

Analysis of Translation Criticism and Its Development

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Abstract: Translation criticism is an important part of translation studies and a link between translation theory and translation practice. This kind of evaluation should avoid random and blind, avoid random criticism, while observe and analyze the translation process and result objectively, comprehensively and systematically under the guidance of certain theories, so as to be as objective, scientific and fair as possible. This paper will introduce the definition of translation criticism, analyze the steps, types, function, principles and the development direction of translation criticism.

1. Introduction

In the context of the continuous development of economic globalization, in addition to the deepening connection of economic development among countries, the cultural communication between different countries is particularly important today. Therefore, translation studies play a very important role in the process of cultural communication and influence. Translation studies has gradually developed into an independent discipline, and translation criticism is an important part of translation studies. To establish a complete theoretical system of translation studies is inseparable from the study of translation criticism. Translation criticism is a key link between translation theory and translation practice, and a key link in translation studies.

2. Introduction of Translation Criticism

2.1 Definition of Translation Criticism

Translation criticism refers to the evaluation of a translated work by following certain translation principles and using certain methods under certain social conditions^[1], which must avoid the arbitrariness and blindness, as well as put an end to the wild criticism and imitative comments. It should observe and analyze the translation process and results in a historical, objective, comprehensive and systematic way under the guidance of certain theories, and be as objective, scientific and fair as far as possible^[2].

2.2 Steps of Translation Criticism

Translation criticism refers to “a comprehensive evaluation of the translation process and its quality and value according to certain standards”^[3], including the following four methods and steps:

(1) To analyze the original work, critics must understand the author's writing purpose, writing attitude, target audience, and accurately evaluate the writing and language style of the original work.

(2) Analyze the purpose of the translator in translating the original work, whether the translator is making translation criticism for appreciation or for correcting mistakes. The former focuses on analyzing the exemplary translation of excellent writers and evaluating their artistic value, while the latter focuses on correcting mistranslations in translation, with the purpose of warning others to take it as a lesson.

(3) Compare the original text with the translation. From the original and the representative translation of the text to carry on the concrete analysis.

(4) To evaluate the translation skills and quality of the target text from the macro and micro perspectives.

2.3 Types of Translation Criticism

Translation criticism includes functional criticism, analytical criticism and comparative criticism. From a certain point of view, functional criticism is a subjective criticism method. Analytical criticism is a careful and objective analysis. Every word in the translation will be contrastively analyzed against the original text. Comments are given on bad translations and good ones are praised. Contrast criticism refers to the comparison of different versions of translations by different translators to compare their translation methods, skills and quality. In this way, the translation can develop its strengths and avoid weaknesses, take the essence and discard the dross, and complement each other^[4].

3. Principles of Translation Criticism

Like literary criticism, the image of translation criticism itself can be established only when the questions such as “what is criticism”, “why criticism” and “how criticism” can be answered. In order to solve the problem of “how to carry out translation criticism”, in addition to the establishment of the standard of translation criticism, another important premise is to establish the principles of translation criticism. As for the basic principles of translation criticism, many translators and translation researchers have put forward their own views.

3.1 Xu Jun's Four Principles

In the book *A Study of Literary Translation Criticism* published in the 1990s, Xu Jun once put forward four principled opinions on literary translation criticism 1. It is necessary not only to judge the correctness and error of translation results, but also to analyze the process of translation. 2. To break through personal feelings and pay attention to rational examination. 3. We should combine the local and micro criticism with the overall and macro evaluation organically. 4. We should pay attention to playing a positive guiding role and establish a new relationship between critics and the criticized^[5].

Among them, the first one emphasizes that translation criticism should not only take the translation text static, but also take the translation process as the analysis object dynamic, and make a comprehensive analysis and evaluation of the translated work through the investigation of the whole translation process and the interaction between various elements in it. The second one emphasizes that translation criticism should be rationalized and objective, and should not only be based on personal interest. The third article emphasizes that translation criticism should not only be analyzed locally, but also be grasped as a whole, and should combine micro criticism with macro criticism. Article 4 points out that the value of translation criticism should be reflected in its orientation and constructiveness, and the attitude of criticism should be good.

3.2 Liu Miqing's Three Basic Principles

In *Translation and Philosophy of Language*, Liu Miqing defines three basic principles for translation criticism and points out that these three principles are related to the “healthy development of translation criticism”. 1. Translation criticism should be positive and aggressive. 2. Translation criticism should focus on the matter rather than the person, and its object is the text and the translated work, rather than the translator himself. 3. Translation criticism should be based on the translator's “first-hand” and full (full-text) translation, and should not be based on the indirect material or excerpt^[6].

Among them, the first one is related to the attitude of translation criticism. The “positive” criticism refers to the practical and realistic analysis and comprehensive and objective judgment, while the “progressive” criticism emphasizes the constructiveness of translation criticism. The second and third aspects are related to both the target and the attitude of translation criticism.

3.3 Yang Xiaorong's Three Principles

In *Introduction to Translation Criticism*, Yang Xiaorong summarizes three principles of translation criticism 1. Translation criticism should be well-meaning and constructive, that is, we

should treat people equally, be kind to others, and reflect the translator's understanding. 2. Translation criticism should be comprehensive, integral, essential and historical, without over-generalization, one-sidedness or bias. 3. Translation criticism should be practical and realistic, objective, grounded and reasonable, never jumping to conclusions based on impressions or believe in authority, and should be practical rather than vague, in-depth rather than superficial^[7]. These three principles summarize the principles of translation criticism from the perspectives of attitude, vision and method.

