

A Comparative Study of Two English Translations of *Tao Hua Yuan Ji* Based on Gideon Toury's Theory of Translation Norms

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Abstract

Tao Hua Yuan Ji, as one of the excellent classical Chinese works written by Tao Yuanming, a well-known idyllist in the Eastern Jin Dynasty (317-420), is of great importance in the Chinese literary circle for describing a quiet and peaceful pastoral life and embodying the Taoist of seclusion. Nowadays, people can also get new thoughts and insights through rereading this classic work. Based on Toury's theory of translation norms, this paper conducts a descriptive and interpretive study of comparing Yang Xianyi's translation of Tao Hua Yuan Ji with Lin Yutang's one. By analyzing the two translators' different translation purposes, translation tendencies and translation strategies in the three aspects of preliminary norms, initial norms and operational norms, this paper states that the concrete translation behaviors of Yang Xianyi and Lin Yutang are influenced and restricted by the translation norms, thus their respective versions show different stylistic characteristics in terms of vocabulary, syntax and text. Through unveiling the reasons of the different styles of these two translations, this paper aims to provide some enlightenment for the descriptive translation studies in the process of spreading Chinese culture to the world.

Keywords

Tao Hua Yuan Ji, translation norms, translation tendency, Gideon Toury.

1. Introduction

The author of *Tao Hua Yuan Ji* is Tao Yuanming, a famous poet and essayist of the Eastern Jin Dynasty. At the end of that Dynasty, with the sharp and complicated class conflicts, the people's life was in turmoil. Against such a social background, Tao Yuanming, who was deeply influenced by the Taoist recluse ideology, wrote this essay to express his dissatisfaction and disdain for the irrational social system. The essay consists of three hundred and twenty words, divided into five paragraphs. With a fisherman's activities as the main line of story, it shows a beautiful place like a fairyland where people live peacefully and happily. Nowadays, the profound philosophical connotations and strong romanticism contained within the essay are more attractive. In addition to its great significance in the history of Chinese literature, this ancient essay has also received wide attention from the Western world. Up to now, there are ten English translations by Xu Jingcheng, A. R. Davis, Rick Davis & David Steelman, J. R. Hightower, Lin Yutang, Yang Xianyi, Fang Zhong, Luo Jingguo, Sun Dayu, and Xie Baikui, respectively. Among these ten English translations, the translations of Yang Xianyi, a renowned Chinese translator and expert in foreign literature, and Lin Yutang, a master of translation, are unique and deserve special attention. Over the course of more than half a century, Yang Xianyi and his wife have translated many classical and modern Chinese literary works into English. The scope covered various genres such as pre-Qin ancient essays, Tang and Song poems, novels of the Qing Dynasty, etc. The masterpieces of ancient and contemporary Chinese literature translated by Yang and his wife had a major impact on the Western world's understanding of Chinese literature. In 2009, the China Translators Association conferred the Lifetime Achievement Award for

Translation to Yang Xianyi, which is the highest honorary award of the contemporary Chinese translation community (Huang Youyi, 2019). Moreover, Lin Yutang, another renowned translator, devoted his life to the exchange and communication between Chinese and Western cultures, introducing Chinese culture to the English-speaking world with his writings and translations, which truly influenced the Westerners' view of China. He regarded translation as an art, and conveyed the beauty of Chinese culture to the Western world with beautiful and concise language.

