

Study on the Translation and Dissemination of Chinese Prose in the Context of Presenting Compelling China Stories

Weiguo Zou

School of Foreign Studies, Guangxi University of Science and Technology, Liuzhou, 545006, China

983735229@qq.com

Abstract

With the exchange and integration of Chinese and foreign cultures, Chinese literature has gradually opened the door to the world and occupied an important place in the world literary field. There are four major literary genres in China. As one of them, prose serves as an important part of China's excellent culture and a treasure of Chinese culture. Promoting the dissemination of Chinese prose is a key to present compelling China stories, which not only bears on the development and promotion of Chinese prose, but also is the need to comply with the requirements of the times and enhance China's cultural soft power. Based on the context of presenting compelling China stories, this paper will make a preliminary exploration and research on the English translation and dissemination of Chinese prose, summarize and prospect the current research results, and propose supplements to promote the external dissemination of Chinese prose, so as to give an inspiration on presenting compelling China stories and improve the fundamentals of theoretical research, thus providing experience and reference for the subsequent study of prose English translation.

Keywords

Translation; Chinese Prose; Dissemination.

1. Introduction

The Communist Party of China led the people to write the most magnificent epic in the history after a hundred years of bloody struggle and perseverance. After the reform and opening up, the Party adhered to its independent foreign policy of peace, created a good external environment for China's development and made significant contributions to the cause of human progress. Presenting compelling China stories requires us to actively shape a sound national image, put into practice and constantly enhance our country's influence. The promotion of the dissemination of Chinese culture by telling stories can not only help other countries understand China, but also enhance China's international influence [1]. In carrying out foreign exchanges, presenting compelling China stories is one of the ways for China to achieve the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. It also embodies the new generation of Chinese leaders' efforts to achieve the "two centenary goals" and their thinking about the great "China Dream" strategy. Prose has always been dubbed as an elegant literary form by the Chinese people. In addition to its beautiful artistic conception and spiritual insights, it also boasts fresh, meaningful, simple and generous styles. When people often read some beautiful essays, they can not only gain rich knowledge and broaden their horizons, but also cultivate their own literary cultivation. Therefore, the dissemination of Chinese prose will help foreigners know Chinese cultures in a new perspective.

2. The Importance of Presenting Compelling China Stories

Storytelling is an effective way of communication with a long history. In the course of global cultural exchanges, good stories are often memorable and widely spread. The *Travels of Marco Polo* let many Europeans know China, and the *Journey to the West* showed the glorious image of the CPC to the world [2]. Presenting compelling China stories can not only create a good national image, but also deeply reflect the country's profound cultural and historical heritages. The charm of the Chinese civilizations, which have lasted for more than 5000 years and lied in the Chinese culture. The essence of presenting compelling China stories is to promote the excellent Chinese culture and spread it overseas in a vivid, infectious and persuasive way. The dissemination of wonderful Chinese stories to the outside world has brought profound and colorful national characteristics to the world, attracted countless foreign friends to come to learn about Chinese culture, further expanded the international influence of Chinese culture, and thus enhancing the soft power of Chinese culture.

3. The Translation of Chinese Prose and Presenting Compelling China Stories

3.1. The Current Situations of Research on the External Dissemination of Prose Translation

3.1.1. On the Practice of Prose Translation

As we all know, there are many famous writers and masterpieces in modern and contemporary Chinese prose fields. Some of these prose works serve as the precious spiritual wealth of China and even the world. In the context of the current Chinese cultural dissemination, if we want to translate more good prose works, we need to strengthen the practice and research of English translation of excellent contemporary prose works[3].

