

The Bible of Confucianism

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Abstract

The *Analects* is the most influential and enduring Chinese classics, which shows its splendor as early as 2,400 years ago between the spring and autumn and the warring states periods, covering a wide scope of subjects from politics, philosophy, literature and art to the education and moral cultivation. To the translator, the most important and most difficult problem is to understand the words and expressions of the archaic Chinese, and the culture background when translating literary classics. In this paper, we choose two versions to compare and analyze. One is from the Arthur Waley, whose version is considered to be the best and the complete one, another is from Ding Wangdao who is a Chinese professor. Compared to two versions, we will study the strategies of the book-domestication and foreignization from lexical level, syntactic level, stylistic level and cultural level.

Keywords: *The Analects domestication*, foreignization, compare

1. Introduction

To the translator, the most important and most difficult problem is to understand the words and expressions of the archaic Chinese, and the culture background when translating literary classics. The archaic Chinese has existed for a long time. It is still hard for us to understand it fully. Since the appearance of *The Analects*, many scholars have made many annotations on it. So it is even harder for us to understand the original texts. Besides, the Confucianism has existed for more than two thousand years. Even many Chinese people do not have a general idea about it, let alone a foreign scholar. So they can't translate it well to the readers who culture background differs so greatly. Because of these obstacles, the difficulties on translating, *The Analects* are growing bigger.

In this paper, we choose two versions to compare and analyze. One is from the Arthur Waley, whose version is considered to be the best and the complete one, another is from Ding Wangdao who is a Chinese professor. Compared to two versions, we will study the strategies of the book-domestication and foreignization.

2. Literature Review

2.1 An Introduction of Different Versions of *The Analects*

Among so many translated versions, the English version of Arthur Waley is generally acknowledged as having the highest quality. Its version is concise, and closer to the original text, enjoys much more popularity than any others. Besides, there are other foreign representative scholars, such as James Legge (1861), and Ezra Pound (1992), Thomas Cleary. As for the Chinese representative, there are Lin Yutang, Lai Bo and Xia Yuhe (1994), Ku Hung-Ming (1898), and Ding Wangdao, who recently translated *100 Sayings of The Analects*, whose translation using the domestication more. In this paper, we will try to compare two versions of Arthur Waley and Ding Wangdao.

2.2 An Introduction to the Two Translators of the English Versions of *The Analects*

In this paper, we intend to set the English version of *The Analects of Confucius* by Arthur Waley and the *100 saying of Confucius* by Ding Wangdao the researching texts. *The Analects of Confucius* by Arthur Waley is a complete translation version of *The Analects*, which contains twenty chapters and about five hundred entries. But Ding Wangdao just translated one hundred sayings of the five hundred entries.

3. Theory in Translation Strategy of *The Analects*—Domestication and Foreignization

Domestication refers to the translation strategy in which a transparent, fluent style is adopted in order to minimize the strangeness of the source text for the target language readers. It means to make the text

recognizable and familiar and thus bring the foreign culture closer to the target language readers. Foreignization means “deliberately breaks target norms by retaining something of the foreignness of the original (Shuttleworth and Cowie, 1997: 59).” It means to narrow the distance between the reader and exotic culture, so that they can feel the differences of the language and culture. In this paper, we collect the data which apply the domesticating translation method and foreignizing translation method from four aspects: lexical, syntactic, stylistic and cultural.

On the lexical level, it emphasizes on the key words that are culture-bound, and words that are attached with particular meaning only in archaic Chinese.

For example, “公” “公子”, and “相”, (in *The Analects*, Chapter 14, Entry 17) are translated into “Duck”, “Prince”, and “Prime Minister” by Waley and Ding Wangdao. These words are culture-bound words. And the two translators apply the domestication translation method when dealing with them. “舜有天下” “You, 有” in modern Chinese means “have or possess”, however, in the archaic Chinese it has other meanings. Arthur Waley translates it into “had all that is under Heaven”, which is a foreignization, for it translates the original text literally. Ding translates it into “rule the country”, which is a domestication.

On the syntax level, those sentences which do not follow the conventions of the English sentences are regarded as foreignizing translation. And on the stylistic level, translations which resemble the original text either on the choices of rhetorical devices or the succinctness in words are regarded as domestication translation. On the cultural level, it depends on the author’s choices of keeping the “strangeness” of the culture in the source text or not.

And it will find out how actually we should use domestication translation and foreignization translation in the process of translating literary classics like *The Analects*. And it will also be helpful in the ancient Chinese literary classics to be translated into English.

4. Domestication and Foreignization in Translating *The Analects*

We will discuss domestication and foreignization from four levels: lexical level, syntactic level, stylistic level and cultural level. Through reviewing so many cases of two versions, we will have a result that when and where we should use domestication and foreignization. They are complementary to each other.