At present, there is a lack of research on the English translation of *Tao Hua Yuan Ji* in the community of translation studies. Most of the studies tend to examine Lin's translation from different perspectives. For example, Chen Yidan (2021) analyzes the gaps embodied in Lin's translation from the perspective of reception aesthetics, believing that Lin Yutang intentionally employs the technique of addition to fill in semantic and contextual gaps in the process of translation. Lin Danmin and Tan Shufen (2020) analyze Lin's translation from the perspective of eco-translatology, pointing out that it has achieved adaptation and selection from the levels of "linguistic dimension", "cultural dimension", and "communicative dimension". Zhang Ge (2011) maintains that there is a phenomenon of "creative treason" in Lin's translation, which is caused by Lin Yutang's unique translation view and his purpose of translation. Other scholars, such as Huang Wei (2021), Ma Xiaomin (2010), and Ma Jie (2014), have analyzed and compared two or more translations of *Tao Hua Yuan Ji* from the perspectives of functional equivalence, cultural equivalence, and the theory of adaptation and selection. In contrast, few studies have been conducted on Yang's translation. Chen Yang and Ge Jihong (2022) have explored the linguistic style of Yang's translation from the perspective of style marking theory, pointing out that in terms of the low-level and high-level formal markers in the original text, Yang Xianyi chose appropriate translation strategies and techniques, which helped him accurately translate the style of the original text. Cao Shanshan (2011), on the other hand, analyzes Yang's translation from Steiner's four hermeneutic steps of translation. She believes that it embodies the basic viewpoint of the hermeneutic school that "translation is understanding". The above studies have briefly analyzed the general characteristics of the English translations of *Tao Hua Yuan Ji* from different perspectives, but the research contents are mostly confined to the case analysis with theories and contents separated. Moreover, being not in-depth enough, the text analysis fails to analyze the different characteristics of the linguistic styles of the different English translations of *Tao Hua Yuan Ji* or to reveal the reasons behind the different linguistic styles of the translations.

Therefore, this study selects Yang Xianyi's translation and Lin Yutang's translation, which are highly praised among the existing translations of *Tao Hua Yuan Ji* and have their own distinctive features, as the studying objects. Taking Gideon Toury's translation norms as the theoretical basis, this study conducts descriptive and explanatory analysis and comparison of the two translations. It emphasizes on analyzing their different features at the lexical, syntactic and textual levels, aiming to reveal the formation principles of the different styles of two translations, with a view to shedding some light on the descriptive study of translations and to helping Chinese culture to go global successfully.

2. Toury's Theory of Translation Norms

After the 1980s, translation studies experienced a shift from a linguistic perspective to a cultural perspective. On the basis of developing the polysystem theory proposed by his teacher Itamar Even Zohar, Gideon Toury proposed his theory of translation norms. Toury's translation theory promotes adopting a descriptive research method and placing translation in a socio-cultural context to be examined. He has systematically elaborated on the translation norms in his book *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond* (1995).

According to Toury, translators are generally subject to three kinds of norms in their actual translation behaviors. Firstly, there is the preliminary norm, which involves translation policy and directness of translation. Translation policy refers to the influence of a particular culture and time on the choice of text, in terms of which, many factors must be considered, including different genres of literature, the requirements of different publishers and the writing styles of different authors, etc. Moreover, a specific language (such as English) has a preference for the translations of some authors and works. Directness refers to whether the translator translates from the source language directly into the target language or translates through an intermediary language. Secondly, the initial norm is related to the “adequacy” and “acceptability” of the translation. According to Toury, if the translator complies with the norms of the source language, the translated text will be characterized by “adequacy”, and if the translator complies with the norms of the translated language, the translated text will be characterized by “acceptability” (Toury 1995: 56-57). Finally, the operational norm refers to the norms affecting translators’ specific translation processes and behaviors, which include matricial norms and textual-linguistic norms. The former determines the completeness and actual layout of the translated text, which involves omissions, additions, and adjustments to paragraphs, while the latter influences the translated text at a micro level, involving vocabulary selection, stylistic features, and sentence structure, etc. (Toury, 1995:58-59).

Toury’s theory of translation norms has received sustained attention from the translation academy and has had a far-reaching impact on translation studies. In an article titled *Gideon Toury and His Translation Theory*, Shan Weilong commented that Toury’s theory of translation norms lays a solid foundation for translation to move from traditional prescriptive research to descriptive research, promotes the further development of descriptive translation, and broadens the horizons of translation studies (2008: 204-206). Therefore, this study takes Toury’s theory as a framework for a comparative analysis of the two English translations of *Tao Hua Yuan Ji* by Yang Xianyi and Lin Yutang.