According to the *Review of Studies on the English Translation of Contemporary Chinese Prose*, it is not too late to start the practice of English translation of prose in China, and many translators began to emerge at an early stage. The Foreign Language Press published the Selected Work of Luxun jointly translated by Yang Xianyi and Dai Naidi in 1956, and then published the English versions of *Wild Grass*, *Call to Arms* and *Wandering* translated by Yang Daihe in 1976 and 1981. In 1993, Zhang Peiji published the English translation of *Luohuasheng* in *China Translation*, and then successively published such translations as *Poverty*, *Mr. Almost* and *Never Give Up the Pursuit of Learning*. High quality translations gradually attract the attention of some scholars. Zhu Manhua (1996), Li Ming (1997), and Li Zhi (1998) successively published articles in *China Translation* to evaluate Zhang Peiji's and Zhu Chunshen's translations from the perspective of aesthetics, and then the study of modern and contemporary prose translation has been gradually beginning.

3.1.2. In Terms of Theoretical Research on the External Dissemination of Chinese Prose

Many scholars have studied the external dissemination of Chinese prose from different perspectives. Some scholars discussed the development of prose under the vision of network media, some scholars discussed the aesthetic value and communication concept of prose, and some scholars interpreted the communication theory of prose. At present, academic theoretical research involves many aspects such as prose development, characteristics, values, ways and significance of external dissemination. In view of the development of the diplomacy of major countries with Chinese characteristics, what we need more is to combine the context of presenting compelling China stories, promote the dissemination of Chinese culture, and explore the translation and introduction research in the overseas communication of Chinese prose. If we want to make prose more effective in overseas, we still need further exploration and study.

3.2. Overseas Dissemination of Translating Chinese Prose in the Context of Presenting Compelling China Stories

Presenting compelling China stories can show the world the image of China as a big country with reform and opening up, civilization and progress, and a responsible country, and show the friendly and peace-loving attitude of the Chinese people and the vibrant image of the Chinese nation. This is of great strategic and practical significance for improving China's national image. In the new era, it is increasingly necessary for us to show the image of China to the world. It has become a task for us to promote the dissemination of Chinese culture, and translation is one of the important ways to promote the spread of culture. If we want to present compelling China stories in the English translation of Chinese prose and promote Chinese excellent prose works to go abroad, we need to follow a certain communication mode.

3.2.1. Translation and Introduction Subjects

First of all, translators in our country need to give full play to their subjective initiative, that is, to have a conscious cultural awareness, a good humanistic character and cultural and aesthetic creativity. It is important to find a balance between the differences between English and Chinese, to tell China's stories in prose English translation with a way of thinking that conforms to both languages, and to show excellent Chinese culture to other countries. What is translator's subjectivity? That is, the translator is the choice of prose translation. The translator can decide the content of translation and what the target language audience can see. At this time, the translator should choose the content that is relatively easy for western readers to accept and understand for translation, so as to arouse the strong interest of western audiences, deepen their understanding of Chinese culture; Secondly, the translator is also the regulator of the two cultures. When the communication of one side of the culture is small and the audience is not large enough, the translator should actively play its role as a regulator. This requires translators to seek ways and means to effectively disseminate English translated prose from language, culture, ideology and other aspects. Finally, the translator needs to fully understand the reading habits and preferences of the target audience, adopt flexible methods to translate prose works into English to meet the needs of western audiences, so as to achieve better translation and introduction effects.

3.2.2. Contents of Translation and Introduction

Only by choosing appropriate translation and introduction content can we better tell China's stories. We live in a new century, so we must choose to translate prose with novel ideas, plot in line with the current way of thinking, and also reflect the national connotation, which helps arouse people's resonance. Prose with national characteristics is more likely to be favored by the public. Chinese prose carries the most profound spiritual pursuit of the whole nation, and is the nectar and jade dew that the Chinese nation can live and grow continuously. Therefore, we should select Chinese prose that can reflect excellent traditional culture, translate it and spread it overseas.

