

Preliminary Study on Translation of Nobel Literature Award Works from the View of Feminism Translation Theory

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Abstract: Mo Yan, as the first Chinese winner of the Nobel Literature Award, raised an upsurge of reading and studying the Noble Literature Award works among Chinese people. Translator, therefore, has become a hot topic in field of translation. Under such background, with the object of the Noble Literature Award, this article, regarding the feminism translation theory as theoretical foundation, adopting the methodology of literature review and qualitative research method, discusses the feminism translation theory's affection and influence on translation practice. The paper aims at the exploratory researches on translation problems of the Noble Literature Award works from the view of the feminism translation theory, analyzing the coupling relationship of the feminism translation theory and the Nobel Literature Award translations. The author then puts forward strategies and advice from the perspective of feminism translation theory, for the sake of making some practical contributions on translation theory and the development of translation practice.

Keywords: Feminism translation theory, Noble Literature Award works, Translation

1 Introduction

As the first Chinese winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2012, Mo Yan raised an upsurge of reading and studying the Nobel Literature award works among Chinese people, which has greatly inspired those struggling in field of translation. Therefore, the introduction and translation of prize works have become a hot topic, with the quality and effect of translation as key points on whether one could receive the Nobel Prize, as well as whether his works could spread widely and be accepted by people from all over the world. How about the quality of translation of the Noble Literature Award works? What position and effect do translators have on the choice of the Nobel Literature Award works? Whether translators' gender differences will influence the option of the Nobel Prize? How to successfully realize the international communication and research of literary works? These are all questions that are worth high attention and reevaluation of authors as well as translators.

In recent years, more and more women are getting into the writing and translation of literary works for the Nobel Prize. What effects would be brought by feminism translation theory to translations? Is it possible that they can promote the development of each other? Taking exploratory consideration and carding of the above two problems and by analyzing the present situation confronting translation of Noble Literature Award works in the influence of the feminism translation theory, this article aims at putting forward some constructive suggestions for translate workers, so as to do some contributions for the combination of theory and practice in translation.

2 Review of the Feminism Translation Theory

From the angle of linguistics, translating is to express the significance of one language using another language. Translating is a special language activity, which occurs in the process of lingual communication. This activity is essentially an intermediary conversion, or interaction between symbol and significance, symbol and symbol, thus serving as an irreplaceable bridge between cultural spreading and exchange.

At first, feminism translation research was called feminist translation research. Feminist stands for

political consciousness in early women's movements striving for equal rights with men. Feminism prefers paying attention to gender difference and cultural awareness. (Yang Liu, 2007) Under the influence of the feminism literary criticism, the feminism translation theory was gradually raised in Canada in 1990s, and the feminism translation research spread fast to North America, then expanded to all over the world. About the feminism translation theory, the most representative researchers include Shelley Simon from Canada, whose masterpiece is the monograph *Gender Roles in the Translation*, and Louis Van Flotow's monograph *Translation and Gender Roles. Translation in female doctrine times* and an article named *On Uniformity and Diversity: Feminism research method*, as well as American Indian scholar, Gayatri C. Spivak, who has made great achievement in the study of "the subordinate".

Taking a wide view of Chinese academics' research on feminism translation theory, domestic scholars, including Liao Qiyi, Ge Xiaoqin, Jiang Jiaohua, Liu Junping, Xu Lai, He Gaoda, Chen Shuiping, and Yang Liu, have all done certain research from different perspectives and contributed to the development of the feminism translation theory both at home and abroad. They thought the feminism translation theory's essence was to subvert the traditional unequal deconstruction in the study of translation discourse as well as the patriarchy, but to advocate different philosophy. This contribution to the study of translation and cultural criticism would not wear away (Ge Xiaoqin, 2003). The task of feminism translation theory was to wave gender setting theory, which relies on gender to locate male and female's social role. On the research of the feminism translation theory, what scholars normally concerned was feminism translation strategy, translator subjectivity research as well as how to eliminate sexual discrimination in translation research and so on. (Chen Meixia, 2008)

Taking a comprehensive review of the present research literature and the current situation of feminism translation theory both at home and abroad, the related research mainly involves several aspects as follows:

- (1) The research about the feminism translation theory pays much attention to female's existence, embedding strong gender consciousness in translator's translation theory, and evaluates female's historical and contemporary effect.
- (2) Deconstructing the source text in the use of language, eliminating the male center doctrines, male bias and sexism criticism as well as demoting the female and translators to bottom's metaphors in traditional translation theory. Instead, the equal relationship between the translation and the source text is emphasized.
- (3) Analyzing the treatment of different languages and ideology problems in translation works.
- (4) Advocating feminism's translation strategies and standards, and using "rewriting strategies" like supplementing prefacing and hijacking and so on to realize translation's creative treason as well as emphasizing translators' subjectivity.
- (5) Encouraging more researches on gender, for example homosexuality text translation researches, and advocating distinction and diversity.

