

Analysis of Research Literature on Biography Translation Under CiteSpace

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Abstract: This paper comprehensively examines and analyzes the current research status, focus themes and development frontiers of biography translation in China with CNKI visualization tools and CiteSpace. It is found that the research on biography translation has been developing continuously, and the number of articles published has been largely on the increase, but the number of published journal literature is relatively small, the scope of research is narrower, and the research conclusions reached are relatively similar. The present study is devoted to analyzing the trend of biography translation research in China in the past 28 years, with a view to providing new ideas for biography translation research in China.

Keywords: Biography, CiteSpace, Bibliometric Analysis.

1. Introduction

With the gradual advancement of globalization, the cultures of various countries intermingle with each other. As an important part of contemporary literature, the study of translation of biographical literature has gradually attracted attention. Unlike traditional literature, biographical literature is a special genre that combines historical authenticity and literature, and its translation also needs to take into account these two natural attributes. Biographical translation is a bridge for the communication of biographical literature between countries. With the increasing globalization of cultural industries, the translation of biographical literature has gradually shown a broader and far-reaching impact. It has played a vital role in the smooth entry of domestic biographies into foreign markets.

2. Related Research Literature Review

In recent years, the research fields of biographical translation by experts and scholars can be classified into three categories: the analysis of the role of biographical translators, the methods, techniques and strategies of biographical translation, and the study of biographical translation from different theoretical perspectives. For example, Ye Zinan, Sun Jian'guang, Zhang Kun, Mu Lei, Liu Yi and other experts and scholars put forward their own views on biography translation, which not only enriches the diversity of works, but also promotes the development of biography translation.

With regard to the study of the translator's role in biographical works, different scholars have different ideas. Zhong Jieling believes that the translator plays the role of selector, creator, communicator, transmitter, and transformer in the translation of biographical literature (钟洁玲, 2016: 199). Sun Jianguang suggests that the translator's role in the translation of biographical literature is an "oxymoron" because he has to balance the relationship between "historicity" and "artistry" to realize the principle of "harmony" in the translation of biographical literature (孙建光, 2009: 33). As the soul of the translation process, the role of the translator directly affects the quality of the translation, so it is important to discuss the role of the translator in the translation of biographical literature in order to improve the

scientificity of the study.

Research on the techniques and strategies of biographical translation is more active and has always been a hot spot for research. Ye Zinan says, "The translation of biographical texts should be handled flexibly because conveying the message is the most important. In order to make the words clear, the language barrier should be removed." (叶子南, 2007:82). Since biographical texts have both historical and literary characteristics, and the interdisciplinary nature of biographical translation is obvious, it is necessary to select words and sentences that are as accurate and relevant as possible to express the meaning and linguistic characteristics of the original text, so Zhang Kun believes that for vocabulary, the translator can choose the method of literal translation or free translation, and for sentence, the translator can use the method of division and combination; affirmative and negative translation; subordinate clause translation and long sentence translation (张坤, 2015: 30). He Yangyang proposes that semantic translation can more intuitively realize the documentary and historical aspects in biographical texts, reveal different linguistic styles and cultural colors, and reproduce the aesthetic value of the original text.

In the research on the guiding theory of biographical translation, scholars have put forward numerous ideas. Tu Ning proposes that Skopos theory should be the main strategy for translating biographical literature because it can both convey the message of the original text well and show the artistry of the original text to achieve aesthetic transmission. Jin Yaming and Sun Yuqing verify the applicability of communicative translation theory to the translation of biographical literary texts by applying text typology (靳亚铭, 孙宇晴, 2022: 117). Based on the theoretical framework of reception aesthetics, Zhang Mei discusses that in translating biographical texts, translators should not only pay attention to the "integration of vision" with the original text, but also pay attention to the differences between Chinese and Western languages, different cultural aesthetic habits and the expected vision of the readers of the translated text, and fully consider the readers' acceptance level and aesthetic needs (张梅, 2012: 144).