4.1 On the Lexical Level

According to the two versions, it is easy to find out that Arthur Waley and Ding Wangdao translated most of the key words in every entry by using the domesticating method. But it does not mean they won’t use foreignization. There are two examples as follow:

NO. 1 子曰：“君子坦荡荡，小人长戚戚。”(*The Analects*, 7.37)

“The Master said, A true gentlemen is calm and at ease; the Small Man is fretful and ill at ease.”(Waley, 1998: 93)

“Confucius said, The gentleman is open and ease; the small man is full of worries and anxieties.”(Ding Wangdao, 1999: 113)

“坦荡荡”和“长戚戚” are very special phrases in Chinese. They describe man’s moral characters. Though the two translations do not fully express the ideas of the two phrases, they at least translate the original meanings of them. “坦荡荡” means the person is always very calm, and does not fear to have one’s secret revealed. So they are usually very open-minded, and always calm and feel comfortable. On the contrary, there are person who always feel uneasy, and fear that their little secret would be found by others. So they always feel very worried and anxious. They two translations “calm and at ease”, “open and at ease” and “fretful and ill at ease”, “is full of worries and anxieties” well express the two phrases. And “at ease”, “ill at ease” are very authentic English. So we consider this translation as a domesticating translation.

Besides “JunZi, 君子”, “XiaoRen, 小人” which appear constantly in the original text, are translated as “gentleman” and “small man”. Obviously the two translators’ translation is a foreignization translation. Because there is no such a phrase as “small man” which describes a man’s moral character is low. “XiaoRen, 小人” is very common in Chinese. Today people in China still use this word. It means a man who is morally inferior to others. Waley and Ding just translate it as “small man” literally. In doing so, they leave a room for the readers to interpret the inner meaning of this phrase. And this kind of translation method, foreigning, is clearly good for the readers to get a general idea of the characteristics of the original text’s ways of expression and culture.

They both translate “JunZi, 君子” as “gentleman”. And it has long been assumed that “gentleman” is an equivalent word to “JunZi, 君子” in English. “In the Xi Zhou Period, aristocrats are generally called ‘JunZi, 君

子’。In *The Analects*, here are only a few places continue to use ‘JunZi, 君子’ to call an aristocrat. In fact, ‘JunZi, 君子’ has shifted to refer to those people who have high moral standard rather than those who are highbred... The author believes that the word ‘gentleman’ in English shifts its meaning as ‘JunZi, 君子’ in Chinese does. ‘Gentleman’ in English also describes a man who has high moral standard. The word ‘Gentleman’ derives from a French word ‘gentil home’, which means ‘aristocrat’. Actually it refers to the nobleman. Then it shifts its meaning, and it also refers to the man who have very high moral standard... Though the humor sense and knight spirit showed in the presence of women by a gentleman are not well showed in Confucius ‘JunZi, 君子’, these two words are still considered as equivalent. (Wang Hui, 2001: 142)

NO. 2 司马牛忧曰：“人皆有兄弟，我独亡。”子夏曰：“商闻之矣：死生有命，富贵在天。君子敬而无失，与人恭而有礼。四海之内，皆兄弟也。君子何患无兄弟也？”(*The Analects*, 12.5)

“Ssu-ma Niu grieved, saying, everyone else has brothers; I alone have none. Tzu-hsia said, I have heard this saying, ‘Death and life are the decree of Heaven; wealth and rank depend upon the will of the heaven, if a gentleman attends to business and does not idle away his time, if he behaves with courtesy to others and observes the rules of ritual, then all within the Four Seas are his brothers,’ How can any true gentleman grieve that he is without brothers?” (Waley, 1998: 143)

“Sima Niu said sorrowfully, All men have brothers; I alone have none. Zixia said, I have heard that life and death are determined by destiny, and wealth and rank are arranged by Heaven. If a gentleman is serious and cautious, free from faults, reverent and polite to others, then all men within the four seas are his brothers. A gentleman need not worry about having no brothers.” (Ding Wangdao, 1999: 215)

“Si Hai, 四海” both translated as “four seas” by the two translator. Although Waley has capitalized the two words as “Four Seas” to indicate it is a proper noun in Chinese, and given out the note to indicate that it means “that bound the universe.” They obviously apply the foreignizing translation, for there is no such an expression in English to say the whole country. However in Chinese, “Si Hai, 四海” does mean the whole country or at least China. Since China is bounded by four seas, the ancient people call the whole country “within the four seas.” It is the Chinese geographical characteristics. So when translated like this, it reminds the readers this specific characteristics of China and a special Chinese phrase.

When dealing with the old Chinese phrase, the translators always carefully apply the foreignizing translation so as not to destroy the old image showed in them.

