

Researches on the C-E Translation of Chinese Classics between 2002 and 2022: Review and Prospect

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Abstract: Under the background of globalization, it is inevitable for Chinese culture to be transmitted abroad, and as an important part of Chinese culture, the study of C-E translation of Chinese classics has also risen. Through the visual analysis of relevant researches from 2002 to 2022, it is found that the researches on C-E translation of Chinese classics has been increasing year by year, but its research field is still relatively narrow, and the space for future researches is huge.

1. Introduction

In the context of global integration in the 21st century, the communication and exchange of various national cultures in the world is becoming more and more frequent, the collision of various ideas is constantly affecting the trend of ideology, Chinese culture going out has become inevitable, Chinese classics foreign translation as an important part of Chinese culture going out, and classic English translation is the majority of Chinese classics foreign translation. The English translation of Chinese classics is of great practical significance for disseminating the excellent Chinese culture and promoting the integration of Eastern and Western cultures. However, what has been achieved in the English translation of Chinese classics? What are the remaining problems? What counter measures do we need to take to solve it? This paper aims to sort out the current situation of the research on English translation of classics, and to find the weak areas of its research, so as to provide reference for future generations in the field of English translation of classics.

2. Review of studies

CNKI Journal Database conducted a literature search with the theme of "English translation of classics", and found a total of 845 literature from 2002 to 2022, and the annual distribution statistics of the literature were carried out, the results are shown in Figure 1. The number of literature has increased year by year since 2002, showing an increasing trend, and in 2017, the number of publications reached a small peak in the past two decades, followed by a slight decrease. Therefore, it can be seen that the study of English translation of classics is in a relatively stable development trend in China.

A literature search found that the Chinese who pioneered the study of English translation of Chinese classics was Zhuo Zhenying[1], and published an article entitled "English Translation of Classics: Problems and Countermeasures" in the 3rd issue of Shantou University in 2002, in which

he affirmed the significance of English translation of classics in cultural dissemination, and the problem of English translation of classics was mainly due to the negative impact of the market economy and the shortage of professional translation talents.

2.1 Statistics of periodicals

The results of 854 literature information were reviewed, as is shown in Figure 1, the core journal literature reached 106, accounting for 12.4% of the total number of literature, and the statistics of the core journal articles were counted, and the results were shown in Figure 2, there were 5 core journals with 5 articles, accounting for 3.6% of the number of articles. The top 5 journals with articles include "Foreign Language Teaching", "Guizhou Ethnic Studies", "Shandong Foreign Language Teaching", "Chinese Journal of Integrated Traditional Chinese and Western Medicine", "Journal of Tianjin University of Foreign Chinese", overall, the journals are scattered, but the core journals account for a relatively high proportion, which is enough to show that domestic research attaches great importance to the English translation of classics.

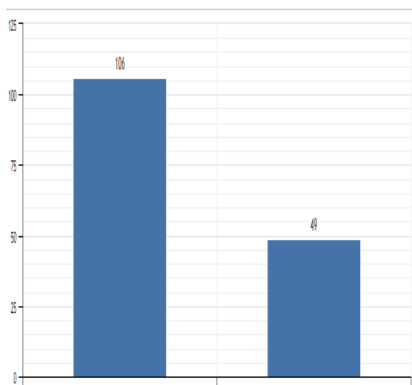


Figure 1 The statistics of published journal

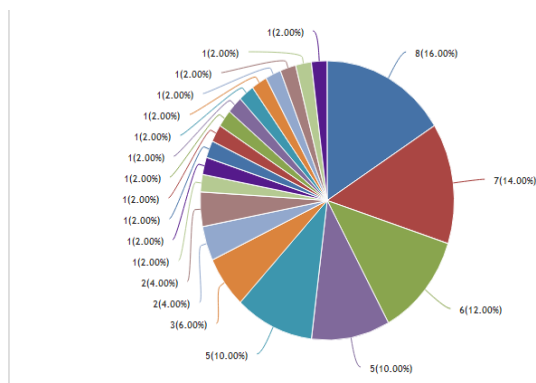


Figure 2 The volume of core journal articles

2.2 Analysis of important scholars

The first author data of 845 bibliographic information were statistically found, with a total of 823 authors. For the authors with ≥ 3 publications, there are 30 authors, which is enough to show that there is a relatively stable core author group in the study of English translation of domestic classics, and many scholars regard the study of English translation of books as a stable research direction. According to Figure 2, there are 2 first authors in the field of English translation research with ≥ 10 publications, accounting for 2.959% of the total number of publications, they are Wang Hong of Suzhou University and Yang Jing of Shangqiu Normal College, respectively, from the perspective of

H-index, the scholars with greater academic influence are Xu Yuanchong and Wang Hong.

Xu Yuanchong[2], a professor and translator at Peking University, has published 60 translations of Chinese, English and French books at home and abroad, including *The Book of Poetry*, *Chu Ci*, and other Chinese and foreign famous works. He has put forward a self-contained translation theory "optimization theory", summarized in the ten words of "the art of beautification, creating excellence like a competition". It was summarized in *The Art of Translation* (1984), *Literary Translation Talks* (1998), *Literature and Translation* (2003) and other works. The form and god, the seeking of truth and beauty, translation and creation, "translation cavity" and "four-character idiom", the difference between Chinese and Western cultures, the competition between the two cultures and other issues are specifically discussed, which can be summarized into the following three theories: "Three beauty theory" (Italian beauty, sound beauty, form beauty) is the ontology of translated poetry. The "theory of three modernizations" (deepening, equalizing, and shallowing) is the methodology for translating poetry. The "Three Treatises" (Knowledge, Goodness, and Pleasure) is the teleology of translated poetry.