To sum up, biographical translation research in China is still developing, and more and more works and researches revolve around the above three aspects. However, among the

current research results, there are few reviews of biographical translation research, which have not been systematically sorted out and lacked the generalization and summary of bibliometric methods. Therefore, using the scientometric visualization software CiteSpace, this paper reviews the latest developments of domestic research on biographical translation between 1994 and 2022, draws a scientific knowledge map of biographical translation-related research, and presents the visualized research areas and hot spots, in order to help researchers outline the current situation and frontier issues of biographical translation research.

3. Data Sources and Research Tools

1. Data sources

In order to ensure the authenticity and authority of the data, the data of this study are all from CNKI. "Biography translation" was used as the key word for retrieval. The final retrieval date was February 5, 2023, and a total of 336 articles were detected. After manual reading and screening, the articles unrelated to or less relevant to this study were excluded, including meeting records, books and other articles. A total of 333 articles were obtained, including 28 academic journals, 294 dissertations, 10 characteristic journals, and 1 academic journal. Since the first journal literature on biographical translation retrieved on CNKI was published in 1994, the time span of this study is from January 1994 to December 2022.

2. Research Tools

In this study, the valid sample data were statistically and visually analyzed using the visualization analysis software

CiteSpace, an information visualization software developed by Professor Chaomei Chen of the School of Information Science and Technology, Drexel University, USA, based on Java. After the software was introduced into the domestic academic community in 2007, it quickly received a lot of attention. It is mainly based on co-citation analysis theory and pathfinding network algorithm, etc., to measure domain-specific literature (collection) in order to explore the key paths of disciplinary domain evolution and its knowledge inflection points, and through a series of visual mapping to form the analysis of potential dynamic mechanisms of disciplinary evolution and the detection of disciplinary development frontier (Chen Yue, Chen Chaomei, Liu Zeyuan, Hu Zhigang, Wang Xianwen, 2015: 244). Therefore, this paper selects the software as a research tool to visualize the current situation and trends of biographical translation research through mapping and visualization analysis, with the following steps:

The data format of the downloaded documents was converted based on CiteSpace 6.1.R6; the time span was set to January 1994 to December 2022, and "Years Per Slice" was "1 year"; "Node Types" was set to "Keywords"; "Pruning" was set to "Pruning sliced networks"; "Show the Largest K Clusters" was set to "8"; "Node Shape of Keywords and Terms" selected "Circle"; and the rest of the parameters are left as default.

