

A Study of the English Translation Strategies of Sinologists' Fork Language

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Abstract: Local fiction is an important part of Chinese literature. As the carrier of local fiction, fork language has gradually attracted the attention of translation scholars and has become a new subject derived from domestic translation academia. This paper explores the translation style and translation strategies of "fork language" between sinologists Howard Goldblatt and Julia Lovell, so as to promote the further "going out" of Chinese culture and provide a reference for telling Chinese stories and disseminating Chinese.

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, more and more domestic scholars have begun to pay close attention to the translation of Chinese fork language. In July 2015, Professor Zhou Lingshun's "Practical Criticism Research on Chinese 'Local Language' Translation into English" was approved as a key project of the National Social Science Fund, which has become another milestone in academic research in this field. Since the approval of the project, Professor Zhou has set up three research columns in Shandong Foreign Language Teaching [17], Contemporary Foreign Language Research [17] and Journal of Beijing Second Foreign Language Institute [18], and published several academic papers to study the translation strategies of fork language. The results are remarkable. Professor Wang Baorong's new book, *Foreign Experience: A Study of the English Translation and Dissemination of Shaoxing Regional Culture in Lu Xun's Novels*, reviews the translation strategies of Shaoxing's regional culture in seven English versions through reviewing the translation and introduction of Lu Xun's novels in the English world. It is known as a masterpiece in the field of foreign and communication studies of "local language" in China. [19], "A masterpiece on the translation and introduction of Chinese regional culture to foreign countries" [11].

Today, China's most popular sinologists include the late Professor William Lyells, as well as Howard Goldblatt and Julia Lovell. Among them, Howard Goldblatt is the most famous one, whose translation representatives not only include Chinese well-known works by Mo Yan, such as *Red Sorghum*, *Rich Breast and Wide Hips*, but also the works by Xiao Hong, Liu Zhenyun and Jia Pingwa. Howard Goldblatt has translated more than 60 works of 30 Chinese writers and is the most prolific translator in Chinese novels in history. His translation is rigorous and exquisite. Gladys B. Tayler commented that he "made Chinese literature take on the color of contemporary British and American literature"[12]. On the basis of loyalty to the original text, Howard Goldblatt believes that translation is a kind of cross-cultural communication and communication[5]. Therefore, most of Howard Goldblatt's translations were adopted assimilation as the main strategy and foreignization as the supplement.

Julia Lovell is a Cenozoic-era Sinologist and Translator in England. Along with the American translator Howard Goldblatt, she is also known as the "Gemini Constellation" in the translation of contemporary Chinese literature in Britain and America [12]. Her translations, especially the full translation of Lu Xun's novels published in 2009, have attracted the most attention.

2. literature review

Throughout the current translation circle, the study of the translator's style of Sinologists is also in full swing. Until 2018, there were 3,127 documents searching for "Mo Yan Novels" and 1,319 documents searching for "Mo Yan Translation" by topic on CNKI. Searching for "Howard Goldblatt", there are 1394 articles. Search for "Julia Lovell " with 70 articles. All the figures all show that their translation version are still influential in translation area.

Current study about local language mainly focus on the following aspect: (1) The study of strategies and methods of local language translation; (2) the analysis of local language translation based on different theories; (3) the analysis and study of local language on the basis of corpus. However, There are only two articles about the comparative study between Howard Goldblatt and Lovell. Liu Xiaole's *A Comparative Study of Howard Goldblatt and Lovell's Views on Translation* [10]. Through the analysis of Howard Goldblatt and Lovell's Views on Translation, it is found that they both adopt similar translation strategies with the balance of faithfulness and treason and attaching importance to cross-cultural communication activities. At the same time, there are some differences in translation modes and text selection criteria. Another article is from professor Zhou Lingshun: *A Contrastive Study on the English Translation Strategies of Sinologists' Local Languages*. Through the analysis of the case study in different translation of Mo Yan and Lu Xun, we can deeply figure out translators' motivation. This paper intends to explore the translator's style and the translation strategies of "fork language" from the perspective of the translations of Howard Goldblatt and Julia Lovell. Hopefully, it can provide a useful enlightenment to the translator's model, and thus promote Chinese "going out" culture to the world.

