A Study on Wu Ningkun's Translation of *The Great Gatsby* from the Perspective of Lefevere's Manipulation Theory

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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

The first Chinese translation of *The Great Gatsby* was published on the mainland of China in 1983, and it was the translation of Wu Ningkun. The context of the times at that time, the early period after the end of the Cultural Revolution and the beginning of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the United States, also had a certain influence on his translation. This work examines the influence of ideology, patronage and poetics on Wu Ningkun's translation from the Perspective of Lefevere's Manipulation Theory. The study finds that ideology and poetics factors have a great influence on his choice of foreignization translation strategy, and patronage factor has a great influence on his choice of translation material.

INTRODUCTION

The Great Gatsby and Fitzgerald

The Great Gatsby is a novella by American author Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald, first published in 1925. The story follows Nick from his Midwestern hometown to New York City, where he lives next to Gatsby's lavish mansion. In this home, a great party is held every night. The story unfolds as Nick and Gatsby get acquainted. Nick learns that the young Gatsby was not rich, he was a major officer. At that time he fell in love with a girl named Daisy. Then due to the outbreak of World War I, Gatsby was transferred to Europe, Daisy married a playboy Tom Buchanan in the period. After demobilization, Gatsby engaged in illegal bootlegging business in New York and got rich, and then he determined to pursue Daisy again so that he bought the mansion across the bay from Tom and Daisy's home. He threw parties every night in an attempt to lure Daisy in. In fact, Daisy's married life is not as good as it should be, and Tom has a mistress outside. Eventually, with the help of Nick, Gatsby and Daisy finally met and rekindled their old relationship. Later, Tom found out about his two hidden affairs and revealed Gatsby's bootlegging business. Gatsby asked Daisy to leave with him, but Daisy did not do so. On the way home Daisy was upset and accidentally killed Tom's mistress by driving a car, Mrs. Wilson, and Gatsby took the blame on himself to protect Daisy. Tom thus instigated Wilson to shoot Gatsby. Gatsby's dream of illusionary grandeur came to an end. Nick witnessed all this deeply disgusted, determined to leave away from the hustle and bustle of the cold and empty metropolis, sadly returned to his hometown.

Gatsby is not just an individual, but a symbol of his time. He was the symbol of American civilization in the 1920s. After World War I, the United States entered an era of unprecedented prosperity in its history. The "American Dream" was the fondest wish of the American people at that time. According to Fitzgerald himself, this was the most joyous and glorious era in American history, and much would be written about it. He wrote about this era and named it the "Jazz Age".

Fitzgerald was not just a storyteller, he was also an experiencer of the Jazz Age. The Jazz Age was his most prosperous decade. His annual income averaged $25,000. His private life was almost as enjoyable as his fiction. Readers increasingly looked to his work for a glimpse of the dazzling high society. In the words of Wu Ningkun (2007), it is for this reason that he has been able to recreate the social landscape, the life and the emotional rhythms of the era with such vividness. But more importantly, he is able to look on with a cool eye while indulging in it, experiencing the disappointment of "the lights are gone, the wine is awake, and the people are scattered", measuring everything with severe moral standards, and writing in a poignant tone about lost generation's disillusionment with the "American Dream" in the post-war period.

However, *The Great Gatsby* is not only about the sadness of the disillusionment of the "American Dream", but also about the persistence of human beings who do not give up their dreams of greatness, just as the last sentence of the novel, "So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past." The reason why Gatsby is great is reflected in this pursuit of unrepentant through the ups and downs. As Wu (2007) says, his soul is suffering, but he has no complaints, no regrets, and never loses his heart.

The Translator Wu Ningkun

Wu Ningkun experienced the instability of the country at the beginning of the People's Republic of China and the hardships of the cultural revolution. He received a good education and went abroad to study. He was invited by the president and the dean of the Department of western languages of Yanjing University to return to China to teach at this university. Before finishing his doctoral dissertation, Wu resolutely returned to China to teach there. However, he soon suffered from the cultural revolution. From the beginning of the founding of the country to the end of the cultural revolution, he became the victim of all previous movements without any omission, but "after so much suffering, he was still sincere" (Huang, 2003). As Ningkun and Yikai (1994) said, "I came to see that our experiences, though not particularly horrendous, ranged over the whole duration of the Communist rule." His experiences over several decades "may indeed be unique as a testament to life in contemporary China". He summed up his story of life in a brief formula: "I came, I suffered, I survived."

