

Original Paper

A Study on Cultural Translatability from the Perspective of Lefevere's Constraints on Literary Translation—Take the Nickname Translation in *Shuihuzhuan* as Examples

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Abstract

Cultural translatability has long been a hot but mysterious topic in translation academia. Lefevere, as one of the major figures of “cultural turn” in translation studies, investigated translation from socio-cultural perspective and stressed the extra-textual constraints on cultural translation. However, most studies have focused on the major four manipulations and neglected the other specific elements that hinder cultural translation. Nickname in Shuihuzhuan, originated from historical figures, anecdotes, legends, weapons, dialects, and other cultural elements, has revealed its research value in literary translation and cultural transmission. Therefore, this paper intends to take nickname translation in Shuihuzhuan as examples, analyzes those specific cultural elements, and carries out some translation strategies and cultural strategies to deal with them. Though the paper is aimed at discussing the cultural translation by using texts in Shuihuzhuan, the conclusion is applicable to all literature works.

Keywords

cultural translatability, Lefevere's constraints, literary translation, nickname translation, Shuihuzhuan

1. Introduction

Translatability and untranslatability are important concepts in translation history. Translatability refers to the degree to which source language can be translated during the process of bilingual transformation. (Liu Miqing, 1999, p. 98) The discussion on translatability and untranslatability in cultural translation dates to Renaissance. In 14th century, Alighieri Dante affirmed that literature works were untranslatable (Tan Zaixi, 1991, p. 53). But not until 19th century do textual translatability, partial translatability and

untranslatability become a heated topic in translation history (Wilss, 2001, p. 29).

Among western translation researchers, Wilhelm von Humboldt (2008) and Sapir (1929)-Whorf (1956) all regard that language is restrained by thoughts and thoughts are closely related to national or regional culture which is unique and very hard to be understood by other cultures. Therefore, translation, as the inter-medium between two different languages and cultures, is impossible to achieve equivalence and perfection. While as translation studies go further and translation practice becomes mature, some scholars emphasize on translatability. For instance, Chomsky (1966) and Eugene Nida (2001) believed that all languages can be understood and translated since we human have common generative mechanism of utterances. The difficulty for translators is to find better expression or forms to present source language in target language.

Nowadays, in translation academia, this discussion continues, but more scholars stood in the middle way, i.e., translation is possible but has constraints or difficulties. Besides, many scholars realize that translation is not merely a linguistic process but also a cultural issue. The constraint of translatability depends on the distance of source text to source culture, and of source culture to target readers. Translation is no longer about finding corresponding surface structure or dynamic equivalence, but goes beyond linguistic level to ex-textual factors. Those factors involve translator, culture, history, ideology, power, and society, etc.

Andre Lefevere is a major representative in this aspect. He advocates “cultural turn” in his book *Translation/History/Culture, a Sourcebook* (1992) and *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (2010), and puts forward that translation is a process of rewriting and manipulation under four constraints including ideological constraints, poetological constraints, universal of discourse and language. Apart from four constraints, he also points out several specific elements that made literary works hard to be translated, such as connotations, different levels of diction, dialects, or idiolects. However, though Lefevere pointed out these specific elements on literary translation, he did not make detailed explanation on them and provide applicable suggestions to resolve them. This paper, taking nickname translation in *Shuihuzhuan* as examples, analyzes these elements, and carries out some translation strategies to deal with them.

2. Lefevere’s Constraints on Literary Translation

Andre Lefevere, a Belgian scholar who later immigrated to America, has shifted from issues like correct translation, faithful or free rendering to frequently answering such questions as “who rewrites, why, under what circumstances, for which audience” (Lefevere, 1992, p. 7). In his work (2010), he points out two main constraints on rewriting—ideological and poetological constraints, two other constraints—universal of discourse and language, and some specific elements that are hard to be translated in literary works. Though our focus is on specific elements which is less discussed in Lefevere’s work, we would introduce the other constraints as well, since they are closely related to each other and translators need to deal with them as a whole.

