

Analysis of the Translations of *Gone with the Wind* Based on Gideon Toury's Theory of Norm

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Abstract—Since there are many translated editions of *Gone with the Wind*, there emerged many disputes and comments towards different translators' different products. In this article, the author intends to analyze Gideon Toury's theory of translation studies and focuses on norm to show that controlled by a specific translation norm, translators tend to take a specific translation strategy, which would be helpful for readers to better understand different translated editions.

Index Terms—descriptive translation studies, translation strategy, translation norm

I. CHINESE EDITIONS OF *GONE WITH THE WIND*

Gone with the Wind, written by American writer Margaret Mitchell, was published in 1936. As soon as it was distributed, it became the best seller, and was sold over 2,000,000 copies that year. In 1937, it won Pulitzer Prize and the Prize of American Publishers' Association. Till 1949, the year Margaret Mitchell died of car accident, the novel had been translated into 18 languages, published in over forty countries, and sold about 8,000,000 copies (Preface of *Gone with the Wind* 2002 English edition). According to *Washington Post*, till 1980, the novel had been translated into 31 languages; the sales had reached over 21,000,000 copies (Zhu, 1991).

In China, the movie adapted from the novel was released in Shanghai in 1940, and was cheered by Shanghai people during its show of over forty days. After several months, the first Chinese edition of the novel, translated by Fu Donghua, came out, and reprinted in 1979 (*Gone with the Wind* 1979 Chinese edition). Several decades since *Gone with the Wind* was introduced into China, Fu's edition dominated the translation. From 1990s, many translators started to retranslate the novel. And till now, it is estimated that there are at least eight editions.

With the issue of the translation, the articles about *Gone with the Wind* welled up. Till now, I got sixty-two articles about the novel, sixteen of which are written between 1980 and 1982, and the rest are mainly between 1991 and 2005. As for the content of these articles, about 90% of them are about the theme, the value, the thoughts of the novel as well as the analysis of the characters, and the last 10% is about translation, most of which are about the comparison of the two editions of the novel, and the central point of the comparison is the dispute of domestication and foreignization. Of the two editions that are compared, one definitely is Fu's edition, because many readers and translators treat it as the representative of domestication, but the other edition is diversified, such as, the edition translated by Daikan, or Chen Liangting, or Zhang Peiyu, or Huang Huai'ren. Although the editions are different, the theme of the articles is the same, that is, which edition is better, the edition of domestication or foreignization.

For example, Wang Danyang (1998) in the article *The Comparison of Two Chinese Editions of Gone with the Wind* thought Huang Huai'ren's edition is better than Fu's, because the author believed that Fu did not achieve faithfulness, which was very important to literary translation, and Huang's translation is rather close to the style of the language and thoughts of the original novel.

Also there are three articles using skopostheorie of German functionalism, among them, Wen Jun (2003) in his article *A Functionalist Critique of Two Chinese Translations of Gone with the Wind* illustrated Fu and Huang's editions, saying that the nature of translation is primarily determined by its skopos or commission, so Fu adopted domestication and Huang used foreignization, therefore their translations have different advantages and disadvantages. But here Wen Jun ignored that functional approach mainly applies to practical writings, and the translation of *Gone with the Wind* would rather belong to literary translation.

Still, Feng Qinghua (1987) in his *Studying Translation from the Macroscopical Viewpoint of Cultural Communication* said that translation is not only a linguistic transference, but also an intercultural communication, we should pay adequate attention to macro-cultural factors involved in the translating, so he employed a historic and descriptive approach to analyze Fu's translation and Daikan's edition, saying that specific sociocultural circumstances and vernacular Chinese of that time influenced and limited him in translating, but his edition was recognized by the readers of that time, so his edition belongs to the past, and we should respect his translation. While new objective conditions nowadays call for the new edition of the novel to adapt to the changed sociocultural surroundings. As for the edition of translation, there is no absolute domestication and foreignization'. Actually Mr Feng's "specific sociocultural circumstances and vernacular Chinese of that time", "new objective conditions" and "the changed sociocultural surroundings" could be regarded as translation norms of a given period of time according to Descriptive Translation Studies (Feng, 1987). Of course, his viewpoint teaches us to evaluate translation in a historic view instead of an

absolute static one, but he still says that with the understanding and attention about the foreign world and with the maturity of the sociocultural conditions, more outstanding translations that are more close to the original work would come out more. That just means foreignization would dominate the translation field nowadays, but there is a question, why could Mr. Feng conclude that foreignization would become the main stream in translation field? And why different translators of different time translated the same work in different ways, and why different editions of different time were treated differently? With Gideon Toury's *descriptive translation studies*, the questions would be explained in a better way.

