husband lived a life filled by "God, family and his country". "My family joins me in sharing the difficult news that Gerald Ford, our beloved husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather has passed away," the former First Lady said in a statement.

ii. **Key moments in the life of Gerald Ford**

(*Telegraph*, 28 Dec., 2006)

Dec 6, 1973: Sworn into office as vice-president in the House of Representatives chamber using a Bible given to him by his oldest son, while his wife Betty looked on. He had refused Richard Nixon's insistence that he take the oath in the White House. Americans already believe he will soon become their president.

Aug 9, 1974: Nixon resigns and is replaced by Ford, who declares in his inauguration speech: "My fellow Americans, our long national nightmare is over. Our Constitution works. Our great Republic is a government of laws and not of men. Here, the people rule."

Sept 8, 1974: Grants a "full, free, and absolute pardon unto Richard Nixon for all offences against the United States which he has committed or may have committed or taken part in". Critics accuse him of striking a deal with his predecessor.

April 30, 1975: Americans are lifted from the roof of the US Embassy in Saigon by helicopters as the city falls to North Vietnamese troops. A week earlier, Ford had said that the Vietnam war "is finished as far as America is concerned".

June 1, 1975: Falls down the steps of Air Force One after slipping in the rain as he arrived in Austria. He says in a speech to his guests later in the day: "Thank you for your gracious welcome to Salzburg – and I am sorry that I tumbled in."

Sept, 5 1975: Lynette "Squeaky" Fromme, a member of the notorious Manson Family cult, is wrestled to the ground in Sacramento as she aims a loaded pistol at Ford as he leaves the Senator Hotel. Just 17 days later, Sara Jane Moore, a Left-wing zealot, fires two shots at Ford in San Francisco. She misses.

Nov 8, 1976: Jimmy Carter, the Democrat governor of Georgia, narrowly beats Ford to the presidency. Ford is damaged by a primary challenge from the conservative Ronald Reagan, a sluggish economy and his pardon of Mr Nixon.

Oct 4, 1982: Ford's wife, who had been an alcoholic and addicted to pain killers, opens the Betty Ford Centre in California for the treatment of drug and alcohol addiction.

iii. **Gerald Ford dies; Nixon's successor in '74 crisis was 93**

(The New York Times, 27 Dec., 2006)

Former President Gerald R. Ford, who was thrust into the presidency in 1974 in the wake of the Watergate scandal but who lost his own bid for election after pardoning President Richard M. Nixon, has died, according to a statement issued late last night by his wife, Betty Ford.

He was 93, making him the longest living former president, surpassing Ronald Reagan, who died in 2004, by just over a month.

The statement did not give a cause, place or time of death, but Mr. Ford, the 38th president, had been in and out of the hospital since January 2006 when he suffered pneumonia, most recently in October at the Eisenhower Medical Center in Rancho Mirage, Calif., for medical tests. He returned to his home in Rancho Mirage after five days of hospitalization.

"My family joins me in sharing the difficult news that Gerald Ford, our beloved husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather has passed away at 93 years of age," Mrs. Ford said in a statement issued from her husband's office in Rancho Mirage, also the location of the Betty Ford Center. "His life was filled with love of God, his family and his country."

President Bush praised Mr. Ford for his contributions to the nation "in an hour of national turmoil and vision," in a statement released early today from his ranch in Texas.

"With his quiet integrity, common sense, and kind instincts, President Ford helped heal our land and restore public confidence in the presidency," Mr. Bush said. "The American people will always admire Gerald Ford's devotion to duty, his personal character, and the honorable conduct of his administration."

Mr. Ford, who was the only person to lead the country without having been elected as president or vice president, occupied the White House for just 896 days – starting from a hastily arranged ceremony on Aug. 9, 1974, and ending with his defeat by Jimmy Carter in 1976. But they were pivotal days of national introspection, involving America's first definitive failure in a war and the first resignation of a president.

After a decade of division over Vietnam and two years of trauma over the Watergate scandals, Jerry Ford, as he called himself, radiated a soothing familiarity. He might have been the nice guy down the street suddenly put in charge of the nation, and if he seemed a bit predictable, he was also safe, reliable and reassuring. He placed no intolerable intellectual or psychological burdens on a weary land, and he lived out a modest philosophy. "The harder you work, the luckier you are," he said once in summarizing his career. "I worked like hell."

Gerald Rudolph Ford was born on July 14, 1913, in Omaha to Leslie Lynch King and Dorothy Ayer King. He rose to House minority leader in 1963 and served in the House until 1973, when Vice President Spiro T. Agnew resigned,

and President Nixon appointed Mr. Ford to succeed Mr. Agnew.

