

On the Translation Strategy of English Version of the Legend of the Condor Heroes from the Perspective of Translation Variation Theory

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Abstract: This paper studies the English translation of *The Legend of the Condor Heroes* published by the British MacLehose Press in 2018 from the perspective of the translation variation theory, and studies the translation strategies and methods applied by the Swiss translator Anna Holmwood. From the perspective of empirical research, it verifies the theory of translating, provides a possible basis for enriching translation variation theory, and also studies a westerner tell Chinese stories, and how she translated the rich Chinese cultural information in this novel. This paper aims to summarize some translation methods and provide a methodological basis for better and more effective dissemination of Chinese culture.

1. Introduction

China's translators have studied western translation theories for a long time, but there are few domestic translation theories being studied. Actually, Chinese translation activity can be traced back to more than 2,000 years ago, some theories about translation emerged but they were not systematic. As we all know, the theory comes from practice. After the policy of the reform and opening up, China's foreign exchanges have been unprecedentedly frequent. Coupled with the Internet and the big data, the exchanges between China and the west are unprecedented in terms of depth and breadth. Under such a background, A large number of translation practices will inevitably lead to the emergence of new translation theories. In the process of translation practice, Chinese translators also found that the translation theory produced in the context of western Indo-European language encountered some obstacles when they are adopted to guide Chinese-English translation practice. The translation theories derived from China's translation practice are urgently needed, and China's modern translation theories appear in such an era. In 1999, Huang Zhonglian, a Chinese scholar, proposed his translation theory translation variation theory, it is an early form of the theory and the argumentation on this theory lasted until 2007, and a complete theoretical framework has not yet been formed. From 2007 to 2018, with the intervention of linguistic theories and philosophical thoughts, corpus and big data provide strong support for the theory, and this theory of translation 5has made great progress. [5] The theoretical framework is founded, the research methods are also diversified. The translation variation theory is used to guide the translation practice in many fields,

such as literature, technology and science, network, tourism, interpretation, external publicity, etc.

The biggest difference between the variation translation theory and the traditional translation theory is that the translation will not exactly follow the source text, but combine the context to highlight the translator's subjectivity and reader's acceptance. Ingest specific information that is needed by a particular reader under specific conditions, if necessary, the source text will be partly translated and a change in the entire text structure is also possible. The flexibility is the core of this theory. [2] The elements of translation include readers, translators, translation variation and source language. The means of variation include addition, subtraction, editing, rewriting, contraction, merger and transformation. The translation methods include excerpt, compilation, translation and contraction, interpretation, translation, and imitation.

2. The English Translation of *The Legend of the Condor Heroes* and The Translator's Profile.

The English translation of *The Legend of the Condor Heroes* was published in 2018 by the British MacLehose Press, translated by the Swiss Anna Holmwood (Hao Yuqing). Due to the length of the work, Hao Yuqing only translated nine chapters of the first volume. Jin Yong's works include a lot of information about Chinese culture, a large amount of ancient Chinese, prose, poetry, colloquialism, dialect, etc. It is very difficult to translate these into English because of the differences between Chinese and Western cultures, and the requirements for translators are very high. Some people think that the Chinese style in this works is too strong to translate. But in terms of the ideas of the works, it reflects some universal values, in the words of the author Jin Yong "People love the country and the nation of their own, at the same time, they respect the countries and nations of others, they are peaceful and friendly, willing to help each other, and value justice and equality, they hate the behaviors bringing about hurts to others. " These reflect people's longing for a better life and this can be accepted by western readers. In the words of the translator, "the biggest loss is not to translate the novel into English. " Throughout the first nine chapters, the translator strives to find the best balance between the original and the target reader's acceptability. The translation method adopted by the translator Anna Holmwood can be explained by the theory of translation variation.

3. The Translation Strategy of *The Legend of the Condor Heroes* under the Guidance of Ttranslation Variation Theory.

3.1 Variations of the original text structure.

Translation variation theory believes that translation is not a word for word approach to the original work, but a combination of contexts that highlights the translator's subjectivity and reader's acceptance. The translator needs to coordinate the specific information needed by a particular reader under specific conditions and can change the entire chapter structure. The English version of *The Legend of the Condor Heroes* only translated the first nine chapters of the original works, and divided the nine chapters into several sections to translate, for example, to the original first chapter “风雪惊变”, the translator divided it into five sections , the same strategy is applied in the translation of the rest of the chapters. Taking so many characters into consideration, the translator added one chapter to the original novel to introduce the characters in the novel. It is conducive to the readers to clarify the relationship between the characters and understand the characteristics of the main characters.

3.2 Variations of the culture specific terms.

The novel *The Legend of the Condor Heroes* contains a large amount of culturally specific terms which is hard to understand for the foreigners. The translator changed the expressions or omitted the information in the translation. For example, the name of the Chinese ancient cities “汴梁城” refers to the ancient capital of Song Dynasty, it is now called Kai Feng, located in Henan province. Anna Holmwood translated it into “the old capital at Kaifeng”, the names are different, but the place is the same, this can be easily understood by the target readers.

In the source text, there is a sentence “惆怅芳魂赴九泉”, the translated version is “And so was taken the sweetest soul that light”, the culture information “九泉”, meaning hell in Chinese, was not translated.

欧阳公子别在老衲脸上贴金啦，我跟这个道士大家吃了亏，半斤八两，谁也没赢。

No need to flatter me, Master Ouyang, we were hurt. There was no winner in that fight.

The translator omitted the Chinese word “半斤八两”, not affecting the transmitting of meaning, but failed to express the vividness of the source language.