2.1 Ideological Constraints

Ideology, in Lefevere's view, would seem to be that grillwork of form, convention and belief which orders our actions (Lefevere, 2010, p. 16). Specifically, it is a way of looking at things, or a set of ideas dominant in certain society and held by its members, which constitutes one's goals, expectations, and actions. Ideology is a powerful factor to affect translation output. It can be seen as "a constraint on the selection and development of both form and subject matter" (2010, p. 13) and has an impact on the main strategy the translator is going to adopt (2010, p. 43). Generally, it includes dominant ideology, translator's ideology, patronage's or reader's ideology.

There are several standards to evaluate translation under the influence of ideology. They are, mainly, whether the translator has undertaken translating on ground of specific situation; how obvious the translator tries to showcase his/her point of view in line with his/her culture condition, and how much he/she consciously controls the ideas and understanding of the receivers or readers. (Huang Zhaokui, 2013, p. 16)

2.2 Poetological Constraints

Poetics is another constraint on translation. Lefevere refers to it in two components: one is the inventory of literary devices, genres, motifs, prototypical characters and situations, and symbols; the other a concept of what the role of literature is, or should be, in the social system as a whole". (Lefevere, 2010, p. 26) The first one is called an inventory component while the latter a functional component.

The relationship of poetics and translation is a primary concern of Lefevere. On one hand, poetics influences the theme of literary translation that must be relevant to the social system (2010, p. 26). When choosing themes, for those which do not conform or even oppose to poetics of target culture, translators would deny or abandon the theme; for those which are close to dominant poetics, translators tend to accept and absorb them. At most time, in order to be noticed, published, sold, and read in target society, translators have to rewrite the literary works more or less to correspond to dominant poetics in target culture. On the other hand, translations play an important role in establishing poetics. They introduce new devices and changes to inventory. Besides, although being constrained, translators do not completely submit to it. They could also go against the dominant poetics, and use translation to shatter or renew existing poetics. "A poetics, or any poetics, is a historical variable; it is not absolute" (2010, p. 35).

2.3 Other Constraints

Apart from ideological and poetological constraints, Lefevere also talked about the other two constraints—universal of discourse and language.

According to Lefevere, universal of discourse can be defined as "objects, concepts, [and] customs belonging to the world that was familiar to the writer of the original" (2010, p. 41). Language is the constraint on linguistic level of translation. He regards that, translators have to achieve their effect on readers by means of making use of linguistic devices, which was further defined by him as a

combination of “illocutionary strategies”, or ways to make use of linguistic devices (2010, p. 99).

Obviously, both universal of discourse and language are closely related to ideological and poetological constraints. When dealing with different universe of discourse and language, their choices for translation, in terms of attitudes, strategies, and means towards the original works, are influenced by the self-image of target culture and the intended audience who have much to do with the dominant ideology in the target culture; and their choice for translation, in terms of types of texts and levels of diction, are determined largely by the dominant poetics in the target culture. (Yin ying, 2013, p. 28)

2.4 Specific elements

Apart from the four constraints, he also points out several specific elements that made literary works hard to be translated. “The point is made, however: it is very difficult to render connotations in translation, or different levels of diction, or, a priori, different dialects or idiolects. Connotations and levels of diction tend to belong to the ‘cultural shorthand’...Dialects and idiolects tend to reveal the translators’ ideological stance toward certain groups thought of as “inferior” or “ridiculous”, both inside their culture and outside.” (Lefevere, 2010, p. 58) However, although Lefevere mentioned these elements that influence literary translation, he did not make further explanation on them and did not take out effective strategies to resolve them.

Therefore, this paper agrees that translation is possible as it is a kind of rewriting, but it is constrained by linguistic factors in the text, and more importantly, social factors out of the text. It is hard to remove these constraints and cultural elements, but it is possible to come up with some suggestions to reduce the untranslatable elements to the largest degree.

3. Overview of *Shuihuzhuan* and Its Nickname Translation

Shuihuzhuan, as one of China’s Four Classical Novels and the first written in vernacular, presents Chinese culture, history and philosophy in a vivid way; thus plays an important role in Chinese cultural transmission. As a folk legend, it describes the uprisings of 108 bandit-heroes gathered on Mountain Liang in Northern Song Dynasty to fight against corrupted emperor and officials so as to practice magnanimity, gallant fraternity, and to seek justice for civilians. This novel reveals the unsatisfactory social and political conditions of feudalism and produces many artistic models for dramas and tales for later generation. In addition, it introduces a great number of ideas rooted in Chinese tradition and custom. There is no exaggeration that *Shuihuzhuan* can be compared to an encyclopedia of tradition and culture of ancient China.