3. A Comparative Analysis of Two English Translations of Tao Hua Yuan Ji Based on Translation Norms

With the theoretical framework of Toury’s translation norms, this study analyzes Yang Xianyi’s and Lin Yutang’s English translations of *Tao Hua Yuan Ji* on both a macro level and a micro level with the findings as follows. Firstly, under the constraints of the preliminary norms, the two translators chose to translate the text due to the influences of different socio-cultural backgrounds and out of different translation purposes. Secondly, the two translators showed different translation tendencies under the constraints of the initial norms. Finally, under the joint influence of the initial norms and the operational norms, the two translators adopted different translation strategies and translation techniques, which render their respective translations present different textual features and styles at the lexical, syntactic and textual levels.

3.1. Their Textual Choices for Different Purposes under the Constraints of Preliminary Norms

The preliminary norms relate to translation policy and the directness of translation. Both Yang Xianyi and Lin Yutang translated *Tao Hua Yuan Ji* from Chinese into English, so there is no difference between them in terms of the directness of translation. However, under the influence of different translation policies, their translation effects are different. According to Toury, translation policies refer to those factors that determine which text types or which specific texts are chosen to be imported into a particular culture or language at a particular time (Toury 2012: 82). The translation policies that had an impact on the two translations of *Tao*

Hua Yuan Ji are mainly the historical backgrounds in which the translators lived and the social and cultural factors.

Lin Yutang was born in a pastor's family. Influenced by his father, he grew up believing in Christianity. He learned English and Western culture at an early age. Then, he went to the United States and Germany to study further. His family background and education at an early age, coupled with his hard work during the period of his study, laid an excellent English foundation for him. His English is idiomatic, smooth and beautiful. A hundred years ago, China was in a period of domestic strife and foreign aggression. In order to save the country, the capable people of that time studied foreign experiences and translated foreign literary works into Chinese. Under such a social environment, Lin Yutang went in the opposite direction. He gained a deep insight into the fact that Westerners and even Chinese people had little understanding of the real situation in China, which led to a distorted and even deformed impression of China by most Westerners. Therefore, in order to change this situation, he began to write in English about the real situation in China. For example, in 1935, he published *My Country and My People*, a work that briefly describes the reality of China in English. In this book, he described his perception of the society at that time in a humorous tone, which opened a window for the Western world to understand the culture and the situation of China at that time. Since then, he became famous overseas. In addition, in order to dissolve the prejudice of Westerners against China, he began to intentionally translate those Chinese classical literature that promoted Chinese literati's open-mindedness and optimism, with the aim of introducing the wisdom and philosophy of Chinese sages to Western readers. For example, in 1936, after he went to the United States, he compiled a series of Chinese classics such as *The Wisdom of Laozi* and *The Wisdom of Confucius*, and also translated *Fu Sheng Liu Ji (The Six Records of a Floating Life)*, *Lan Ting Ji Xu (The orchid Pavilion)*, and other masterpieces of prose. *The Peach Colony (Tao Hua Yuan Ji)* was from *The Importance of Understanding: Translations from the Chinese* he compiled. A number of classics established his position in the international translation and literary communities. *New York Times* praised him that "his achievement in explaining to Westerners the customs, aspirations, fears and ideas of his countrymen is unsurpassed."