In a word, all categories of feminism translation research should agree with feminism's dream and application. (Yang Liu, 2007)

Although the discourse transformations in the domestic research of translation have faced a great development with the influence of translation theory, these developments have attracted great attention of the academic circles to the new research field. However, compared with other intervening translation theories in cultural research at the same period, the teams of feminism translation research are not so strong and the voice of it is not so high. There are only a few true feminism translators and researchers, so the translation researches, which rely on perspective of the feminism translation theory, have a wide research space and prospect, and will have certain influences on translation theory and practice, producing both practical value and academic value.

I think the feminism translation theory, as an important part of study on the interaction of culture, is of its uniqueness and novelty, which helps us think deeply of the unreasonable aspects in traditional translations, and has an heuristic effect on translation workers. But more significantly, we should realize that the feminism translation theory gives excessive value to "translators' subjectivity" and "political

purpose”, which are bad for the production of fine translations. So translators must overcome the negative face about extreme and mood tendency, and strength the research of translation essence. They can’t merely put translation in the beneath of applied linguistic and regard it as pure language operation, but should pay attention to the meaning of research and activity, and better strength the construction of translation subject.

3 The Coupling Relation of Feminism Translation Theory and Nobel Literature Award Translation

Since the Nobel Literature Prize was born in 1901, as the most influential literary prize in the world, it has a history of more than one hundred years. The first Chinese winner of this prize, Mo Yan attracted attention of both literature and translation circles. Apart from Mo Yan himself and his work, the translation of his works have also become a focus of the world. As a result, the Sweden female translator, Chen Anna, who had worked on China literary works as a translator became known by people. Authors and teachers both gave big admiration to this translator. It’s widely admitted that translation had played a key role in the winning of the prize.

Alice Munro, an 82-year-old Canadian female writer, was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2013. She became the thirteen female winners in the history. Under this background, female writers and translators again attracted attention in literature and translation circles, and they opened new perspectives for researchers.

Taking a wide review of the translation of Nobel Literature Award writers’ works in China since the new century, there were many problems actually. The quality of translation has great significance in the works’ award and the international cultural communication. At present, although the research of Nobel Literature Award works is hot in domestic, the translation situation still has a big gap. While importing more high-quality Noble Prize works to China, we must highly value the important effect of translation strategy and translation quality in culture spread. The Canadian writer, Alice Munro, awarded the Nobel Literature Award in 2013, was honored as “Master of contemporary short stories”, but in fact, only one works of Munro was translated into Chinese before that. It is *Escape*, which most people didn’t know. Now, Munro has risen into fame, China’s literature and translation circle became scramble, and this is worth thinking. Why not import Munro’s translation works all the time in domestic? How to choose translation orientation by Chinese translators? How to become a qualified translator? What translation theory and practice skills should we adopt to realize readability of translation works? How to healthily develop the translation field of Noble Prize works? As major translators of Mo Yan’s works, Chen Anna and Munro did great contributions to Noble Literature Award and literature. So what effect does their feminism and feminism translation theory have on modern translation circle? How to do more contributions to translation circle and the Nobel Literature by feminist? All these are worth considering seriously by translation workers.

The writer think, female translators and writers come to light in the Nobel Literature Prize, the success is not accidental. With the feminism’s position becoming more and more obvious in translation, the feminism translation can’t excessively emphasize translator’s subjectivity and completely regard the political purpose as the target. Instead, more attention should be paid on translation’s final object. While realizing the translation standard of “faithfulness and taste”, produce more better translation results in the concern.

4 The Translation Strategy and Advice in the View of Feminism Translation Theory

The translator of Mo Yan’s Prize works, Ge Haowen, said: “It’s a fact that Mo Yan’s works have many excellent translation editions, especially in Japan, Italy and Germany, translators do exiguous

contributions for his international reputation. China indeed lag in promoting and subsidizing literary translation: Some countries in Europe, America as well as Japan are all subsidizing translators, who take kinds of foreign language as mother tongue, so that their works come into these language area's native market. China should do better in this aspect". By this, authors and translators share the heavy task of promoting Nobel Literature Award and translation carrels development.