II. DOMESTICATION AND FOREIGNIZATION IN CHINA

About domestication and foreignization, I got seventy-six articles, which could be divided into three categories. In the first category, the authors usually use a certain translation edition to analyze the process and current situation of domestication and foreignization in China, for example, Jiang Ping (2004) analyzes the dispute between domestication and foreignization by investigating the translation of the poems in *The Red Mansion*. In the second category, the author would analyze domestication and foreignization by analyzing the practical types of writing, i.e. law English, the English used in tourism, the translation of the film title, etc. But actually the articles about the origin, the evolvement, and present situation of domestication and foreignization written in a pure theory remain the majority, i.e. Qiu Wensheng (2002) wrote *On Context Establishment in Translation from the Viewpoint of Ideology and Logic*; Fang Can (2004) wrote *Translation Criticism: From Impression to Scientific Approaches—on the Scientific nature of Translation Criticism*; Qui Jixin (2004) wrote *Translator's Cultural Orientation and Translation Strategy*. No matter what kind of category the articles belong to, they generally mentioned the origin, the development and the present situation of domestication and foreignization in China.

Towards the origin of domestication foreignization, or rather free translation and direct translation called at the beginning, started after the unconscious translation developed into conscious large-scaled translation, the time when the translation of Buddhist Scripture became sweeping in China (Wang, 2002). In modern times, the second movement in the literary field about direct translation and free translation happened from 1920s to 1930s, and Lu Xun was the representative of direct translation, while Liang Shiqiu supported the opposite. Actually at that time political elements were involved in the dispute. And in the translation field of this contemporary age, the dispute of domestication and foreignization, took many elements into consideration i.e. politics, culture, power, religion, etc., was the extension of the dispute took place from 1920s to 1930s.

The first one who started the dispute of the translation mainstream in the contemporary age was Liu Yingkai (1987) with his *Domestication—Wrong Road of Translation*. Ten years after that, Xu Jun published an article, which was about the investigation of readers' response towards the translation of *Le Rouge et le Noir*, directly resulted in the dispute between the group of domestication and foreignization which led to the climax of the battle. Consequently, so many articles were published to discuss this problem, and these articles mainly concerned about which one, domestication or foreignization, dominated which time of period, and which one will take the dominance in the near future.

Among these articles, some were written by Sun Zhili, who brought forward his ideas about domestication and foreignization. In 2001, he said in his *Domestication and Foreignization* that if a translator wanted to make a successful translation, then he must deal with the relationship between domestication and foreignization well, the basic rule would be making foreignized translation as much as possible. (Sun, 2001) Then In his *China's Literary Translation: from Domestication to Foreignization* concluded that the translation of Chinese literature will turn to foreignization from domestication (Sun, 2002). By using many examples, he confirmed that from 1870s to 1970s the translation of Chinese literature translation, except for about ten years after the May 4th Movement of 1919, was mainly guided by domestication. And from 1980s to 2000s, Chinese translation field was encouraged and influenced by western translation theory; foreignization was paid more and more attention. Finally he made the conclusion that in the 21 century, domestication would become the main translation strategy of Chinese literature. In 2003, Mr. Sun wrote another article *Some More Words on the Strategy of Literary Translation*, he provided a further analysis of the advisability and feasibility of the "foreignization first, domestication second" strategy, in terms of the general tendency of the international situation, the domestic situation and the basic policy of China, and the main tasks of literary translation, etc. (Sun, 2003). Later in his *False Foreignization in Translation*, he still insisted that foreignization should be preferred for foreign literature translation, plus avoiding the "morbid form of translation" (Sun, 2004). Therefore, from his development of his ideas, we could easily see that he his arguments turned to the reasons of the tendency of this issue from explanation of the relationship between the two.