Yang Xianyi once went to Oxford University in England to study Ancient Greek and Roman Literature, as well as Medieval French Literature and English Literature. He received his B.A. and M.A. degrees with honors in Greek, Latin and English literature. During the long process of study, he read widely and absorbed both Chinese and Western cultures with a solid English foundation laid down. If Lin Yutang lived in an era when the Western world knew little about China's situation, Yang Xianyi lived in an era when the Western world had many misunderstandings and misinterpretations of Chinese culture. At that time, Yang Xianyi was invited by Liang Shiqiu to work in Chongqing National Compilation and Translation Museum. He was arranged to translate Chinese classics into English, in order to disseminate Chinese culture to the Western world. In more than half a century, he and his wife Gladys B. Tayler have translated hundreds of Chinese classics and contemporary literature, including *Lisao*, *The Scholars*, *A Dream in Red Mansions*, *Selected Works of Lu Xun*, etc. In addition, they also translated a series of poems by famous poets, including *Selected Poems of Du Fu*, *Selected Poems of Lu You*, *Selected Poems of Su Shi*, and so on. *Peach Blossom Springs (Tao Hua Yuan Ji)* is from his *Selected Poems of Tao Yuanming* published in 1999. Yang Xianyi has been a prolific writer and translator all his life and he is known as the one who has "translated almost the whole of China".

At the end of the Qing Dynasty, China was in a period of turmoil and its comprehensive national strength was weak. Concerning the cultural exchanges, it was in an extremely weak position. Therefore, the social environment at that time prompted most of the translators to translate from foreign languages into Chinese to learn the Western world's advanced knowledge, technology and culture to save China. At that time, the Western world did not know or want to

know much about China. Therefore, as a “different” translator, Lin Yutang translated to introduce China’s social situation and culture to the Western world to help them understand China. In the era of Yang Xianyi, due to the development and progress of society, the Western world already had a certain understanding of Chinese culture in the process of cultural exchanges and communication, but there were still many misunderstandings, even deliberate misinterpretations. The translator’s task was no longer to cater to the aesthetic interests of the western readers but to accurately and comprehensively introduce Chinese cultural knowledge. Moreover, the context of translation also underwent a fundamental change from “translating the world” to “translating both China and the world”. Therefore, translators in different periods have different purposes for translating cultural works and consider different translation policies, so the translation strategies they adopt would naturally be different, which results in different translations.

3.2. Translation Tendencies of Yang and Lin under the Constraints of Initial Norms

Initial norms affect the translator’s macro translation strategy. In the process of translation, the translator faces two different cultural systems of the source language and the target language, and needs to consider their different linguistic, stylistic and cultural characteristics. If the linguistic and cultural features of the SL are observed, the readers of the translated text can fully experience the language and culture of the foreign country, thus the “adequacy” is achieved. On the contrary, if the translator tends to be close to the target language and culture, the translated text will be more fluent and natural to the readers of the target language and be easy to be accepted, so the “acceptability” can be realized. The translation tendencies of Yang Xianyi and Lin Yutang are also constrained and influenced by the initial norms. After analyzing two translations carefully, this study finds that Yang Xianyi tends to abide by the norms of the source language and pursues the “adequacy” of the translation, while Lin Yutang tends to conform to the norms of the translated language and emphasizes the “acceptability” of the translation.

Throughout the text, Yang’s translation strictly adheres to the norms of the source language and focuses on the full expression of the content and form of the original text. There are very few adjustments of the syntax or subjective explanations of the original text. By contrast, Lin’s translation, which tends to adhere to the norms of the translated language, is richer in wording and more varied in syntax. The different translations of the following sentence by the two translators are enough to serve as a paradigmatic example to prove this phenomenon:

ST: 问今是何世？乃不知有汉，无论魏晋。

Yang’s TT: They asked what dynasty it was now. The Han they had never heard of, let alone the Wei and the Jin.

Lin’s TT:and asked what was the ruling dynasty now. They had not even heard of the Han Dynasty (two centuries before to two centuries after Christ), not to speak of the Wei (third century A.D.) and the Chin (third and fourth centuries).

In this example, Yang’s translation follows the linguistic norms of the source language. Except for placing “the han” at the beginning of the sentence to emphasize the long period of time that the people in the Peach Blossom Springs had been isolated from the rest of the world, he has not made any other syntactic adjustments to the original text, nor has he added any comments. Moreover, he employed modern pinyin to translate the dynasties involved. Thus, it can basically be regarded as a full translation of the original text which reflects “adequacy”. However, in Lin’s version, “Jin” is translated in Wade-Giles to “Chin” to conform to the pronunciation habits of English people. In addition, for the three dynasties mentioned in the example (i.e., “Han”, “Wei”, and “Jin”), the translations are added with detailed annotations involving “After Christ” or “A.D.” to help the target readers understand the time concept of the three dynasties. Both adjustments are intended to increase the acceptability of the translation. As a matter of fact, their two

different approaches are obvious throughout their English translations of Tao Hua Yuan Ji. There is another example:

ST: 白云先世避秦时乱.....