Previous Studies

There are 33 translation studies related to this translation version. Among them, both single-translation version analysis and two translation versions' comparative analysis are available, with the latter predominant.

Among the studies from the translator's perspective, they analyzed the influence of translator's habit on the selection, understanding and translation strategy of the original work, and suggested that we should view and evaluate the translation with a correct attitude, taking into account the formation of translator's habit, i.e., the translator's personal social life and the potential social, cultural and political factors behind the production of the translation to correctly understand and evaluate the translation. There is also a study of the translator's foresight, which is considered to be the most important factor influencing the difference of translations, and a reflection on the gains and losses of re-translation. However, no previous studies have analyzed the role of translator's subjectivity in translation from the perspective of manipulation theory. The factors influence the translator's choice of text and the translation strategy from the perspectives of patronage, poetics and ideology, which is an issue worth studying.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Manipulation and Rewriting

Lefevere is a representative of the cultural school of translation studies. His ideas of translation studies are reflected in his book *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (1992). Inspired by Gideon Toury's descriptive translation studies and Even-Zohar's polysystem theory, he developed his own theory that translation is to be studied in a culturally relevant system and believed that there is a "controlling factor in the literary system which see to it that this particular system does not fall too far out of step with other systems that make up a society (Lefevere, 1992)." His target-oriented translation study emphasized the role of cultural identity and the translator in the translation process, and he argued that the manipulation of translation consists of three aspects: patronage, poetics and ideology. Lefevere's theory of manipulation sees translation as a rewriting of the original work, a "manipulation" of the original work, and breaks with the traditional standard of evaluating translation by the original text. He mentioned in the preface of *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (1992) that "translation is, of course, a rewriting of an original text. All rewritings, whatever their intention, reflect a certain ideology and a poetics and as such manipulate literature to function in a given society in a given way". Again, his point was emphasized. He argued that translation helps to create the image of a writer and a work of literature, and therefore translation can be called rewriting. Rewriting not only takes place within the constraints of the poetic norms and ideologies inherent in the target culture, but also serves power. Thus, Lefevere argued that patronage, poetics and ideology have been manipulating the translation process, and that manipulation and rewriting are central to the theory of manipulation. These three factors interact and combine with each other to determine the choice of translation and translation strategies and the way to solve specific problems.

Patronage, Poetics and Ideology

Lefevere's views on the three factors can be summarized as follows.

Ideology is reflected in the fact that translation operates within a culture and is therefore inevitably governed by ideology. In general it is the interests and demands of a group. This group can be divided into authors, translators, and readers in translation studies. Ideological manipulation of translation is reflected in two aspects: firstly, it manipulates the translator's choice of materials and translation strategies; secondly, although the translation process is influenced by various factors, the main one is the manipulation of the social ideology of the target language country.

Patronage is the force consisting of people or institutions that hinders the reading, writing, and rewriting of literature. It is more interested in ideology than poetic influence, and it can be an individual, a group of people, a religious group, a political party, a social class, royalty, a publishing house, or the media. It has three main components: ideology, economy, and class. Patron manipulation is related to three

dimensions: first, the rise and fall of translation activity is directly related to class, governmental and religious groups, with their greater focus on educational significance, and with the range of translation processes and expansions they can facilitate or hinder; second, the need to satisfy ideological needs, to compromise between translation motives and patron demands, to connect patrons and publishers, and to consider publication prospects and material security; and third, individual manipulation is reflected in the establishment of translation standards and the use of different translation strategies.

The Poetics factor is divided into two parts: first, the list of literary equipment, including genres, motives, signs, typical characters and situations; and second, the role that literature fills in the larger social system. The latter influences the choice of themes and the acceptability of the work, and once identified, works of other poetic principles are excluded.

ANALYSIS OF MANIPULATION THEORY IN THE TRANSLATION OF *THE GREAT GATSBY*

In 1998, New York literary publishing giant Random House reviewed the achievements of the century's English language fiction and selected the 100 best novels of the 20th century, topped by Irish novelist James Joyce's groundbreaking *Ulysses* and followed by American novelist F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*. *The Great Gatsby* is naturally at the top of the list of 20th century American novels (Wu, 2007).