4.2 On the Syntactic Level

In Arthur Waley and Ding Wangdao’s translation, foreignizing translation method is also applied. “Though foreignizing translation method applied on the syntactic level is common in Chinese-English translation, and this is rare to be seen in Chinese-English translation.” (Xu Chunshan, 2005: 113-4). And when we are doing the Chinese-English translation, we usually make the translation adapt to the English way of expression on the syntactic level. It is very common to see that the two translation mostly choosing domesticating translation method on the syntactic level. For example:

NO. 3 子曰：“学而不思则罔，思而不学则殆。” (*The Analects*, 2.15)

“The Master said, He who learns but does not think, is lost. He who thinks but does not learn is in great danger.” (Waley, 1998: 151)

“Confucius said, He who learns without thinking will be bewildered; he who thinks without learning will be in danger.” (Ding Wangdao, 1999: 151)

In the source text, there is no subject in the two sentences. However, in the English sentences, the basis structure is SV structure. When Waley and Ding Wangdao translate these two sentences they as a subject “he” to the sentences. And this avoids disobeying the principles of English sentence construction, which should be considered as applying the domesticating translating method on the syntactic level. (Liu Chang, 2003: 77)

To keep the translation grammatically right can use another strategy besides adding certain subjects to the sentences. The ancient Chinese are very concise, and the inner logical relations between the sentences are hard to be observed if the translator does not understand the sentences fully. When Conjunctions are always used in the translation in order to reveal the connections between sentences and make the translation more precisely. And this phenomenon is constantly seen in the two translations.

NO. 4 子曰：“德之不修，学之不讲，闻义不能徙，不善不能改，是吾忧也。” (*The Analects*, 7.3)

“The Master said, The thought that ‘I have left my moral power untended ,my learning unperfected, that I have heard of righteous men ,but been unable to go to them; have heard of evil men, but been unable to reform them’-it is these thoughts that disquiet me.”(Waley, 1998: 79)

“Confucius said, Neglect of moral cultivation, neglect of learning and practicing what has been learned, failure to follow what is right, and failure to correct what is wrong –these are my worries.”(Ding Wangdao, 1999: 63)

In Chinese, it is common that we several phrase came from a sentence. However this is not allowed in English. Waley adds a subject “the thought”, which is followed by three subordinate clauses. However, the sentence “have heard of evil men, but been unable to reform them” is a sentence without subject. And in Ding’s translation, his sentence construction is very much close to that of the original text. Though they two mainly adopt the domesticating translation method when dealing with the syntactic problems, they are affected by the foreignizing translation method as well.

To sum up, it is domesticating translation method which is important for the translator to adopt when dealing with the syntactic problems. And it should be admitted that the foreignizing translation method should not be neglected if there is a chance to use them correctly.

4.3 On the Stylistic Level

From the stylistic level, *The Analects* is characterized by the following aspects: first, it is succinct and full of expressive force; second, it adopt many rhetorical devices such refrain, parallelism and antithesis to make the context full of energy. Since the style always has something to do with the language, when we discuss about the style, it always remind us to discuss the selection of words and the rhetorical devices involved in the translation. Most of their translations are much close to the style of the original text. For example,

NO. 5 齐景公问政于孔子,孔子对曰:“君君,臣臣,父父, 子子。”公曰:“善哉! 信如君不君,臣不臣,父不父,子不子,虽有粟,吾得而食诸?”(*The Analects*, 12.11)

“Duke Ching of Ch’I asked Master K’ung about government, Master K’ung replied saying, Let the prince be a prince, the minister a minister, the father a father and the son a son. The Duke said, How true! For indeed when the price is not a prince , the minister not a minister, the father not a father, the son not the son ,one may have a dish of milled in front of one and yet not know if one will live to eat it .”(Waley, 1998: 153)

“Duke Jing of Qi asked Confucius about the government. Confucius said, The price should be like a prince, the minister like a minister, the father a father, the son a son. The duke said, Well said! If the prince was not like a prince, the minister not a minister, the father not a father, and the son not a son. I would not be able to eat anything though there was plenty of grain.”(Ding Wangdao, 1999: 123)

“君君,臣臣,父父,子子” is translated as “Let the prince be a prince, the minister a minister, the father a father and the son a son.”, and “The prince should be like a prince, the minister like a minister, the father a father, the son a son.” The translation and the original text are almost equally the same in the sentence construction. And this makes the translations receive the same effects as the original text does on the stylistic level.

Rhetorical devices are frequently used in the original text. When the two translators are translating, they also try to apply rhetorical devices in the translation where the original text does.