Yang's TT: They themselves told him that their ancestors had escaped from the wars and confusion in the time of Qin Dynasty.

Lin's TT: They said that their ancestors had come here as refugees to escape from the tyranny of Tsin Shih-huang (builder of Great Wall) some six hundred years ago.....

In this case, the two translators have different interpretations of “秦时乱(chaos in the Qin Dynasty)”. As we all know, one of the characteristics of ancient Chinese literature is the employment of condensed words. In the original text, Tao Yuanming used only one word “乱(chaos)” to summarize the social situation of the Qin Dynasty, which, however, renders a translational difficulty: whether to keep this characteristic of the original text and choose general words to translate, or to make it explicit. Both translators chose the latter one, with the difference that Yang Xianyi interpreted it as the wars and confusion of the Qin Dynasty, whereas Lin Yutang dealt with it as “the tyranny of Qin Shih-huang”, and added “builder of Great wall” and “some six hundred years ago” in parentheses to explain. This treatment directly materializes the generalized expression “乱chaos” in the original text into the imagery of “Qin Shih-huang”. Compared with Yang's translation, Lin's translation's degree of explicitness is higher. After all, in Yang's translation, the word “confusion” still corresponds to the word “chaos” in the original text, whereas in Lin's translation, Western readers who do not know Chinese history will not think of the concept of “chaos” in the original text. It is not difficult to explain Lin's motivation behind this treatment from the perspectives of his translation view and the context of the times in which he lived. He once put forward three major criteria for translation: faithfulness, fluency and beauty, which are roughly in line with Yan Fu's faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance. However, their emphases are different. As Lin (1984: 417-432) points out in his preface to Wu Shutian's *On Translation*, “Faithfulness is not a matter of word-for-word translation, and the translator must have a sense of responsibility and not pursue superficial faithfulness. A smooth translation requires taking the sentence as the body and acting according to the Chinese mentality”. As mentioned above, influenced by the background of the times, Lin Yutang's translation purpose was to make Western readers enjoy reading Chinese literature and understand the social situation in China. Therefore, in order to obtain the greatest social benefits, and also influenced by his above translation view, he chose the translation strategy oriented to the target language. To sum up, although both translators adopted explicit translation, they did so for different translation purposes. Yang Xianyi aimed at pursuing the “adequacy” of the translated text, while Lin Yutang focused on maximizing the “acceptability” of the translated text.

3.3. Stylistic Features of Lin's and Yang's Translations under the Joint Constraints of Initial and Operational Norms

Initial norms shape the translator's translation tendency at the macro level, while these two translation tendencies, i.e. “adequacy” and “acceptability”, influence the translator's choice of specific translation strategies at the micro level. In other words, the initial norms influence the operational norms. Under the joint constraints of the two norms, the translator will adopt corresponding translation techniques in the specific translation process, and thus the translated text will have different stylistic features. In terms of the two translations of Tao Hua Yuan Ji, Yang Xianyi and Lin Yutang are subject to different initial norms, which form different operational norms. As a result, the textual features of the two translations are also different. Specifically, Yang's and Lin's translation tendencies of pursuing “adequacy” and “acceptability” under the influence of the initial norms, as well as their respective adherence to the matricial

norms and textual-linguistic norms influenced their choice of specific translation techniques, which resulted in the two translations with different features at the lexical, syntactic, and textual levels.