4. Data Analysis

1. Trends in the number of articles issued

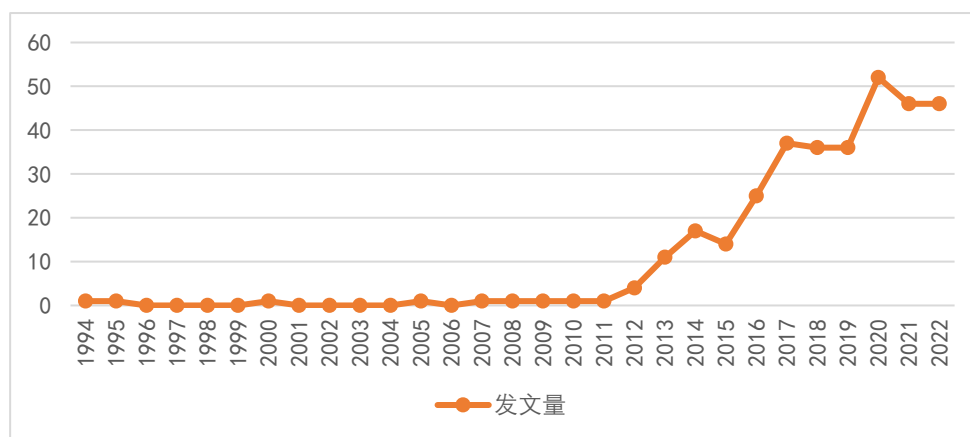


Figure 1. Line graph of the number of articles issued

The visual analysis of CNKI yielded a line graph of the volume of articles (Figure 1), with the time of publication on the horizontal axis and the volume of articles on the vertical axis. It can be seen from the diagram that the first literature on biographical translation studies was published in 1994, followed by a period of silence from 1994 to 2011, with a small number of publications. 2011 is the first turning point, and since then, the number of studies on biographical translation has begun to increase. 2014 was the first peak, with 17 articles published. From 2014 to 2017, although the number of papers published in 2015 was less than that in the previous year, the overall trend showed a steady growth trend, and reached the second peak in 2017, which was 37. The overall trend of the number of publications from 2017 to 2020 also tends to rise, and 2020 is the year with the largest number of publications in the past 20 years, up to 52. From 2020 to

2022, the overall number of publications is more than 46, and the number of publications tends to be flat. In general, the number of related literature is on the rise, which shows that the research on biographical translation has gradually entered the public's field of vision, and has aroused the discussion and research of scholars. It also proves that there is still much room for improvement in the field of biographical translation.

2. Analysis of Highly Cited Literature

Literature with a high number of citations plays a guiding role for research in the field, and the more citations it receives, the more it proves that scholars recognize its research results. In this paper, those with 20 citations or more are considered as highly cited literature. Thus, by using the citation number ranking on CNKI, we can get 12 documents that meet the requirements, including 8 academic journals and 4 master's theses, as shown in Table I.

Table 1. Analysis of highly cited literature

序号	文献名称	数据库	作者	来源	发表时间	被引次数
1	谈传记文本的翻译	期刊	叶子南	中国翻译	20070515	371
2	译者在传记文学翻译中的角色	期刊	孙建光	浙江师范大学学报 (社会科学版)	20090715	191
3	散谈传记翻译	期刊	叶子南	中国翻译	20050915	104
4	传记文学的翻译策略	期刊	张坤	安徽文学(下半月)	20150225	83
5	评《我在中国的岁月》的三个中译本——兼论传记文学的翻译	期刊	穆雷, 刘祎	外国语(上海外国语大学学报)	19940420	76
6	中西方思维方式的差异对传记文学翻译的影响	期刊	宋蕾	东南传播	20120229	72
7	从翻译目的论看传记文学翻译策略和技巧 ——以《威廉·燕卜苏传》第一卷第七章为例	硕士	屠宁	北京外国语大学	20130420	42
8	接受美学视野下的传记文本翻译——从《史蒂夫·乔布斯传》中的一封情书谈起	期刊	张梅	译林(学术版)	20120601	39
9	翻译、传记、交游: 阿瑟·韦利汉学研究策略考辨	博士	冀爱莲	福建师范大学	20100402	35
10	从语义翻译和交际翻译理论看传记文学翻译策略 ——以《李光耀: 决定时刻》为例	硕士	何扬阳	北京外国语大学	20160524	26
11	赞助人在传记文学译介中的操纵力研究——以《史蒂夫·乔布斯传》为例	期刊	刘春媛	外语学刊	20130705	25
12	语义翻译和交际翻译在传记文学翻译中的应用 ——以传记《燕卜苏: 在名流之间》第五章中译本为例	硕士	胡玘玘	北京外国语大学	20130414	22

According to the above table, the contents of these 12 literatures can be summarized into: translation strategies, translation methods, translation theories, and the role of translators. It can be seen that the study of translation itself is still very important in the process of biography translation, and the fact that each article involves the discussion and analysis of translation strategies and methods of biography literature proves that it is still the focus of biography translation research. Among the eight academic journals mentioned above, four of them are from core journals of Peking University and CSSCI, namely, Ye Zinan's *Talking about the Translation of Biographical Texts* and *Talking about Biographical Translation*, Mu Lei and Liu Yi's *Reviewing the Three Chinese Translations of "My China Years" - A Concurrent Discussion on the Translation of Biographical Literature* and Liu Chunyuan's *A Study on the Manipulative Power of Patronage in the Translation of Biographical Literature - Taking "Steve Jobs" as an Example*. In both articles, Ye Zinan gives examples of how to translate biographical literature properly and uniquely. Mu Lei and Liu Yi emphasize that biographies are true portrayals of history, so translations must be accurate to make readers see the true nature of the original text. Liu Chunyuan analyzes the embodiment of Lefevre's patronage theory in the Chinese version of *Steve Jobs' biography*, and also suggests that there is an urgent need to establish a research system in order to form a research theory and provide research data for biography translation. These literatures provide references and directions for subsequent research.