When Mr. Ford took the oath of president in 1974, the economy was in disarray, an energy shortage was worsening, allies were wondering how steadfast the United States might be as a partner and Mr. Nixon, having resigned rather than face impeachment for taking part in the Watergate cover-up, was flying to seclusion in San Clemente, Calif.

There was a collective sense of relief as Mr. Ford, in the most memorable line of his most noteworthy speech, declared that day, "Our long national nightmare is over."

Appendix B

i. 福特总统的传奇人生

(The Legendary Life of President Ford)

美国前总统杰拉尔·鲁道夫·福特于12月26日去世，享年93岁，是迄今美国历史上最长寿的总统。

鲁道夫·福特生性温厚谦逊、随和，以至于林登·约翰逊总统取笑当时还是议员的福特甚至“不能一边走路，一边嚼口香糖”。然而就是这样一位“好好先生”，一路福星高照，将美国从“水门事件”以及越南战争的阴影中解脱出来，成就了传奇一生。

ii. 史无前例：未经选举当上副总统和总统

(Unprecedented: President and Vice-president without Election)

1973年10月，副总统阿格纽因贪污丑闻辞职，福特因其良好形象和与尼克松总统多年的良好私交而被任命为副总统。八个月之后，尼克松因“水门事件”被迫辞职，福特直接就任美国第三十八任总统，福特成为美国历史上唯一一位未经选举而接连担任副总统和总统职务的人。

福特接手的是一个经过越战的烂摊子，这注定他的总统之路将荆棘密布，而尼克松犯下的错误，更是打碎了美国人对政府的最后一点信任。福特的首要任务就是恢复民众对白宫的信任。布什总统在追悼词中评价福特总统用其“不事张扬的正直、人所共有的感性和善良的本能”帮助美国人治愈了创伤，恢复了公众对国家的信心。

1975年4月，福特宣布越南战争结束，他带领美国人走过了越战结束后最困难、最混沌的日子。在内部最混乱的时候，重新团结国家，鼓舞人心，这是福特短暂总统的生涯的最大成就。

iii. **尴尬往事：摔下“空军一号”**

(Embarrassing: Falling down from Air Force One)

1975年六月一日，福特前往奥地利访问，那天刚下雨，他不慎从“空军一号”的楼梯上摔下。事后，他在演讲中自嘲说：“感谢你们的热情欢迎，抱歉我摔进了萨尔斯堡”。

除了人们的不理解，福特还面临着异常严峻的经济形势。福特虽殚精竭虑，但1975年1月失业率仍创下了33年来的最高纪录。全国各地响起一片谴责政府无能的抗议声。与此同时，柬埔寨和南越的亲美政权随着美军的撤出相继垮台，福特匆忙派兵到西贡帮助撤侨，千家万户的电视上出现了难民抱着直升机起落架仓皇逃命的画面。福特给美国民众留下了妥协退让、软弱无能的印象，有人甚至戏称他为“白宫里的童子军”

iv. **福星高照：躲过两次暗杀**

(Lucky: Surviving Two Assassinations)

福特虽然在任期内没有干出多少像样的政绩，但他温厚谦逊、随和的个性却让大多数人对他的尊敬有加，称他是美国最老实的总统。命运女神也在眷顾着这位“好好先生”。在任期间，福特曾两次躲过暗杀，大难不死。1975年9月5日，福特夫妇参加一次集会时，一位红衣女郎掏枪对准他，但是因为枪支故障而没能射出子弹。十几天后，福特在观看一次展览时，一位当过联邦调查局密探的女士从提包里掏出左轮手枪，向大约40英尺外的福特射出一发子弹。不过因为看热闹的人破坏了杀手的视线，子弹偏离了几英尺。

v. **成也“水门”，败也“水门”：赦免尼克松丢总统宝座**

(Controversial: Pardoning Nixon and Losing the Presidency)

尼克松困水门事件无奈辞职，然而福特作出一个争议性很的决定，他宣布动用总统特权，无条件赦免涉及尼克松的所有罪行。对此，美国舆论一片哗然，咒骂其徇私枉法之声不绝于耳。也正因为这个原因，福特因此付出巨大的政治代价。2年后，他输掉了总统大选。福特在后来的总统选举中败给民主党总统假选人吉米·卡特，赦免尼克松被认为是导致失利的主要因素。然而当纷扰远去，尘埃落定后，美国人开始理解福特当时的良苦用心。许多曾极力批判这一赦免的人后来都不得不承认“这是极富勇气，真正为国家利益着想的举措”。

福特的一生既平凡而又不平凡，也许他的妻子蓓蒂对他的评价才最为恰当：“我的丈夫一生都充满对上帝、家人和祖国的爱。”