With the worldwide recognition of Fitzgerald and *The Great Gatsby*, and its quintessentially American cultural nature, *The Great Gatsby* has been favored by publishers. According to Sun Yihong (2010), the first Chinese translation of *The Great Gatsby* appeared in Taiwan as early as 1954, and a Chinese translation by Qiao Zhigao was published in 1970, which was well received in Hong Kong and Taiwan, especially in Taiwan. 1982 saw the translation of the novel into Chinese by literary scholar and translator Professor Wu Ningkun. In 1983, the Shanghai Translation Press published this book together with a translation of eight excellent short stories by Fitzgerald. This was the first Chinese translation of Fitzgerald's novels in mainland China.

Analysis of Ideological Elements in the Translation of The Great Gatsby

Dominant ideology in Wu's times

The Great Gatsby was first publicly introduced to mainland readers in the 1980s, just after China had undergone a decade of cultural revolution, and the prolonged cultural gap left many intellectual youth hungry for the unexplored literature that had been banned for the past decade. Zha and Xie (2007) refer to this period as a time to fill the gap in foreign literary translation from the 1950s to the 1970s, when there was a large gap in literary translation for thirty years. In addition, during this period, when China and the United States had just established diplomatic relations and the reform and opening-up policy was enacted, Chinese readers became eager to learn all about the United States. As a representative

work of the American "Jazz Age", this book reflects all aspects of the United States and is a household name in American literature. Therefore, the book is of great reading value from both a historical and literary point of view. Therefore, readers of *The Great Gatsby* at that time wanted to learn about American culture, but also wanted to enjoy the best foreign literature.

Having lived in the United States for decades, Wu knows American literature and culture very well. His language habits and way of thinking are deeply influenced by the English culture and social environment, and American literature and culture have been integrated into him as an individual. But at the same time, as a Chinese, he also understands the social situation and the needs of Chinese readers. Therefore, he tries his best to convey the exoticism of the work, i.e., the artistic characteristics of the original work, to Chinese readers to meet their reading needs. So he chooses the translation strategy of foreignization and follows the principle of faithful to the original text. His foreignization translation strategy is specifically reflected mainly in the level of vocabulary and thus adopts the direct translation method.

Ideological manipulation in Wu's translation

According to Lefevere (2003), "Translation then, is not just a process that happens in the translator's head. Readers decide to accept or reject translations. Different types of reader will require different types of translation." Examples of Wu's foreignization strategy considering readers' needs are as follows:

(1) ST: "**Hello**, Wilson, old man," said Tom, slapping him jovially on the shoulder. "How's business?"
    TT: "**哈罗**，威尔逊，你这家伙，"汤姆说，一面嘻嘻哈哈地拍拍他的肩膀。"生意怎么样？"

In this sentence, Wu Ningkun translates Tom's greeting word "hello" by using transliteration, instead of replacing it with the Chinese equivalent "你好". In modern society, we use the transliteration of hi and hello instead of "你好" because of the development of global communication, and this kind of colloquial words is not unfamiliar to Chinese readers. In the early days of reform and opening up 40 years ago, Chinese readers were not very familiar with English greetings, so the translator's use of this method is a complete application of foreignization strategy, preserving the linguistic characteristic of the spoken language in English culture and allowing readers to understand how foreigners greet each other.

(2) ST: It was a few days before **the Fourth of July**, and a grey, scrawny Italian child was setting torpedoes in a row along the railroad track.
    TT: 再过几天就是**七月四号**了，因此有一个灰蒙蒙的、骨瘦如柴的意大利小孩沿着铁轨在点放一排"鱼雷炮"。

(3) ST: At the news-stand she bought a copy of "Town Tattle" and a moving-picture magazine and, in the **station drug store**, some cold cream and a small flask of perfume.
    TT: 她在报摊上买了一份《纽约闲话》和一本电影杂志，又在**车站药店**里买了一瓶冷霜和一小瓶香水。

"The Fourth of July" in sentence 2 and "station drug store" in sentence 3 are both loaded with American cultural meaning, so if they are translated directly, it will be difficult for Chinese readers to understand them. However, although Wu Ningkun uses the strategy of foreignization to translate them directly, he adds footnotes to explain both phrases: he mentions that "the Fourth of July" is the anniversary of American independence, and for "station drug store" he explains that American pharmacies also sell candy, cigarettes, drinks and other groceries. These explanations add an aid to the readers' comprehension and allows the readers to easily connect the context, thus alleviating the barriers to reading for Chinese readers.