3.3.1. Comparative Analysis at the Lexical Level

In terms of the lexical level, there is an obvious difference between Yang's and Lin's translations of adjectives under the joint constraints of initial norms and operational norms. This is specifically reflected in the fact that Yang's translation follows the textual-linguistic norms of the original text and adheres to the original text closely in the translation of adjectives without arbitrary additions or deletions, whereas Lin's translation, oriented by the norms of the target language, pursues the acceptability of the translation. In his translation, some adjectives are omitted to conform to the reading habits of the English readers. The following two examples can illustrate this difference:

ST: 芳草鲜美，落英缤纷。

Yang's TT: The fragrant grass was beautiful to look at, all patterned with fallen blossoms.

Lin's TT:while the beautifully grassy ground was covered with its rose petals.

In this case, the original sentence consists of eight words, of which “芳(fragrant)”, “鲜美(fresh and beautiful)”, “落(falling)” and “缤纷(colorful)” are all adjectives. As mentioned above, one of the characteristics of ancient Chinese writing is conciseness, and what is reflected here is its second characteristic: the frequent employment of adjectives to describe beautiful scenery. These adjectives are accurately conveyed in Yang's translation, with “芳” translated as “fragrant”, “鲜美” translated as “beautiful” and “落” translated as “fallen”. Only “缤纷” is translated into the verb “pattern” because of the lack of equivalent in English. On the contrary, Lin Yutang employed the translation technique of transformation to translate the sentence “芳草鲜美” into the noun “beautifully grassy ground”, in which the adjective “芳” was deliberately omitted. Moreover, “落英缤纷” was translated as “.....covered with its rose petals”, in which “落” and “缤纷” have not been translated. Only the word “cover” was employed to reflect the imagery of “fallen flowers spreading all over the ground”. This is by no means an isolated case, and the difference between the two translators' translations of adjectives is even more striking in the next example:

ST: 土地平旷，屋舍俨然。有良田美池桑竹之属；阡陌交通.....

Yang's TT: The place he had come to was level and spacious. There were houses and cottages arranged in a planned order; there were fine fields and beautiful pools; there were mulberry trees, bamboo groves, and many other kinds of trees as well. There were raised pathways round the fields.....

Lin's TT: He saw before his eyes a wide, level valley, with houses and fields and farms. There were bamboos and mulberries...

This sentence is a concrete description of the living environment of the people in the Peach Blossom Springs. In order to emphasize the beauty and orderliness of the place, the author Tao Yuanming employed five adjectives, including “平旷(flat and open)”, “俨然(orderly)”, “良(good)”, “美(beautiful)” and “交通(interlaced)”. All of them are translated by Yang as “level and spacious”, “arranged in a planned order”, “fine”, “beautiful”, and “round the fields”. However, in Lin's translation, four adjectives have been omitted with only “wide” and “level” referring to “平旷”. Moreover, “池(pool)” and “阡陌(path)” have also been omitted in the translation. Some scholars believe that this is an intentional mistranslation by Lin Yutang because there are no corresponding words in English (Zhang Shengxin 2017: 74), but this can only explain the omission of nouns and cannot interpret why the adjectives were also omitted. After all, many English words can express “good” and “beautiful” in English. This study maintains that the

reason behind is the linguistic difference between Chinese and English. Chinese is paratactic. Except for a few nouns and quantifiers, most of the determiners are adjectives, which leads to the high frequency of adjectives in Chinese. Nevertheless, the rhetorical qualifiers and syntactic forms in English are more abundant. Except for the adjectives, the nouns, prepositional phrases and subordinate clauses can all be used to modify the main subject. Moreover, English is open at the end of the sentence, so the modifiers can be placed at the end of the sentence (Liu Miqing, 1992). Thus, the frequency of adjectives in English is relatively low. In these two examples, Lin Yutang deliberately avoids the translation of some adjectives in order to emphasize the subject and the modified noun, so as to make the sentences more concise and to conform to the reading habits of the English readers, which also echoes his tendency to pursue the “acceptability” of translation.