Similarly, Wang Dongfeng wrote another article *An Invisible Hand—Ideological Manipulation in the Practice of Translation* and tried to tell the reasons why translator chose a specific translation strategy (Wang, 2003). By using the translation of Buddhist Scripture, he pointed out that ideology, this invisible hand, not only could manipulate the choice of the original novel and the use of translation strategy, but could determine whether the translation is popular or not.

Actually, no matter in which period of time, translation would no doubt be influenced by society and culture, at the beginning translators all put the focus on the literal correspondence; after that with the development of many aspects, economy, politics, culture, communications among countries, translators did realize that there are certain elements influence the choice of the way of translation, or translation strategy. Some scholars spent much more attention on

which one would be better and which one would be the dominant tendency, and they also concentrated on the judgment of which translation was better than which one. So what are the theories that translators based on to make such a conclusion? Are there rules to evaluate a translation appropriate or not? And when comment translations, should translators use set standards? Must the translation editions be picked out which one is better? As a matter of fact, with Israeli scholar Even-Zohar's polysystem theory, Toury's descriptive translation studies and his theory of translation norm in particular, we would find in their theories that domestication and foreignization would be decided by the certain situation and certain status of a certain culture, not the author's subjective choice. Therefore, this is a different way to judge a translation, we could not just comment on a past translation from the viewpoint of modern people's criteria, without considering the influences of many elements at that time.

III. GIDEON TOURY AND DESCRIPTIVE TRANSLATION STUDIES

A. *The Relevant Background Information*

It would be impossible to discuss Toury and his descriptive translation studies without mentioning Israeli scholar Even-Zohar, who developed polysystem theory in the 1970s on the foundations of Russian Formalism of the 1920s, and Most of his work was to discuss the role of translation literature in a particular literary system and the broader theoretical significance of polysystem theory to general translation studies. According to *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, polysystem theory "offers a general model for understanding, analyzing and describing the functioning and evolution of literary systems, its specific application to the study of translated literature." "According to Even-Zohar's model, the polysystem is conceived as a heterogeneous, hierarchized conglomerate (or system) of systems which interact to bring about an ongoing, dynamic process of evolution within the polysystem as a whole" (Baker, 2001, p.176). "Essential to the concept of the polysystem is the notion that the various strata and subdivisions which make up a given polysystem are constantly competing with each other for the dominant position. Thus in the case of the literary polysystem there is a continuous state of tension between the center and the periphery, in which different literary genres all vie for domination of the center. There are not only the 'high' or 'canonized' forms; it also includes 'low' or 'non-canonized' genres. Thus the literary polysystem is made up not only of 'masterpieces' and revered literary forms (such as the established verse forms) but also of such genres as children's literature, popular fiction and translated works, none of which have traditionally fallen within the domain of literary studies. The new, non-elitist, non-prescriptive approach which this rejection of value judgments has made possible has had far-reaching consequences for the field of translation studies" (Baker, 2001, p.176). This notion speaks for itself, that is, polysystem theory is the theory about literature, which pays much more attention on literature translation.

Gideon Toury, Even-Zohar's colleague, probably made the most significant extension of the model, and the *target-oriented* approach is consolidated, as well as the notion of *translation norms* being introduced and developed. Toury, as Even-Zohar, developed his theory on the basis of his investigation of the translation of Hebrew literature, and the purpose of his study is also the same with Even-Zohar, that is, translation theory and the complicated structure of Hebrew literature. So Toury focuses on what kind of translation would achieve in certain culture, and what are the functions of these translations, and what kind of prescription culture would make on translation studies. He concentrates on translation, especially literature translation, would bring about what kind of influence towards specific culture and cultural development, and he centers on what kind of position translation has in a specific culture as well as the influence that position exerts on the translation strategies and the whole translation process. So all the above elements decide that what he studies mainly is literature translation.