Up to now, *Shuihuzhuan* has been translated into Japanese, English, French, German, Russian, Latin, Italian, Hungarian, Czech, Polish and other foreign languages. Take English as an example, there are four complete translation versions.

Table 1. Complete Translation Versions of *Shuihuzhuan* (Liu Keqiang, 2014, p. 16)

Versions	Chapters	Translators	Publishing house
<i>All Men Are Brothers</i> (1933)	70 chapters	American scholar Pearl S. Buck	John Day Company in New York
<i>Water Margin</i> (1963)	70 chapters	British scholar J. H. A Jackson	Hong Kong publishing house
<i>Outlaws of the Marsh</i> (1980)	100 chapters	American Chinese Sidney Sharipo	Foreign Language Press in Beijing
<i>The Marshes of Mount Liang</i> (1994-2002)	120 chapters	British scholars John and Alex Dent-Young	Chinese University of Hong Kong Press

Though, compared to the other Chinese classical novels, *Shuihuzhuan* has the most translation versions at quite early times, but the studies on its translation have attracted less attention and efforts. Xu Yan (2008, pp. 87-91) thinks that the translation study of *Shuihuzhuan* is still at inception phase since the scope and depth of the study are not enough, and some studies are fragmented and far from systematic. Therefore, more and more translation studies should be carried out from the perspective of cultural translation and stress on the cultural choices behind the translation.

Nicknames have a history of thousands of years and exist in both English and Chinese cultures. They are given on the basis of an individual's appearance, character, hobby, specialty, occupation, region, experience, etc. In literary works, nicknames have been adopted as an artistic skill to show readers the features of characters and the denotation of story and plot. Good nicknames can arouse in the mind of readers the images, characteristics, identities, and stories of their carriers by just mentioning. In *Shuihuzhuan*, nicknames constitute a significant part since almost all greenwood men have nicknames, and even they are much more meaningful than names as most of them are culture-loaded. According to the study carried out by historians, most nicknames are borrowed from popular names in Song Dynasty. These names are from historical legends, mythologies, physical appearance, strength, professions, and so on. They play an important role in portraying the hero's characteristics including identities, moral characters, physical characteristics, and special skills, among others. Nicknames are also significant in reflecting the spirit, meaning and mental structure of a certain culture during a certain period. (Wang Hangyan, 2009, pp. 4-5) Here in this paper, we classify 108 nicknames into seven categories based on cultural meanings behind.

Table 2. Categories of Nicknames in *Shuihuzhuan*

Categories
1) Nicknames based on historical figures.
2) Nicknames based on profession.

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- 3) Nicknames based on weapon.
 - 4) Nicknames with religious elements
 - 5) Nicknames with allusion.
 - 6) Nicknames in metaphor.
 - 7) Dialects.
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Although some researches have been focused on nicknames and their cultural meanings in *Shuihuzhuan*, there is no systematic theory on its nickname translation so far. Generally, past studies on nickname translation in *Shuihuzhuan* can be classified into three kinds. The first kind is from the Translator's Subjectivity. For example, Peng Zaizhen (2006) published *On the Translator's Subjectivity in Literary Translation: A Study of Nickname Translation of Shuihuzhuan*, where she mentioned that all translation activity involves translator's subjectivity and different translators adopt different strategy to present subjectivity. The second kind is from cross-cultural point of view. For instance, in the thesis *Foreignization and Dissemination of Chinese Culture—A Comparative Study of Two English Versions of Shui Hu Chuan* written by Lin Xiaoling (2006), and *The Translation of Culture-Based Words and Expressions in Literary Translation—A Comparative Study of Two English Versions of Shuihuzhuan* written by Yu Hong (2006), the writers talked about strategies taken by translators to transmit deep cultural meanings. The third kind is from the perspective of conceptual metaphor. In the thesis *On the Translation of Character Nicknames Relating to Animal Metaphor from the Perspective of Conceptual Metaphor: A Case Study of Shu Hu Zhuan* written by Liu Ting (2014), the writer analyzed cognitive operating process based on conceptual metaphor theory. As for monographs, there are no more than several pages or examples about nickname translation. For example, Liu Keqiang (2014) discussed the translation of nicknames in *Shuihuzhuan* by applying parallel corpora, but there are only several pages which discussed the translation quality of *Shuihuzhuan* translations by making an analysis on nickname translations. Therefore, nickname translation, as an indispensable part in the process of cultural transmittance and character recreation, deserves more attention and research to promote intercultural communication.