3. CONTRASTIVE STUDY OF THE TRANSLATION OF "LOCAL LANGUAGE"

"Local language" covers a wide range, including dialect, idioms, proverbs, allegorical sayings, slang, proverbs and so on. Professor Zhou Lingshun [18] defined it as the popular and refined expression forms with all the local characteristics, oral transmission and wide spread, which to a certain extent reflects the local customs, customs and cultural traditions.

Dialect

As a variant of language, dialect reflects the world outlook, mode of thinking, social characteristics, culture and history of different nationalities in different regions. Therefore, there are more or less differences between each dialect and the standard language in pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary. The strategies of dialect translation mainly include standardized dialect translation, paired translation, self-created translation method and dilution of dialect translation.

For example: Original: 上官吕氏怒道: “我问你哪, 呲牙咧嘴干什么? 碌碡轧不出个屁来!”[2]

Translation: “I asked you a question!” she shouted angrily, “What do you again by showing me those yellow teeth? I can't fart out of you, even with a stone roller!”[5]

“碌碡”is a typical Chinese farm tool used for threshing grain. It is made of stone and shaped like a cylinder. “I can't fart out of you, even with a stone roller!”is a saying indicating a person who is reluctant to talk in public. Shangguan Lu use the local language to express her anger of her husband Shangguan Fulu, complaining that he is so rigid and not sophisticated. Howard Goldblatt adopted dialect literal translation, depicting the woman's furious emotion and her husband's indifference. Stone roller is translated vividly to eliminate cultural differences among readers.

Example 2: Original: 那天夜里, 俺心里有事, 睡不着, 在炕上翻来覆去烙大饼。[2]

Translation: My thought kept me awake that night, as I tossed and turned on the brick kang, like flipping fried bread. [5]

This is the beginning of Mo Yan's *Sandalwood Death*, with the obvious colloquial feature. Kang is made of brick or adobe in residential buildings in northern China and it is used for heating beds. Goldblatt adopted foreignization method and translated “炕” into Kang. This original foreign culture could arouse western readers' interest. Meanwhile, this translation method is close to

original author's writing style. However, he adopted domestication when translating “烙大饼” into “like flipping fried bread”. Bread is principal food for westerns, thus fried bread is not strange to them. In a word, these different translation methods ensure the whole translation more fluent and natural.

Dialect translation is a kind of cultural or regional cultural translation activity that reproduces the etymology of a social group in the target culture and context. Therefore, good dialect translation should be able to accurately convey the information of the translated text and conform to the intention of the author of the original text.

Proverbs and Allegorical Sayings

Proverbs and allegorical sayings are popular idioms with concise language and fixed format. Its characteristics are vivid, concise, thought-provoking and philosophical. For the translation of Chinese proverbs and allegorical sayings, domestication and foreignization are generally adopted. That is to say, equivalence translation, transplantation borrowing and interpretation substitution are most often used [6]. Equivalent translation requires equivalence of content and form of information between the source text and the target text. Complete equivalence can completely reproduce the verve and rhythm of the original text. Transplantation borrowing is to use corresponding English proverbs to expound Chinese proverbs. Interpretation substitution is the substitution of familiar things and images in the translated language, which enables foreign readers to get corresponding cultural compensation and overcome reading barriers. The proverb “三个臭皮匠，顶个诸葛亮” translated into “Two heads are better than one” was completed by replacing the form of annotated analogy, which is more concise, more rhythmic.

However, the translation of proverbs and allegorical sayings in Mo Yan's novels translated by Goldblatt adopts the methods of deletion and annotation.

Example 3. Original: 不蒸馒头争口气！不要让他们小瞧了我们，不要让他们认为高密东北乡无能人！ [2]

Translation: A man only lives once. Don't let the world look down on the people of Northeast Gaomi Township! [5]

If there is no explanatory note on the allegorical sayings in Chinese culture, it will undoubtedly be difficult for English readers to understand them. But if annotations are added, the reader's reading continuity will be interrupted and the reading burden will be increased.