B. *Methodology for Systematic Descriptive Translation Studies*

In *his Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond*, Toury (2001) calls for the development of a properly systematic descriptive branch of the discipline to replace isolated free-standing studies that are commonplace. For Toury (2001), translation first and foremost occupies a position in the social and literary systems of the target culture, and this position determines the translation strategies that are employed. Toury (2001) proposes a three-phase methodology for systematic descriptive translation studies (DTS), incorporating a description of the product and the wider role of the sociocultural system:

- 1) Situate the text within the target culture system, looking at its significance or acceptability.
- 2) Compare the ST and the TT for shifts, identifying relationships between 'coupled pairs' of ST and TT segments, and attempting generalization about the underlying concept of translation.
- 3) Draw implications for decision-making in future translating. (Munday, 2002)

In the first step, without considering the source text, Toury provides a possibility for some kinds of comparing work, which may furnish an addition of the way of explaining the texts' acceptability, namely, the comparing of various parallel translations in one language, which came into being at one point of time; the comparing of a number of parallel translations into one language, which came into being in different periods of time; the comparing of different phases of the emergence of a single translation, trying to trace at least the way individual translators waver between different concepts of acceptability as they move along; the comparing of several (assumedly parallel) translations into different languages, which could be treated as a means of assessing the impact of various factors on the modeling of a translation,

with an eye to drawing the distinction between what is universal and what is culture, or language-specific in this type of behavior (Toury, 2001, p73-74). Therefore, the first step aims to expand corpus and establish a descriptive profile of translations in the light of genre, period, author, etc. In this way, the norms related to each type of translation can be defined as the ultimate purpose (with more descriptive studies carried out) to illustrate the behavior of general translation.

In the second step of Toury's methodology, he mentions there are several cases where a multitude of candidates for a source text may exist. First, under some circumstances, there could be the existence of more than one version for an assumed text, even in one source text and language. Second, there are cases where candidates for a source text appear in more than one language. Third, a specific group that is of particular interest for later periods involves so-called self-translations. Finally, a set of assumed original texts in different languages involves the possibility of using mediating translation, which is performed by some other people instead of the original author. In his book, Toury maintains that a 'mapping' of the TT onto the ST would 'yield a series of (ad hoc) couple pairs' (Toury, 2001, p77). This is a type of comparison which Toury (2001) admits that every comparison is partial; that a comparison is also indirect in its very essence; and which will undergo 'continuous revision' during the very analytical process itself. Therefore, in this stage, establishing norms is crucial, because it is norms that control translator's choice, the acceptability of TT and finally determine the relationship between ST and TT.

Obviously, in the last step, the corpus of texts would be analyzed and try to figure out the implications for decision-making, so as to develop the laws of translation.

C. *The Concept of Norms of Translation Behavior---Translation as a Norm-governed Activity*

One of the most important points in Toury's descriptive translation studies are the norms that he added between translation competency and translation behavior, then differences of different translation behavior could be noted. He tries to explain different translation strategies and different choices of the assumed source texts by the requirements that target culture calls towards translation function. So in this way, norms would naturally be conceived as the central point of descriptive translation studies. The definition of norms used by Toury is:

"The translation of general values or ideas shared by a community—as to what is right and wrong, adequate and inadequate—into performance instructions appropriated for and applicable to particular situations, specifying what is prescribed and forbidden as well as what is tolerated and permitted in a certain behavioral dimension." (Toury, 2001, p55)

According to Toury, "norms are acquired by the individual during his/her socialization and always imply sanctions—actual or potential, negative as well as positive. Within the community, norms also serve as criteria according to which actual instances of behavior are evaluated" (Toury, 2001, p55). And norms represent an intermediate level between general absolute rules and pure idiosyncrasies. So it could be seen that the norms themselves form a hierarchical continuum along the scale: Some are stronger, so it's more like a rule, and others are weaker, so it's almost unique. The boundaries between the different kinds of constraints are hence diffuse. And it is the same case with each of the concepts, including the grading itself, being relative. Accordingly, within a heterogeneous group, much more binding force may be well obtained for what is just a preferred mode of behavior within a certain (more homogeneous) section thereof, in the light of either human agents (e.g., translators among texters on the whole) or types of activity (e.g., interpreting, or legal translation, within translation in general). (Toury, 2001)

So the core of the norms is not only metaphorical, in the light of their relative position along a postulated continuum of constraints; on the contrary, it is essential that norms be the crucial concept and central point for any attempt to explain the social relevance of activities, because their existence along with the wide range of circumstances in which they apply to (with the conformity this indicates), are the main factors in making sure the establishment and maintenance of social order. This also applies to culture as well as to any of the systems that constitute culture which is in fact a social system (Toury, 2001).