4. Functions of Translation Criticism

The value of translation criticism is both practical and theoretical, and the function of translation criticism should also be reflected in both practical and theoretical aspects. "The most basic function of translation criticism is the supervisory function, from which it derives the guiding function for readers and the guiding function for translators". "The second basic function of translation criticism is theoretical research"^[7].

4.1 Supervisory Function of Translation Criticism - Guide to Translators

When discussing the five functions of translation criticism, Newmark stresses that the primary purpose of translation criticism is to improve the quality of translation^[8]. This means that the most basic and main function of translation criticism is to supervise the quality of translated works and resolutely prevent the inflow of low-value and low-quality translations into the book market, because the quality of translated works is the fundamental guarantee for the realization of translation value and the necessary condition for the healthy development of translation industry. To ensure and improve the quality of translated works, we should first base on the text and pay attention to the methods and skills adopted by translators in the process of translation. Therefore, translators should be encouraged to re-create in the process of translation and keep it within a moderate range to avoid excessive freedom or blindness in understanding or interpretation that may be caused by subjectivity, so as to promote further maturity and self-discipline in translation behavior. This is an important dimension of the supervision function that translation criticism must perform when facing the subject of translation^[9].

4.2 Supervisory Function of Translation Criticism - Guide to Readers

Understanding is not to repeat something of the past, but to participate in a present meaning, and the acquisition of the true meaning of a literary work is a never-ending process. Therefore, translation, as an act of understanding, is always a process of visual integration between the author, the work and the translator, as well as between history, tradition and the present. It is inevitably characterized by historical and creative features. In this sense, the explanatory function of translation criticism lies in that critics convey their reading feelings and aesthetic experience to readers by virtue of their own aesthetic comprehension ability and professional knowledge of translation, so as to provide readers with one or more possibilities to understand the meaning of the original text and the meaning of the target text. It also encourages and guides readers to give full play to their subjective initiative and make creative interpretation of the translated works from different angles and at different levels, so as to attract readers to fully enjoy the pleasure of reading and encourage more people to love the translated works and pay attention to the translation cause.

The existence of multiple versions and the continuous re-translation have opened up an unprecedented space for translation criticism and made it shoulder more responsibilities. To guide readers to read and appreciate truly high-quality and valuable translated works, and to meet the aesthetic needs of readers of different levels by opening up the space of re-translation, is the constructive aspect of translation criticism and the important embodiment of its guiding function.

4.3 Theoretical Study and Constructive Function of Translation Criticism

Under the guidance of the research results of translation theory, translation criticism can summarize experience and sublimate rationality based on the analysis of translation process, the

evaluation of translated works and the interpretation of translation phenomena. It not only tests and revises the existing theoretical research, but also further expands the field of theoretical research and provides new research directions and contents, so as to promote the deepening development and improvement of the study of translation theory.

The scientificity of translation criticism is largely based on the independence and autonomy of its theoretical system. Translation criticism without an independent theoretical system is irrational, which not only hinders the development of translation and translation theory, but also makes it difficult to fulfill its mission and fails to embody its own value^[10]. At the same time, translation criticism has always been a weak link in translation studies. The theoretical construction of translation criticism itself, including the concept, principles, methods and standards of translation criticism, constitutes an indispensable and important part of the study of translation theories, and has a positive significance in promoting the development of translation studies.

5. The Development Direction of Translation Criticism

5.1 Improving the Systematization of Translation Criticism

Do not give the reader the impression that he has been given a rambling ramble, or that he has picked up a few examples at the whim of the moment. In order to construct the whole methodology framework of translation evaluation, we should take an academic attitude in advance and conduct a serious and patient theoretical discussion on the translation issues involved.

5.2 Improving the Theoretical Nature of Translation Criticism

To construct in-depth and explanatory translation theories from the theoretical perspectives of disciplines directly or indirectly related to translation work, including linguistics, anthropology, culture, philosophy of language, etc. And from the perspective of these theories to appreciate and evaluate the translation, rather than according to personal intuition and subjective criteria for further evaluation of the translation.

5.3 Improving the Adaptability of Translation Criticism

Translation criticism and appreciation need to keep pace with the times, not only focusing on the translation tasks and appreciation in the current translation market, but also paying attention to some specific difficulties encountered by professional translators and users of translation. Only in this way, translation criticism and appreciation can give full play to their effectiveness.

5.4 Raising the Overall Awareness of Translation Criticism

The expression of words, syntax and rhetoric is part of the larger communicative event. If translation criticism and appreciation can be understood from a more comprehensive and macroscopic perspective, it will help us to have a deeper understanding of the nature of translation.

6. Conclusion

Translation criticism is an important link linking translation theory with translation practice. In the process of conducting translation criticism, only by following the above theories and principles can we accomplish the fundamental task of translation criticism. Only in this way can we promote translation to play its due role in national communication, cultural inheritance and social development, promote the healthy and rational development of translation profession, ensure the realization of translation value, and realize the self-value of translation criticism. At the same time, it also realizes the supervision function of translation criticism, and finally plays a positive role in coordinating the dialectical relationship between translation theory and translation practice, deepening the study of translation theory, and promoting the construction and development of translation discipline.

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