From the above, it is not hard to see that among the few researches on nickname translation in *Shuihuzhuan*, many employed culture-oriented approaches as theoretical basis, but most of them focused on micro level and on Shapiro's and Pearl's versions from textual aspects. Few of them compared four versions in one paper. However, four versions appeared in different times at different place, so translators, consciously or unconsciously, would be influenced by social factors apart from their subjectivity or purpose. Therefore, the following part would apply Lefevere's theory to analyze four versions of nickname translation in *Shuihuzhuan*, which analyzes different constraints of translatability appeared. Only by connecting translation study with the society in a larger scope, can translation versions of *Shuihuzhuan* attract more and more readers around the world, and Chinese culture get acknowledged and appreciated by the world.

4. Analysis of Nickname Translation in *Shuihuzhuan* Based on Lefevere's Theory

In this part, we will analyze the nickname translation in *Shuihuzhuan* based on Lefevere's constraints on cultural translation. Since most studies have been on the four main constraints, this paper would focus on the other specific elements—connotation, different levels of diction, dialect and idiolect, which have long been neglected so far.

4.1 Cultural Background of Four Translators

Pearl S. Buck (1892-1973) was the first translator of *Shuihuzhuan* in full length. Buck came to China from America several months after her birth, and altogether stayed in China for 37 years. At that time, proletarian revolution broke out and imperialist countries in West were eager to expand their colonies, so they began their colonial invade to China. But before that, the West needed to know more about Chinese culture and people in order to carry out cultural invasion. Under this background, Buck began her translation. As Buck's intention was to interpret real Chinese language and culture to the West, she adopted "literal translation" as her strategy. Therefore, her translation was the most tedious, but she was the most loyal to source text and source language style among the four.

J. H. Jackson, a British scholar, was the second translator of complete version. His translation was thirty years later than Pearl's and scholars inferred that he was influenced and got reference from Pearl's translation. His translation versions were popular in British and Hong Kong, but rare in mainland, China. The cultural background was rather complicated at this time as Hong Kong was part of China in history, but at the same time, it was also a colony of Britain. There was conflict between Britain and China. Meanwhile, the whole world was experiencing "Cold War" and there was conflict between capitalism and communism. Therefore, in order to improve relations between China and Britain, Jackson retranslated *Shuihuzhuan* by adopting domestication strategy, i.e., his translation was more concise and easier for foreigners to understand than Pearl's.

The third translation version was translated by Sidney Sharipo (1915-2014) who was a Chinese Jewish-American scholar. Sharipo was an American-born author and translator, but he lived in China since 1947 and took Chinese citizenship in 1963. He had a good command of both Chinese and English and he loved Chinese culture. But at that time, China was suffering from "The Great Culture Revolution" and *Shuihuzhuan* was considered as a banned book. Sharipo's translation was interrupted, but he persisted and finished translation. He thought that good translations should reproduce the content and style of source text. He once said, "I introduce China to American people in a way that they can understand". He believed that there was no direct equivalence between Chinese and English language, so his translation was neither too formal nor too colloquial. Compared with Peal who chose to imitate ancient Chinese, Sharipo tried to make meaning easier to be understood by western people.

The fourth version was translated by British scholars John and Alex Dent-Young and got published by Chinese University of Hong Kong Press from 1994 to 2002. At this time, translation was a collective work as it was carried out father and son, and their translation version has the most chapters and the longest time to translate and publish. At the end of 20th century and the beginning of 21st century,

China put forward Reform and Opening Up policy and the whole world has witnessed the rapid development of China, so the West needs to know more about Chinese culture from a new perspective. Therefore, Young family, as experts in translation and Asian cultures, carried out translation work in order to promote cultural understanding. Besides, at this time, researches on translation theories have achieved huge progress, so their translation were largely influenced by these theories. Readers can figure out huge differences between Young family's translation and the other three translation versions.