Therefore, from Toury's explanation of the relationships among rules, norms and idiosyncrasies, the conclusion could be drawn that translation norms are not the rules people made, but the objective requirements people have towards the choices of source texts, translation strategy and the acceptability of the target texts in a specific time period or a particular society. While translators must be influenced by these objective requirements and would consciously or unconsciously perform some kind of translation behavior. Obviously, translation norms are closely connected with society and time, which are much broader concepts, referring to the past societies and various kinds of people, such as, patrons, authors, translators, readers etc. Hence, different time periods would definitely have different translation norms, which exert a subtle influence on translators (Lin, 2006).

Consequently, as translation is the type of activity that unavoidably includes at least two different languages and two indigenous cultural traditions, i.e., at least two sets of norm-systems on each level, translation is thus conceived as a norm-governed activity based on Toury's theory.

D. *The Concept of Norms of Translation Behavior-- The Multiplicity and Instability of Translation Norms*

Although translation is thought to be a norm-governed activity, it does not necessarily mean that there is an absolute need for a norm to apply to all sectors of a society, to the same extent or not at all. It is even less necessary or even more likely to be a culturally applied norm. In reality, sameness here is only a coincidence, or else the result of constant

contacts between subsystems in a culture or between the entire cultural systems, and therefore a manifestation of interference. After all, its significance lies only in the norm of the system it embeds, and even if instances of external behavior appear to be the same, the systems are still different.

With the exception of their inherent specificity, norms are also unstable, constantly changing entities; not because of any inherent defects but because of their nature as norms. On some occasions, norms change fairly quickly; and on some other circumstances, they are more persistent and the process may need longer time. (Toury, 2001)

Multiplicity and variation should not be regarded as the proof of a lack of norms in translation. They simply indicate that the situations in real life are often complex; and if any reasonable conclusion is to be drawn, it is best to note this complexity rather than ignore it. As a result, it seems that the only feasible way out is to put every phenomenon, every item, every text, every act into consideration in the process of distributing the different norms themselves their just-right position and valence. (Toury, 2001)

Of course, many of the translators, through their very activity, help in shaping the changing process of translation norms. Adapting to social pressure and constantly adjusting one's behavior to changing norms is by no means simple, and most people, including translators, sponsors of translation activities and the consumers of their products, could fulfill the task only to a certain extent. It is not uncommon, therefore, that in a society there are three competing norms, each having its own followers and its place in the entire culture in general: "the ones that dominate the center of the system, and hence direct translational behavior of the so-called mainstream, alongside the remnants of previous sets of norms and the rudiments of new ones, hovering in the periphery. This is why it is possible to speak—and not derogatorily—of being 'trendy', 'old-fashioned' or 'progressive' in translation (or in any single section thereof) as it is in any other behavioral domain." (Toury, 2001, p62)

On the basis of the theory that translation norms are unstable and multiplied, we could sum up that different times have different translation norms; even in a same society, different translators would take different translation norms towards different styles of writing and different readers. But as for a particular style of a special society, translators would still follow some translation norms for specific readers.

Based on the above introduction of Toury's theory, it is easy to see that with the target-oriented approach, translation is conceived as the communication in a specific cultural-linguistic system, that is, the key point of translation is not only the source text, the source text should also be put into the target culture at the time to study, so with his theory, the actual translation is concerned about. In a word, when evaluating a translated text, we should take the translation norms at that time into consideration, analyze all the conditions controlling the translators, and then we would get an appropriate and reasonable opinion.

IV. CONCLUSION

From the above analysis, we understand that translation norms are not the rules people made, but the objective requirements people have towards the choices of source texts, translation strategy and the acceptability of the target texts in a specific time period or a particular society. Translators must be influenced by these objective requirements and would consciously or unconsciously perform some kind of translation behavior. Different time periods would definitely have different translation norms, which exert a subtle influence on translators. Therefore, different translator would take different translation strategies adherent to the mainstream of his period of time. Informed of this, the readers of different translated editions of every literary classic would better understand and enjoy the translator's products.

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