NO. 6 子曰:“君子求诸己,小人求诸人。”(*The Analects*, 15.21)

“The Master said, The demands that a gentleman makes are upon himself; those that a small man makes are upon other.”(Waley, 1998: 207)

“Confucius said, The gentleman seeks everything from himself; the small man seeks everything from others.”(Ding Wangdao, 1999: 103)

Both translations adopt the antithesis rhetorical device, and both are quite equally corresponding in the words on both sentences. Though in Waley’s translation, “the demand” is used as the subject of the sentences, while in Ding’s translation, “the gentleman “and” the small man” are subjects of the two sentences respectively. And Ding’s translation is closer to the original text since each word of the translation is almost equally corresponded to that of the original text. Anyhow, the two translations are quite similar to the original text on the stylistic level.

The two translators are working hard to follow the style of the original text mainly from the choices of words, and adopting rhetorical devices. And in order to make the translation closer to the style of the original text, they also try to be as succinct as the original sentence either on the syntactic level or on the lexical level. From the data above, we could also draw this conclusion that we should apply foreignizing translation method when translating the literary classics into English while dealing with the stylistic problems.

4.4 On the Cultural Level

On the cultural level, the foreignizing translation method should come first, and the domesticating translation method of complementary. As we could see from the data above that Waley and Ding Wangdao are mainly choosing the foreignizing translation method when it comes to the cultural level. Zhang Zhizhong said this was determined by the nature of translation. One of the primary motives for translation is culture communication. So foreignizing translation method should be adopted in most cases so as to enable the readers in the English-speaking countries to taste the real flavor of the culture in Chinese traditional culture. Therefore, some of the strangeness of the Chinese culture still needs to be preserved in the translated works. And when we are translating *The Analects* to English, the foreignizing translation method will help to promote cultural transmission and communication. Here are the examples of foreignizing in the translation of Chinese culture into English.

NO. 7 子曰：“三人行，必有我师焉；择其善者而从之，则其不善者而改之。”(*The Analects*, 7.22)

“The Master said, Even when walking in a party of no more than three I can always be certain of learning from those I am with. There will be good qualities that I can select for imitation and bad ones that will teach me what requires correction in myself.”(Waley, 1998: 87)

“Confucius said, whenever I talk with two other men, I can always find teachers in them. I can learn from their good qualities, and correct those faults in me which are like theirs.”(Ding Wangdao, 1999: 73)

These sayings are unique Chinese saying. It has been passed down from the Pre-Qin Period. The two translators do not seek other equivalent sayings or fixed expressions in English language, but translate them literally. In translating them in a foreignizing way, it helps reflecting the special cultural roots of the Chinese tradition.

However, if the translators adopt the domesticating translation method to deal with the cultural factors, they need to seek for the equivalents of the Chinese phrases and fixed expressions in the target culture with the aim of catering to the linguistic habits and aesthetic conventions of the reader in the target language.

NO. 8 子曰：“志士仁人，无求生而害人，有杀身以成仁。”(*The Analects*, 15.9)

“The Master said, Neither the Knight who has truly the heart of a knight nor the man of good stock who has the qualities that belong to good stock will ever seek life at the expense of Goodness; and it may be that he has to give his life in order to achieve Goodness.”(Waley, 1998: 203)

“Confucius said, A man with lofty ideals or a humane man never gives up humanity to save his life, but may sacrifice his life to achieve humanity.”(Ding Wangdao, 1999: 23)

“志士仁人”is someone with lofty ideals or a humane man, as Ding Wangdao has translated. However, Waley translated it into “knight”. Apparently “knight” refers to a man of noble birth skilled in the use of weapons. The code of manners and morals of a knight is known as chivalry. And now it is usually known as a man who is righteous or a brave man. In that sense, the word “knight” has something different from the traditional “someone with lofty ideals or a humane man.” So Waley’s translation is regarded as domesticating translation here. Though it is easier for the reader to obtain the information of the text, it is not good for the transmission of culture.

5. Conclusion

We finally draw this conclusion that on the lexical level, it is good to translate them by choosing the method of domesticating. And when the words in the source language are culture-based, it is wise to choose the foreignizing translation method. Certain notes are needed when it is necessary; on the syntactic level, domesticating translation is mainly applied; and on the stylistic level, it is the foreignizing translation method which should be applied more often; and on the cultural level, it is the foreignizing translation method which plays a dominant role in the process of translating *The Analects* into English, and the domesticating translation method can serve as a complementary skill to the foreignizing translation in case it does not add or delete information of source language.

Though this paper discusses the domestication and foreignizing from four aspects, the lexical level, the syntactic level, the stylistic level and the cultural level, but the translation work is far more than what has covered, for example the phonetic aspect is not concluded. And since the two translators live in the different period, the different cultural background would have a certain effect on these two translators. With the communication between the countries, the once foreignized translation can turn into a domestication translation, for this foreignized expression may become a part of the target language. With regard to the classification of the four

levels, the cultural level should be specifically categorized in future study, which is still a tremendous work to do.

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