4.2 Connotations

Example: 赛仁贵 (郭盛): Sai Rengui (Guo Sheng)

P: He Who Is Like Jen Kuei Of Old

J: Rival Of Rengui

S: The Second Rengui

D: Halberdier

This is an example for the literary translation of connotation. "Sai", in traditional Chinese dictionary, has three meanings: a. ancient worship ceremony to pay tribute to gods; b. competes or contest; c. finish. "Rengui" is the second name of "Xue Rengui", a famous general at the beginning of Tang Dynasty. Ji or halberd is his weapon. During his whole life, he conquered from east to west and made huge contribution to territorial expansion for Tang emperors. In Yuan and Ming Dynasty, not only warriors, but also many common people admired Xue and his story has been recorded and replayed in many dramas and novels.

Here Guo Sheng is named as Sai Rengui because there are some similarities between Rengui and Guo Sheng. They are all in white clothes and good at using Ji or halberd. Besides, Shi Nai'an gave Guo Sheng this nickname to praise his bravery and power. Pearl S. Buck, J.H. Jackson, Sidney Sharipo, John and Alex Dent-Young provided four different translation versions. Pearl, Jackson and Sharipo all tried to present the Chinese name of historical figure in their translation although Pearl adopted Wade-Giles system which was different from the other two's pinyin, while Dent Young used "Halberdier", the person who used halberd. Although "Halberdier" pointed out the hidden meaning that Guo Sheng was compared to Rengui because they all used halberd, the historical meaning was missing. Western readers would never know Rengui, the famous general in Chinese history, and they would not think that Guo Sheng was brave from the nickname. Pearl's translation contained an attributive clause which was tedious and not suitable for nickname, but Pearl's translation was close to original meaning. Jackson misunderstood the meaning of "Sai" which means "better or surpass" in this nickname. In Jackson's, Guo Sheng was a rival of Rengui. According to dictionary, "rival" refers to "a person, group, etc. competing with others for the same thing or in the same area". However, Guo lived in Song Dynasty while Rengui lived in Tang Dynasty, so they could not become rivals. In Sharipo's translation, "the second Rengui" can mean that Guo Sheng is like Rengui because in the dictionary, "second" has a meaning that "happening or coming next after the first in a series of similar things or people". It is not as the same as the source meaning, but it is the closest one in form and meaning to source language

among the four.

As Lefevere mentioned, it is difficult to render connotation in translation. In this example, Rengui is a Chinese historical figure, so it is not only a name but also associates with his stories, characteristics as well as Chinese people's attitude to him. If translators want to arouse the same reflection on foreign readers as Chinese readers do, they are constrained by poetics. Meanwhile, the strategies translators adopted here also present their ideology, i.e., choices they make are constrained by their own ideology, target culture's ideology as well as patronage's ideology. Pearl's translation reduced the constraints on ideology since she tried to express the full meaning of original text, but she had to sacrifice poetics as the form changed. Dent Young reduced poetological constraints as the core meaning of this nickname was expressed, but he was constrained by western ideology. He wanted foreign readers to understand the meaning in disregard of Chinese history and culture. Jackson intended to keep the form and historical name, but he did not grasp the meaning of "Sai" accurately. Although their translations are not perfect, we can figure out their efforts to reduce either ideological or poetological constraints. The best in dealing with these constraints is Sharipo's translation. The form and meaning as well as historical elements have been remained in his nickname translation.

4.3 Different Levels of Diction

Example: 病关索 (杨雄): Bing Guan Suo (Yang Xiong)

P: The Sick Kuan So

J: Sick Guan Suo

S: The Pallid

D: Morbid

This is an example for translating different levels of diction. "Bing", according to traditional Chinese dictionary, has two meanings: a. sickness; b. Tongjia word, or interchangeable characters. "病 (bing)" is the same as "并 (bing)" which means "equal or same". Guan Suo is said to be Guan Yu, a famous and brave general in Three Kingdom period. Another saying is that Guan Suo is the third son of Guan Yu, but there is no solid record about it. No matter it is Guan Yu or the son of Guan Yu, many people were named as "Guan Suo" as their nickname in Song Dynasty, because they admired Guan Yu very much.