3.3.2. Comparative Analysis at the Syntactic Level

Under the constraints of the initial norms, their different tendencies of pursuing “adequacy” and “acceptability” are also distinctly reflected at the syntactic level, or specifically in the means of cohesion between sentences in the translated text. The genre of Tao Hua Yuan Ji is a prose travelogue, and one of the main characteristics of Chinese prose is that the literary form is loose but the thought is unified. The article centers on a series of activities of the fisherman with no explicit word for cohesion in the text. The cohesion of the sentences is implied in the sequence of what the fisherman saw, felt and experienced. Yang Xianyi and Lin Yutang, under the joint constraints of initial and operational norms, differ in their translations concerning the cohesion between sentences: Yang Xianyi followed the norms of the source language, and adopted a rich variety of grammatical structures in his translation, such as independent subject case, participle, cognate, and gerund, with the aim of preserving the literariness of the original text. Lin Yutang, on the other hand, inclined to follow the norms of the target language. He deliberately simplified the means of cohesion by frequently employing “and” to connect sentences, so as to make the translation easier to read and thus to improve the “acceptability” of the translation. One example is as follows.

ST:鸡犬相闻。其中往来种作，男女衣着，悉如外人；黄发垂髻，并怡然自乐。

Yang’s TT:and he heard the fowls crowing and dogs barking. Going to and fro in all this, and busied in working and planting were people, both men and women. Their dress was not unlike that of people outside, and all of them, whether old people with white hair or children with their hair tied in a knot, were happy and content with themselves.

Lin’s TT:farmers were working and dogs and chickens were running about. The dresses of the men and women were like those of the outside world, and the old men and children appeared very happy and contented

The original sentence describes the people’s state of life in the Peach Blossom Springs, where young men and women are farming in the fields and old people and children are playing at ease. In translating this sentence, Yang Xianyi adopts inversion and apposition respectively. He advanced the predicate “going to and fro...busied in” and placed “both men and women” as an apposition after “people”, thus bringing together “both men and women” and “going to and fro”. Moreover, he also adopted “whether...or...” to guide the gerund, which connects “old people with white hair or children” with “happy and content”. In addition, Yang only employed one “and” to connect two clauses which are separated by a semicolon and belong to two clusters, with the rest of the sentences connected by more complicated grammatical structures. Therefore, his such treatment of cohesion precisely reflects the translator’s pursuit of “adequacy”. Nevertheless, in Lin’s translation, there is no complex cohesion with only two “and” connecting sentences. Moreover, the syntactic structure of his translation is also very simple. There are only two kinds of syntactic structures, i.e., the subject-predicate structure and the subject-linking verb-subject structure, which make his translation simple and easy to

understand with a high degree of “acceptability”. Another example is added to further prove their different tendencies.

ST: 南阳刘子骥，高尚士也，闻之，欣然规往。

Yang’s TT: Liu Ziji, a scholar of high reputation from Nanyang, heard of this and enthusiastically offered to go out with the fisherman to try again.

Lin’s TT: Liu Tsechi of Nanyang was a great idealist. He heard of this story, and planned to go and find it.....

The original sentence consists of four clauses. Yang Xianyi abides by the norms of the source language by placing “a scholar of high reputation from Nanyang” as an apposition after “Liu Ziji” to translate them as one sentence. By contrast, Lin Yutang translated them into two sentences. In the second sentence, the word “and” is also used to connect the clauses. In addition, there are still only two simple syntactic structures in Lin’s translation, namely, the subject-linking verb-subject structure and the subject-predicate-object structure. As mentioned in the section of the preliminary norms, both translators have studied abroad and received higher education. Both of them are famous and competent translators. Thus, their different translations are by no means the result of the difference of their linguistic competence. Instead, the reason why Lin’s translation is easier to understand than Yang’s is that the preliminary norms and the initial norms on the macroscopic level influence the translator’s operational norms on the micro level. Specifically, the two translators lived in different historical periods and therefore had different translation purposes. Yang’s purpose was to reduce the Western readers’ misunderstanding of China and to accurately disseminate Chinese culture, so his translations were always oriented to the norms of the source language and were close to the original texts. However, Lin Yutang aimed to improve Western readers’ interest in reading Chinese literature, so he had to consider the reading preferences of the target readers in order to improve the dissemination of his translations. His translation of *Tao Hua Yuan Ji* is a representative example, in which he consciously deleted some concepts with no equivalents in English and simplified the structure of the sentences.