3.3 Variations of the plots and the description of the fighting.

Anna Holmwood’s translation of this novel is distinct in her flexible adjustment of the plots and the description of the scene of fight, aiming at achieving the fluency in the modern English language and readability. In terms of the language, the translator tried to adopt the strategy of domestication. She even rewrote the plots of the novel and some description of the fight between the opponents. For example,

“他见这婆娘扑上去之势猛不可挡，金龙鞭一招“乌龙取水”，居高临下，往她手腕上击去。梅超风竟自不避，顺手反带，已抓住了鞭梢。”

He pulled out his Golden Dragon whip and performed a move known as Black Dragon Fetches Water, directing all his force at Mei’s wrist. But, to his surprise, she did not move to avoid it and instead grabbed hold of the other end.

In the translation of this paragraph, Anna Holmwood used plain and fluent English to describe the fight between the two persons. She omitted some background information and vivid description of the source text. For examples,

“郭兄，你是梁山泊好汉地佑星赛仁贵郭盛的后代，使的是家传戟法，只不过是变长为短，化单为双。”

Master Guo, you are the descendant of Prosperity Guo, one of the heroes of the Marshes of Mount Liang. You are skilled in the use of the halberd, as taught to you in accordance with your family’s customs, only your halberd is short rather than long, and has two blades instead of one.

The sobriquet of Prosperity Guo is “地佑星赛仁贵“, “地佑星”is a nickname derived from the constellation, and “赛仁贵”is the other sobriquet of Guo Sheng, with the implication that Guo Sheng’s Kung fu is better than “薛仁贵“, a large-than-life hero in the Tang Dynasty. The translator didn’t mention the nickname of Guo Sheng, not conveying the rich cultural background of Guo Sheng’s name, it’s also a case of application of variation translation.

韩小莹突然间“咦”了一声，只见在那急奔而来的人影之前，更有一个矮小的人影在走上山来，只是他走得甚慢，身形又小，是以先前并没发见。她凝神看时，见那矮小的人形是个小孩，心知必是郭靖，又惊又喜，忙抢下去要接他上来。

她与郭靖相距已不甚远，又是下山的道路，但铜尸陈玄风的轻身功夫好快，片刻之间，已

抢了好大一段路程.韩小莹微一迟疑：“我下去单身遇上铜尸，决不是他对手！”

Just then Jade Han cried out. There, climbing the hill, was a smaller figure, moving much more slowly. It was a child.

Guo Jing.

She ran to fetch him.

Guo Jing was not very far away now, but Copper Corpse was gaining ground. Jade Han hesitated. She could not possibly take Copper Corpse on by herself.

In the translation of this passage, Anna Holmwood cut down some information of the source language, such as“急奔而来的人影”，“只是他走得甚慢，身形又小，是以先前并没发现”，“心知必是郭靖，又惊又喜”，“轻身功夫” etc. But she put the name of Guo Jing into a specific paragraph to emphasize who is the smaller figure, reflecting the wonder and surprise when Jade Han found Guo Jing, showing the intense of the plot, and achieve the correspondent result in the English version.

3.4 Variations of the verse.

The author of the novel Jin Yong, who was honored by his literary accomplishment, vivid description and his abundant background historical knowledge. In the novel *The Legend of the Condor Heroes*, there are many verses to highlight the plots and feelings of the characters or the writer. As is known to all, it is very difficult to translate the verse to another language, the translators tend to translate the meaning but fail to transmit the form of the verse, and vice-versa. For example,

“为人切莫用欺心，举头三尺有神明，若还作恶无报应，天下凶徒人吃人。”

Keep honest heart and ever gods in mind. For if evil deeds go unpunished, only evil doth one find.

We can find that the translator didn't follow the form of the original text, she changed the verse into two sentences in the English version, translating the meaning of the verse. In addition, the Chinese“神明”is not equivalent to “god”, for the acceptance and readability of the novel, the Anna Holmwood used “god” to translate “神明”.

3.5 The varied translation of the name of the characters.

The translation of the name of the characters in the novel shows that the translator adopted different methods, when she translated the name of the people of Han nationality, she not only used the method of transliteration, but also adopted the method of liberal translation combined with literal translation. The translator tried to convey the meaning and implications contained in the name of the characters. For example, Ironheart Yang(杨铁心)、Skyfury Guo(郭啸天)、Justice Duan(段天德)、Hurricane Chen(陈玄风)、Cyclone Mei(梅超风), Lily Li(李萍)and Mercy Mu(穆念慈).When Anna Holmwood translated the name of the persons of Moggol nationality, she adopted transliteration, such as The Great Khan Temujin, Tolui , Khojin, sticking to the pronunciation of Mongolian, distinctly differed the people from the Han nationality, making the readers easily understand the plots.

4. Summary.

The translation of the novel *The Legend of the Condor Heroes* is an attempt to introduce Chinese Wu Xia novel to the western readers. Although the English version only covered nine chapters, the

very beginning of the novel, it is expected that the subsequent chapters will be translated because of the acceptance of the target readers and popularity among the target readers. Studying the English version, the writer of this thesis found that the translator considered many factors in the process of translation, she tried to introduce the information in the source language, including the Wu Lin and Jiang Hu in Ancient China, the traditional Chinese culture, the knowledge of Chinese history, the implication in the name of the characters, the vivid description of the fights between the opponents, the tense and interesting plots. At the same time, Anna Holmwood took the readers acceptability and cultural shocks into consideration, she tried to bridge the gap between two different cultures by applying variety of translation methods, such as addition, omission, excerpt, compilation, translation and contraction, interpretation, and imitation. All the methods are under the guidance of the translation variation theory, which is valuable in the later translation of literature.

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