First of all, there is no shortage of prose in the Chinese literary field that contains both narrative and lyric expressions as well as smooth language. For example, Ouyang Xiu's prose, which is full of harmony and lightness, can let foreign friends follow the author's footsteps to see the great rivers and mountains of China through the lines; Another example is Lu Xun's reminiscent prose, which is colorful and appropriate in details; There are even some essays extolling the good qualities of human beings, which are all cultural works with distinctive national characteristics. These works are worthy of further exploration. The translation of Chinese prose into English and sending them overseas not only shows our cultural charms, but also shows the value and significance of our times. In addition, you can also choose some famous works, such as Yu Qiuyu and Xu Zhimo. Through reading the *Yu Qiuyu's Translation of Prose Excerpt*, we can know that there is a defining thread in Yu Qiuyu's prose works, that is, the tracing and thinking of Chinese

history and culture. Compared with some other cultural essayists, Yu Qiuyu's works reveal a few flexibilities and liveliness. Xu Zhimo, who is called a poet of the Crescent School, has endless beauty and romance in his prose works. Westerners advocate the subjective world of their hearts, pursuing rich ideals and passionate life. The English translation of these works fully coincides with the western audiences' preference for romance.

3.2.3. Translation Audience

To clarify who our English translated prose works should be presented to is to answer the questions of "who to tell" and "how to tell" in presenting compelling China stories. The audience of English translation of Chinese prose should be scholars from English speaking countries and ordinary readers, even foreigners who do not have a deep understanding of our extensive and profound culture. However, there has always been a problem in the English translation and dissemination of Chinese prose. Previous surveys have shown that the English translation of domestic prose is mostly used in the domestic English teaching classroom. The audience of domestic English translation prose is often those English learners or candidates. In most cases, it is only aimed at domestic readers, and there are few cases of promoting prose dissemination to introduce to people in other countries. In order to present compelling China stories and let more foreigners understand Chinese culture, we must change the previous mode of thinking and promote the spread of Chinese prose to the outside world.

First of all, considering the target audience, translators can appropriately adopt foreignization in translating prose into English. We present stories in order to gain the recognition of the audience. In the course of presenting compelling China stories to the audience, we must focus on the target readers. Therefore, when telling Chinese stories to the western society, translators need to take into account the foreign people's thinking mode, cultural background, aesthetic and reading points and receptivity. For example, in the form of combining film and television with books, some prose works with Chinese national characteristics can be made into film and television plays or sitcoms, and interesting Chinese elements can be added to the realistic content of books to enhance the penetration of prose works and the willingness of western audiences to further understand Chinese culture and other deep-seated content, such as national customs, human feelings and ethics.

Secondly, in order to better tell China's stories to western audiences and arouse their resonance, translators can properly use the translation technique of three-dimensional transformation. It should be noted that we must try to reduce the target language readers' resistance to foreign cultures, and the content of translation and introduction must conform to the audiences' reading habits. In the course of translation, the translator should pay attention to the different expressions caused by the differences between Chinese and English. For this part of translation, the translator can use the corresponding conversion techniques. In particular, the Chinese original text will have a large number of gorgeous words and various expressions, which are unexpected for the target language readers. In the process of translating these expressions into English, they can be omitted or borrowed without affecting the understanding of the source language. In addition, in terms of cultural dimension, Chinese prose works will also have some unique elements that are not available in foreign countries, such as "withered vines, old trees, and dim crows". Literal translation should not be used for the translation of such sentences in that literal equivalence should not be sought while ignoring its specific meaning. When necessary, annotation must be added. Some four-character idioms in the works can also be translated by free translation.

4. Conclusion

The Chinese nation is a great nation that has endured many hardships but has gone ahead bravely. Compared with any period in history, the development achievements of China today

are a qualitative leap that is different from the past, surpassing the past and inspiring. The constant stability of the political system, the continuous surge of economic development, the smooth social order, and the significant enhancement of cultural strength have all contributed to the expansion of China's international influence and realistic appeal year by year. We can see from the changes on the world stage that countries all over the world pay attention to China. In this context, it is a historical necessity and a demand of the times to tell good stories about China. Prose is one of the literary genres in our country. Its long history, distinctive features and rich content are worthy of our in-depth study and promotion. In the external dissemination strategy of telling good China's stories, the English translation and overseas communication of Chinese prose are conducive to promoting the excellent Chinese culture and demonstrating the great country quality of being friendly, harmonious and mutually beneficial, which is of great practical value and far-reaching significance.

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