3.3.3. Comparative Analysis at the Textual Level

Subject to the joint constraints of initial and operational norms, Yang Xianyi and Lin Yutang also adopted different translation strategies at the textual level, which are mainly reflected in their arrangements of the paragraphs. As mentioned above, the original text of *Tao Hua Yuan Ji* is divided into five subsections. Yang Xianyi abided by the norms of the source language and subdivided the translation into ten paragraphs according to the specific order of the fisherman’s activities and the change of the scenes, which are: 1. Encountering the Peach Blossom Forest by chance; 2. Entering the Peach Blossom Spring through the mouth of the cave; 3. The natural environment of the Peach Blossom Spring; 4. The activities of the people in the Peach Blossom Spring; 5. The people in the Peach Blossom Spring set up a banquet to entertain the fisherman; 6. The people in the Peach Blossom Spring are isolated from the world for a long time; 7. People asked the fisherman about what dynasty they are in nowadays; 8. The fisherman stayed for a few days and then left; 9. The fisherman searched for Peach Blossom Spring again and got lost; 10. Liu Ziji failed to search for Peach Blossom Spring. Such a division of the paragraphs makes the whole story clear and the content complete, which is in line with the style of the original text as a “prose travelogue” and reflects Yang’s pursuit of “adequacy” of the translation. By contrast, Lin Yutang tends to follow the norms of target language by combining the five subsections of the original text into one whole paragraph and intentionally adopting simple vocabulary and syntax in the process of translation, so as to make a smooth reading and to attract the interest of the Western readers. Therefore, his translation demonstrates a higher “acceptability”.

4. Conclusion

Taking Toury's theory of translation norms as a framework, this article conducts a comparative study of Yang Xianyi's and Lin Yutang's translations of *Tao Hua Yuan Ji* from the perspectives of description and explanation, revealing the reasons behind the different stylistic features of the two translations. The article first analyzes the different translation purposes of Yang Xianyi and Lin Yutang under the constraints of preliminary norms and the influence of different social and cultural environments. Lin Yutang's translation purpose is to let the Western world understand the situation and culture of China, while Yang Xianyi's purpose is to eliminate the Western readers' misunderstandings about the culture of China. Then, this study examines the different translation tendencies of the two translators under the influence of the initial norms. Yang tends to pursue the "adequacy" of the translation, while Lin Yutang focuses on the "acceptability" of the translation. Finally, this study analyzes different translation techniques chosen by the two translators under the influence and constraints of the macro-initial norms and the micro-operational norms. In this way, the different features of the two translations at the lexical, syntactic, and textual levels are clarified. The result of the study shows that Yang Xianyi's and Lin Yutang's translation behaviors are deeply influenced by the preliminary norms, the initial norms and the operational norms, so they adopted different translation strategies, and the translated texts also show different stylistic features. Yang followed the norms of the source language and focuses on the "adequacy" of the translated text, which is closer to the original text in terms of form and content; while Lin abided by the norms of the target language and pursued the "acceptability" of the translated text, aiming to conform to the reading habits of the Western reader.

Toury's theory of translation norms places the translation object to be described in a specific socio-cultural context, breaking through the confinement of traditional structuralist linguistics and thus providing a new direction for translation studies. As an effective research tool, the theory of translation norms helps us construct or reconstruct translation norms by describing different translation phenomena in different historical periods or of different cultural groups, so as to clarify how the norms work and discover the so-called "laws" (Xu Huimin 2017: 12). This theory can effectively explain the specific translation behaviors of translators in translation activities as well as describe the styles and characteristics of different translations, with a strong reference value for the descriptive translation studies and a guiding significance for the translation practice of disseminating Chinese literary works to go global.

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