The translation of Mo Yan's works by Goldblatt has never been annotated, which has alleviated readers' reading barriers and continuity to a certain extent. The reason lies in the fact that the translator has deleted and omitted the original dialects, idioms and allegorical sayings.

“人活一世，不蒸馒头争口气” is a well-known allegorical saying in Chinese. “蒸（争）口气” is a typical Chinese homonym, describe that man should have courage. But if translated into English, the first homonym will disappear. Secondly, steamed bread is a product with Chinese characteristics. The relationship between steamed bread and striving for success cannot be understood by Western readers. Therefore, if literal translation is chosen, it will make foreign readers confused and make reading more difficult. Then the

translator chose the method of deletion and translated it directly into “A man only lives once”. Consequently, the translation neither changed the original meaning nor caused reading burden for readers.

In Lu Xun's novel *The True Story of Ah Q*, “老鹰不吃窝下食” is also a Chinese allegorical saying. William Lyells adopted literal translation and translated it into “The hawk is always a pest, but never round its own nest”. But Julia Lovells adopted the translation method of domestication and translated into “someone in his line of business wouldn't shit on his own doorstep”. Through this transparent and fluent translation, the translator minimizes the reading barriers caused by cultural differences to “foreign” readers, and ultimately achieves “cultural equivalence” between the source culture and the target culture [7].

In a word, allegorical sayings and proverbs originate from the working people and describe the folk life and labor scene. Therefore, the language is vulgar, concise and colloquial, and the forms

are diverse and straightforward. It is the proverbs and proverbs with strong local flavor that highlight the regional characteristics of the novel and enrich the folk discourse system under different cultures

4. TRANSLATION STRATEGIES FOR SINOLOGISTS

Through the analysis of the translations of Sinologists Howard Goldblatt and Julia Lovells, it is not difficult to find that Howard Goldblatt strives to adopt the method of “literal translation” in specific translation strategies, so that Chinese folk culture and local customs can be retained in their original flavor. The culture differences can arouse Western readers’ novelty-seeking mentality and curiosity, and let them experience different exotic features [8]. However, when literal translation is hindered, Goldblatt will adopt many strategies such as deletion, addition and transformation to achieve the effect of domestication. This flexible and unconventional translation strategy makes the translation text colorful and interesting, so readers’ favorite degree will also increase.

Julia Lovells believes that translation is a faithful recreation. She attaches more importance to the fluency of the translated text, reading experience and the acceptability of the translated text [14]. Therefore, there are few footnotes and endnotes in her translation. She tries to mix domesticated translation strategies into Chinese traditional culture so that the target language readers can naturally integrate into the different cultures. For some works, she also adopted the translation methods of simplified language and deletion.

The emergence of a good translation is influenced by some external factors besides the translator's excellent literary control and translation ability. However, it is no doubt that every translator's efforts are aimed at spreading Chinese culture to the world [19]. Therefore, it is more objective and objective to judge a translation text from the perspective of “other country” readers regardless of translation methods, translation strategies.

5. CONCLUSION

Sinologists always put domestication first and foreignization second in translating Chinese works. Apart from the influence of the translator's sense of power in Western culture, his/her translation texts are also influenced by his own poetic standpoint, the operation of sponsors and publishing institutions, etc. Sinologists have always been restricted by the limitations of personal cognition and vision. It is inevitable that there are errors in translating Chinese culture. Therefore, the ideal model for translators is to combine sinologists, domestic translators and authors together [17]. “Chinese Culture Going Out”, a grand theme, has great room for expansion. It covers the study of “Chinese Culture” and the method of “Going out”, such as translator's model, translation method, communication method, propaganda planning and so on. As a part of the “Going Out” of Chinese culture, the study of Chinese “fork language” should effectively guide translation practice so as to facilitate the sharing of China's “treasure house of native language” among the international readers [15].

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