Analysis of Patronage Elements in the Translation of *The Great Gatsby*

Elements influencing patronage system

We can see from the previous text that patrons should consider the factors of class, government and religious groups, because they are related to the rise and fall of translation activities. Patrons pay more attention to the significance of education, and they consider the publishing prospects and material security. They have a great influence on promoting or hindering the translation process. Therefore, the manipulation of the translation process by the patrons deserves our attention.

Patronage manipulation in Wu's translation

In the word of Zha and Xie (2007), it is described that in the early 1980s, the choice of literary translation matched the expectations of the literary world, responded to the reflection on "human" and "literature" in the literary and cultural world, and resolutely echoed the demand for literary change. The translation and literary circles have reached an unspoken tacit understanding.

In his autobiography *A Single Tear* (1994), Wu mentioned the motivation for the translation of this book: "The one request that had me savoring strongly the irony of fate came in the summer of 1980 from *World Literature*, the national magazine devoted to the introduction of foreign literary works: I finished a translation of *The Great Gatsby* in less than two hot summer months for the October issue." In 1982 Wu translated the novel into Chinese, and it was officially published in 1983.

We can learn from the book *A History of the 20th Century Foreign Literary Translation in China* (2007) that in 1978, Foreign Literature Publishing House and Shanghai Translation Publishing House jointly formulated a huge translation plan to translate and publish 200 masterpieces of 20th century world literature. The "Masterpieces of Foreign Literature Series" jointly undertaken by the two publishers resumed publication in 1978 and 53 titles had been published by 1981.

The Great Gatsby, translated by Wu Ningkun, was included in the "Selected Novel and Short Stories of F. Scott Fitzgerald" published by Shanghai Translation Publishing House. The translation and publication of this book were supported by the publishing house and translation program of that time. The Foreign Literature Publishing House "made it a priority to translate and publish the best and representative works of contemporary foreign literature", so that *The Great Gatsby* was approved by its patron. It is clear that the motivation for the translation, the selection of the original work and the publication of the translation were all due to the patron, that is the publisher, who interpreted the meaning of the translation of these works as "contributing to our understanding of American society and people's lives" (Zha & Xie, 2007), as required by the ideological discourse of the time, and at this level, the translation was necessary to meet the needs of the readers and the market.

Analysis of Poetic Elements in the Translation of *The Great Gatsby*

Poetological characteristics in Wu's times

Poetics prescribes that language not only formally ensures that a literary work is grammatical, but also pragmatically prescribes that the work reflects the culture to which the language belongs. Since language is always meant to reflect a particular culture, translation is also always meant to "naturalize" a different culture, even if it conforms to the conventions of the receiving culture (He, 2005).

The publishers of Chinese translations prior to Wu's translation were products of the Cold War and aimed to spread American ideology. In order to enable readers to read fluent translations and to reduce reading barriers, the translations of American literature were published in a very Chinese style. The vocabulary used is biased towards the language habits of the old Chinese period (Sun, 2010). And according to Zha and Xie (2007), in the late 1970s and early 1980s,

> when reprinted masterpieces of world literature came out, long lines of books were seen in Beijing and Shanghai, clamoring to buy and read them. Chinese readers, who had been suffering from cultural hunger for more than 10 years, were in so much need of being nourished by the soul!

With the launch of the ideological liberation movement, the foreign literature publishing industry also began to break free from all kinds of ideological constraints and boldly released a series of excellent 20th century literary works. Modernist works were published one after another, forming a climax of translation. Against this ideological and cultural background, it is not surprising that Wu Ningkun adopted the strategy of foreignization when translating. After the publication of his translations, the issues of Western "modernism" and the connection between "foreignization" and "modernism" became important topics of discussion in the literary and artistic circles.

Poetological manipulation in Wu's translation

The choice of foreignization strategy under the control of poetics is mainly reflected in the level of vocabulary and sentence.

Vocabulary level:

Table 1. Translation of names

	ST	TT
Names of Place	New Haven	纽黑文
	Westchester	威斯彻斯特
	Monte Carlo	蒙的卡罗
	Oggsford College	牛劲大学
	West Egg/East Egg	西卵/东卵
Names of People	Dukes of Buccleuch	布克娄奇公爵
	T. J. Eckleburg	T.J.埃克尔堡
	GEORGE B. WILSON	乔治·B·威尔逊
Names of Objects	Rolls-Royce	罗尔斯–罗伊斯轿车
	the Cunard or White Star Line	康拉德或白星轮船公司

Table 1 shows the representative names of places, people and objects. From the table, we can see that the translator mainly adopts transliteration for place names, such as the first three; for meaningful place names he adopts free translation method, such as Oggsford, which is a variation of Oxford. And the original work shows the speaker's local accent with a playful tone, so the translator uses "牛劲" and "牛津" to form a counterpart, which also shows the rude side of the speaker which is wanted to show in the original work and retains the original linguistic characteristic. The translator's direct translation of East Egg and West Egg mainly emphasizes the opposition of the two islands.