Yang Xiong's face was a little yellow as if he were sick, that's why people called him "Bing Guan Suo". Here "bing" means "sickness". However, Yang Xiong is compared to Guan Suo because of their weapon and personality. Both Yang Xiong and Guan Suo use knife as their weapons, and all of them are brave and strong, which is opposite to "Bing" or "sickness". Generally, all four translators adopted the first meaning of "bing", so they used "sick", "morbid", or "pallid" in their translation. According to dictionary, "sick" refers to "something affected by an impairment of normal physical or mental function". "Pallid" means "abnormally deficient in color as suggesting physical or emotional distress" or "(of light) lacking in intensity or brightness; dim or feeble". "Morbid" suggests an unhealthy mental state or the state caused by manifesting disease or pathology. According to the description in novel,

Yang Xiong did not sick. He was deemed as “sick” because of his yellow face. Therefore, “pallid” in Sharipo’s version is better than “sick” and “morbid” in this case. In Pearl’s and Jackson’s translation, they all presented the historical name “Guan Suo”, while in Sharipo’s and Dent Young’s translation, they omitted “Guan Suo” and revealed hidden connection between Yang Xiong’s feature and his nickname.

As many literary words or phrases have different levels of meaning, it is very difficult for translators to use different levels of diction in target language to express all meanings. In this nickname, “病 (bing)” has two meanings in Chinese and Guan Suo also has two kinds of understanding, so translators’ choices show their constraints and their efforts to reduce constraints. Pearl’s and Jackson’s translation reduced poetological constraint, but they are constrained by language as the meaning of “bing” was wrong. Sharipo’s and Dent Young’s translation reduced the constraints on language since they tried to make source text more understandable to foreign readers, but they did not consider constraints of poetics since historical name and relevant stories are missing. Moreover, Dent Young made his efforts to reduce ideological constraint as the ideology of his patronage is to promote understanding, while Sharipo neglected ideological constraint because his patronage wanted him to promote Chinese culture but he omitted cultural element. Besides, there are other understanding of this nickname, so different translators can have different interpretation and adopt different strategy.

4.4 Dialects and Idiolects

Example: 活闪婆 (王定六): Huo Shan Po (Wang Dingliu)

P: The Lively Female

J: Lightning Goddess

S: The Lightning

D: Fleetfoot

This is an example about translating dialects and idiolects. “Huo Shan (活闪)” is “Huo Shan (霍闪)”, which means “lightning” in the dialect of provinces along Yangze river and Huai river. In Chinese legend, as the god governing lightning is a woman in people’s mind, so “霍闪” is always used with “Po (婆)” in dialect. That’s the origin of “Huo Shan Po”. No matter the person is a male or female, people all call them the nickname “Huo Shan Po”. Another explanation about “婆 (Po)” is that “婆” refers to Chinese alligator in Yangtze river in dialect. Since Chinese alligator is small and quick in movement, and Wang Dingliu is also small in figure and walks very fast, it is vivid and reasonable to give him this nickname.

Four translations showed three levels of understanding. Pearl only transferred the first level of meaning—literal meaning. Jackson and Sharipo understood that the meaning of “Huo Shan” in Chinese dialect was “lightning”, while Dent Young understood even further as they pointed out the reason why Wang Dingliu was nicknamed as “Huo Shan Po”. These three levels also revealed the distance of translator to source text and target readers. Besides, “Po” was a tricky word as it referred to female literally, but here Wang Dingliu was a man. Pearl and Jackson translated it as “female” and “goddess”

respectively, which would confuse target readers on the gender of Wang Dingliu.

China is a country with amounts of local dialects and idiolects and many literary works are written in dialect or idiolect to express certain meaning to attract readers' attention, but it is very hard for translators to translate dialect or idiolect and transfer the local sense to target readers. On one hand, many translators, like Pearl, do not notice that these words or phrases come from dialect, so they only translate them word by word. On the other hand, even for some translators who know that these words come from dialect, they have constraints on ideology, poetics, and language. They realize these constraints and try to get rid of them.