How do female translators and authors use the feminism translation theory to do translation and creation? The writer think, more reasonable translation strategies and advice should be put forward to Nobel Prize works' translators. For example, the female translator mainly adopt translation theory methods and practice skills; the Nobel Prize work's requirement to female translators, as translators must have deep cultural accumulation and cultural emotions, lofty language navigability, social responsibility and sense of mission, eliminating excess feminism thoughts and political purposes. The strategies and advice are as follows:

4.1 Translators must have a good internal accomplishment

The writer think, a translator's necessary internal accomplishment includes cultural accomplishment and professional ethics. For the cultural accomplishment, translation and culture are a constant research topic to which translators devote. Translators should know the corresponding relation between target language and source language not only in language, but also know it from the deep background knowledge in cultural origin, so as to make the translation works better. To Chinese translators, the biggest difficulty is how to transform reasonably or convert into characters with native cultural implication's. Only when translators know the source language's cultural background accurately and profoundly, can they transfer language successfully. Ge Haowen and other translators' deep cultural knowledge is the base of their translation success. To the professional ethics, the translators who obey the occupation ethics should take international culture communication and spread as their own duty, keep pursuing excellence in the translation and form a personal style. for example, to obey the "faithfulness expressiveness and elegance" principle of Yan Fu, or to learn the creative translation style of Xu Yuanhong and so on, the field of China's translation needs translators like Ma Yueran, Ge Haowen who are in deep love of traditional culture, with influence and infiltration by the traditional cultural for a long time. Inferior translations by translators who engage in translate with utility purpose should be avoided, and we should also put an end seriously to miss of interpretation, transliteration and so on. An excellent translator should take original and acuteness vision to discover and translate excellent works, rather than translate hastily for utility purpose. Translators must take responsibility for translating works, translations and readers.

4.2 Translators must have lofty language ability

The most fundamental requirement of translating workers is that they must have lofty language ability. It's well-known that Zhang Ailing is a female writer, who had strong English language ability, she tried to transform her Chinese works into English, but failed in the end. English translation level is the main factor restricting her Chinese works to spread abroad. No matter how excellent Chinese works are, without relevant English translation quality, people can't spread it to the international market. So, foreign language ability is a big bottleneck, which is restricting Chinese translators in translating literary works, especially the Nobel Literature Award works in this article. This is also the reason for the fact that few are admitted by readers, but more translators exist. Likewise, if foreigners translate tend to translate our excellent literary works; they must have great Chinese competence. For example, Ge Haowen experienced literary translation practice for a long time and had a deep comprehension of Chinese culture. He formed a personal language sense and cultural perception to Chinese, in this way can he do intuitive distinguish of Mo Yan's language features. It is also the premise and basis of successful translating. Of course, he spent much time and energy in translating Mo Yan's works and this has a direct relationship with his success and helped him better recognize the author's literary style. Apart from it, the feminism translation theory also requires translators, especially the female, of high

social responsibility and sense of mission as men; better physical quality and psychological quality; objectivity to own gender consciousness, not too weak nor too strong, eliminating egregious feminism thoughts and possible political purposes; able to use the translation strategy in the view of feminism translation theory like “supplement”, “hijacking” and so on. In a word, to do well in Nobel Literature Award works’ international spread one need an overall reflection on translation circle’s ethos, authors, translators and other problems in the subjective and objective aspects. In this way can we powerfully promote the development of China’s Nobel Literature works translation.

5 Conclusion

The article takes the feminism translation theory as theory basis, with the stupendous Nobel Literature Award translations as the research object. While adopting Literature review and qualitative scientific research methods, it argues the feminism translation theory’s influence and effect to translation practice. Through analysis of some problems in language, culture and skill during the translations, and by solving the practical translation problems, the article aims at giving some guidance to translating workers. Translation plays a key role in winning the Nobel Literature Award. In other words, translation theory and practice skill as well as the accomplishment of translator research have great significance to Nobel Literature Award’s development and the extension of translations. The article research hopes to do contribution to prosper our Nobel Literature Award works’ translation and the prosperity and development of global cultural communications, and to provide more practice basis for the development of feminism translation theory research, as well as sending out more powerful voice for female translators.

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