Wang Hong[3], Director of the Institute of Translation, School of Foreign Chinese, Soochow University, mainly focuses on translation theory, English translation and research of Chinese classics, and advocates that translation studies should be divided into internal and external research of translation, and the two live in harmony and have no distinction between primary and secondary. He has published 32 translations of "Mengxi Pen Talk", "Mozi", "Classic of Mountains and Seas", "Ming and Qing Dynasty Sketches", "English Translation of Chinese Classics", "Essence of Kunqu Opera", "English Translation of Ink Classics", "Mozi Wisdom Story" and so on.

The above scholars are not only practitioners of Chinese classics translation, but also the backbone of the study of Chinese classics to English translation, and both scholars have played a pivotal role in the English translation of Chinese classics.

2.3 Research hotspot analysis

Analyzing 845 literature themes, a total of 30 main themes of > 7 and 30 secondary themes of > 5 were analyzed, it can be seen that the research hotspots of English translation of domestic classics are divided into four categories: first, the translation and research of traditional Chinese classics, traditional classics mainly refer to Chinese ideological classics, such as "Four Books", "Five Classics", "Laozi", "Zhuangzi", etc.; Literary classics, such as poetry and songs, plays, novels, essays, etc.; Other classics, such as science and technology, Chinese medicine, sports, health care, etc. Among these three types of classics, literary classics are always the focus of research, followed by ideological classics, while other types of classics are less. Second, the research on the methods or strategies of English translation of classics, and third, the research on Chinese classics translators, the most widely studied scholars are Wang Rongpei and Legge. Fourth, the combination of English translation of classics and culture, in recent years, the practice and research of English translation of classics have been deeply influenced by cultural turns, paying more attention to the manipulation of cultural factors and ignoring the composition of the text itself. As far as translation methods or strategies are concerned, they mainly focus on cultural factors, combining the English translation of classics with cultural communication.

2.4 Analysis of High Impact Literature

Using the cited quantity as the evaluation indicator, a search was conducted on China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI), and a total of 4 articles with a cited quantity of 100 were found.

Xu Yuanchong (2005)[6] pointed out in his article "The Translation Theory of Classical Poetry by the Chinese School" that classical works, especially classical poetry, should be the best written and

arranged texts. However, in translation, equivalent text between the target language and the source language may not necessarily be the best way of expressing oneself in the target language. At this time, the translator should choose the best expression of the target language, rather than the equivalent expression, to reproduce the content of the original work and convey the beautiful meaning of the original, sound and form. There are three methods used: equalization, shallowness, and deepening, with the aim of making readers aware (understand), good (like), and happy (happy). The author provides an explanation of the translation of poetry in the English translation of classics from the perspective of translation methods.

Wang Hong (2012) mainly introduced in his article "Translation of Chinese Classics into English: Achievements, Problems, and Countermeasures" that translating Chinese classics into English is the main way to promote China's excellent traditional culture to the world. After years of development, the English translation of Chinese classics has achieved great success in translation practice and disciplinary construction, and is facing greater development opportunities. This article reviews the achievements of translating classic Chinese into English, analyzes the existing problems, and proposes specific strategies that can be used for reference.

Wang Xueming and Yang Zi (2012) [4] explained "deep translation" in their article "The Types and Functions of Deep Translation in English Translation of Classical Books - Taking" Selected Works of Chinese Translation Discourse in English Translation "(Part 1) as an Example. They believe that" deep translation ", as an extension of cultural anthropology in the field of translation research, has important guiding significance for the translation of classical books. This article combines the theory of paraphrasing proposed by French narrator Gennett and relevant discussions by domestic scholars to conduct a typological and functional analysis of the annotations used as paraphrasing in the widely acclaimed book "Selected Works of Chinese Translation Discourse in English" (Part 1), summarizing the six types and functions of annotations, in order to provide reference for the foreign translation of Chinese classics.

Xu Jun and Huo Yuehong (2008) [5] explored the principles, applicable strategies, and methods that should be followed in the process of translating Chinese cultural classics into English in their article "Translation of Classics into English: Foreignization Strategies under a Cultural Translation Perspective and Chinese English". They proposed that when translating Chinese cultural classics into English, cultural translation perspectives should be taken as guidance, and foreignization strategies should be adopted, with moderate use of Chinese English, so as to quickly promote Chinese culture to the world and truly become a member of the world's multicultural system.

3. Outlook and conclusion

Through the combing of the research literature on the English translation of domestic classics, the following conclusions can be drawn: First, the development trend of English translation of domestic classics has eased and shown a steady upward trend. Second, the English translation of domestic classics is influenced by the national strategy of "Chinese culture going abroad", which has an important position, and the study of English translation of classics will still be a hot research field in the future. Third, the research area of the existing English translation of classics is mainly based on the study of Chinese traditional cultural classics, and cultural classics are only part of China's traditional classics, so the study of classic translation has a very broad research field and research value. Fourth, the study of English translation of domestic classics is based on Western translation theory, but due to the rich meaning of Chinese classics and obvious stylistic characteristics[4], English does not seem to have enough language resources to show these elements of stylistic form or poetry, therefore, it is far-fetched to apply Western translation theory to English translation of classics, so we should find a new translation theory suitable for English translation of Chinese classics, which is also

lacking in English translation of classics at present.

In short, in the context of the great era of the 21st century, the call for Chinese culture to go out has become increasingly strong, and the English translation of classics has become an important component of cultural export, so there are more and more studies from this perspective, and the fields involved are becoming more and more extensive. The study of English translation of classics has broad research space, whether it is from the content of English translation of classics, the method of English translation of classics or the means of English translation of classics.

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