The translator obviously adopts the strategy of foreignization in the translation of people's names, mainly transliteration. However, foreign names often contain single English letters, which are abbreviated because the names are too long. In translating such names, Wu retains the letters in the original text instead of returning them to the original words and then making a transliteration, which is a novel enough method of foreignization for Chinese readers, and also allows them to understand the way foreign names are composed.

For names of objects, the translator also uses mainly transliteration, for example, Rolls-Royce is "劳斯莱斯", which was not familiar to Chinese readers at that time, so the translator adopts the foreignization strategy, and is only needed to assign a name to this item.

Sentence level:

(4) ST: ...and so it came about that in college I was unjustly accused of being a politician
TT: 由于这个缘故，我上大学的时候就被不公正地指责为小政客。

(5) ST: I meant nothing in particular by this remark but it was taken up in an unexpected way.
TT: 我说这句话并没有什么特殊的用意，但它却出乎意外地被人接过去了。

Passive sentences are often used in English, but not in Chinese. The author's treatment of the two English passive sentences here is to translate them into passive sentences instead of active sentences familiar to Chinese readers, which is different from the way Chinese readers are used to form sentences.

(6) ST: I was so excited that when I got into a taxi with him I didn't hardly know I wasn't getting into a subway train.
TT: 我神魂颠倒，跟他上了一辆出租汽车，还以为是上了地铁哩。

(7) ST: They got into automobiles which bore them out to Long Island and somehow they ended up at Gatsby's door.
TT: 他们坐上汽车，车子把他们送到长岛，后来也不知怎么的他们总是出现在盖茨比的门口。

There are great differences in syntactic structure between English and Chinese. The structure of English sentences is compact, with many clauses and strict structure; However, Chinese sentences are relatively loose and have no obvious cohesive devices. The translator's way of dealing with English long sentences is to use more long sentences, basically retaining the word order and structure of the original sentence. The target adverbial clause and attributive clause in examples 6 and 7 show the logic of English sentence patterns and have certain rules. When the translator translates them according to the order of the original sentence, the priority and causality are more emphasized.

CONCLUSION

Based on Lefevere's manipulation theory, this paper studies the influence of ideology, patronage and poetics on Wu Ningkun's translation. It is found that the ideology considered in this paper mainly refers to the readers' reading needs. In the social background at that time, Chinese readers were eager to understand American literature and culture. Therefore, the strategy of foreignization adopted by the translator was manipulated by the readers. Poetics has a great influence on his choice of translation strategy. With the development of the ideological liberation movement at that time, the foreign literature publishing industry also broke away from all kinds of ideological shackles. The translator's foreignization strategy is the result of the specific cultural background. In addition, the patronage factor has a great influence on the choice of the translation material. Here it mainly refers to the publishing house. The translation and publication of this book are supported by the publishing house and the translation plan at that time. The initiation of translation motivation, the selection of the original work and the publication of the translated text are all manipulated by the patronage.

Thus, through this study we appreciate here *The Great Gatsby* in Wu Ningkun's translation from the perspective of manipulation theory, and gain a better understanding of the translator himself, of the original work and the translation, and last but not least, of the translation process.

This paper also has some flaws. Firstly, the number of samples and examples collected by the author is small, and there are more translation strategies that should be listed and explained in detail in this paper. Secondly, the manipulation theory only gives a macro direction of a research perspective, which focuses on the cultural factors hidden behind the text, i.e., the influence of ideology, poetics, and patrons on the act of translation and translators, and does not address the micro level of the translator-text relationship in the study. Translation is an act of language transformation, and

the article also lacks attention to other micro-levels such as language transformation within the text. In addition, different translators always have different results on the same text, and more attention should be paid to the subjective role of the translator, an aspect that should not be ignored. Despite some limitations of this paper, the author attempts to provide a new perspective for analyzing translation of foreign literature by carefully selecting examples for an objective and inclusive study. It adds a certain level of informativeness to the study of translator studies and manipulation theory.

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