5. Translation Strategies

According to Lefevere, translation is a rewriting process, i.e., translation needs to extend creativity of source text, and present the extension in target language with acceptable limits. Pearl, Jackson, Sharipo and Dent Young all tried to understand original texts and present them in target language with some degree of constraints, but their strategies were different, so do the degree of constraints they reduced at last. Seen from the examples provided by four translators, four strategies have been adopted in literary translation.

(1) Literal translation. Literal translation is usually defined as “not to alter original words and sentences”. It tries to keep the forms and word meaning of original text. Sometimes people criticize literal translation because they regard it as “word-for-word translation”, but this understanding is too narrow. Literal translation also tries to recreate the original content, but it keeps the basic form and meaning as much as possible. Pearl is the translator who adopted literal translation the most among the four, so she is the most loyal to original text in meaning. In order to promote Chinese culture, literal translation should play the most important role since this strategy gets target readers closer to source text.

(2) Literal translation plus notes. In addition to literal translation, literal translation plus notes should also be applied to cultural translation in order to introduce abundant cultural information to target readers. With the notes, readers can make sense of cultural connotation that source text refers to. Although Pearl's translation is the most loyal to original text, her translation is tedious. If she could add notes below the text rather than translate everything literally, her translation would be easier to read. Therefore, it is a useful method to deal with those elements.

(3) Free translation. In translation process, there would be the time when literal translation is impossible to translate implied meanings because Chinese and Western countries have different cultural backgrounds and ways of thinking. For example, there are linguistic phenomenon and proper nouns peculiar to Chinese culture, so translators must adopt free translation to transfer cultural meaning. Besides, the process of free translation is also the process for translators to interpret cultural elements. If the connotative meaning can be reproduced in the target language, the strategy is regarded as a successful one.

(4) Free translation plus notes. Although free translation is acceptable during translation process, there should be some limits on it. Sometimes free translation would get target readers far from source culture because translators reproduce the text and meaning too much that target readers cannot acknowledge the writing skill and intention of original authors. Therefore, free translation plus notes is considered as a reasonable approach in order to balance the original writer's intention and the comprehension of target readers.

6. Cultural Strategies

Despite translation strategies, literary translation is a complicated process as it inevitably involves two cultures. When the translator deals with the typical word, he faces with two different cultures. Therefore, translators must know two cultures very well in order to achieve equivalence in both language meaning and cultural meaning.

(1) Source culture. In order to promote Chinese culture around the world, it is very important to maintain cultural elements in translation. On one hand, translators must know the origin and meaning of those cultural elements in source language. In order to achieve that, translators should do a lot of preparation before translation. If possible, knowing the author and his times should be the first and the most time-consuming part of translation. This is the best way to reduce constraints and grasp the most accurate meaning. On the other hand, while doing translation, meaning and form are all important in translation. For instance, those elements—connotation, different levels of diction, dialect, and idiolect, are largely connected with Chinese language and poetic forms. They all reveal the particularity of Chinese language. When there is no equivalent or similar expression in source language, translators have to make compromise, but there is also compensation to maintain source culture. The first and the ideal choice is to keep the original meaning and form in target language; the second choice is to keep original meaning and part of form; the third choice is to keep the form and compensate the meaning in textual level. (Xia Tingde, 2006, p. 249)

(2) Target culture. As translation is a process from one culture to another, it is significant to keep target readers and target culture in mind. A good translation must let readers comprehend and accept original culture and at the same time acknowledge the similarity and difference between two cultures. On one hand, translators should reduce the efforts target readers take to read the translation work. On the other hand, in order to promote original culture, translators should present cultural heterogeneity rather than turn original culture to target culture. Cultural communication is not to fuse all cultures but to appreciate exotic culture with target language under the concept of cultural co-existence.

7. Conclusion

Seen from the discussion above, it can be realized that literary translation is possible although there are untranslatable factors. Lefevere's rewriting theory points out four constraints as well as four elements that hinder literary translation. In *Shuihuzhuan*, every nickname is closely related to Chinese culture

and society. They are vivid and interesting, but difficult to translate. Therefore, nickname translations are good examples to reveal difficulties when translating cultural elements in literary works. After discussing on some nickname translations from the perspective of Lefevere's theory, this paper carries out translation and cultural strategies to reduce the constraints on cultural translation. Though the examples are from *Shuihuzhuan*, the conclusion is applicable to all literature works.

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