3. Keyword analysis

(1) Keyword co-occurrence analysis

Keywords are used to express the thematic content of a literature, and they present the core of a literature in a condensed posture. And the co-occurrence of keywords can explore the focus of attention in a subject area at a certain period of time, and then capture the research hot spots in this area (Wang Jing, Guang Caihong, 2022: 76). Using CiteSpace to generate a keyword co-occurrence knowledge map, 278 keyword nodes and 587 groups of keyword co-occurrence relationships were counted in the literature collected in this study, and by adjusting the color of the map and the shape and size of the points, the following maps were generated:

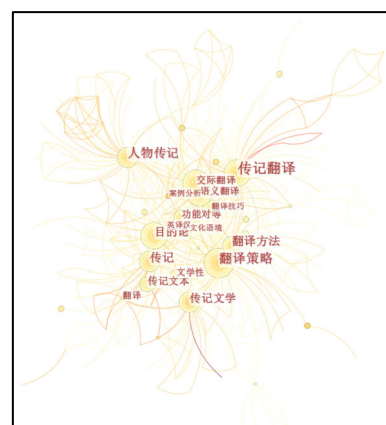


Figure 2. Keyword co-occurrence knowledge graph

The circular nodes represent the keywords in the literature, and the higher the frequency of occurrence, the larger the area of the node circle. The lines represent the co-occurrence relationship of keywords, and the thicker the line is, the higher the co-occurrence frequency of keywords is. From Figure 2, it can be seen that the keyword with the largest node area is

biography translation, followed by translation strategy, skopos theory, biography and communicative translation. At the same time, CiteSpace is used to count the frequency and centrality of keywords, and the top 20 keywords are counted, thus generating a high-frequency keyword table, as follows:

Table 2. Top 20 keywords for biography translation research

序号	关键词	频次	中心性
1	传记翻译	103	0.48
2	翻译策略	69	0.35
3	目的论	33	0.15
4	人物传记	31	0.30
5	交际翻译	31	0.05
6	传记文学	29	0.16
7	翻译方法	29	0.20
8	语义翻译	27	0.05
9	传记	22	0.13
10	传记文本	19	0.09
11	功能对等	17	0.06
12	翻译技巧	16	0.04
13	文学性	12	0.02
14	翻译	9	0.03
15	翻译报告	8	0.01
16	案例分析	7	0.01
17	文本类型	6	0.01
18	文化语境	6	0.02
19	英译汉	6	0.04
20	翻译实践	6	0.04

Among the 20 key words in the above table, except for the necessary words such as “translation” and “biography translation”, the rest are the research hot spots in this field, which can be divided into translation strategies, translation methods, translation theories (Skopos theory, functional equivalence, cultural context, text type, communicative translation, semantic translation), translation skills, and most of the literature elaborates the above four categories in translation practice by using case analysis method. In addition, centrality, as a measure of node power, reflects the importance of the node in the network. The higher the co-occurrence frequency of keywords is, the higher the point centrality is,

indicating that nodes are more important in this field (Wang Juan ,Chen Shichao, Wang Linli ; Yang Xianmin, 2016: 9). It can be seen from this that among these four categories, translation strategies are the focus of academic circles.

(2) Keyword time zone analysis

On the basis of keyword clustering, the nodes of the same cluster are arranged on the same horizontal line in chronological order through Timeline to show the historical results of the cluster, so that the development and evolution of research hot spots in the field of biography translation research in the past 20 years can be observed (see Figure 3).

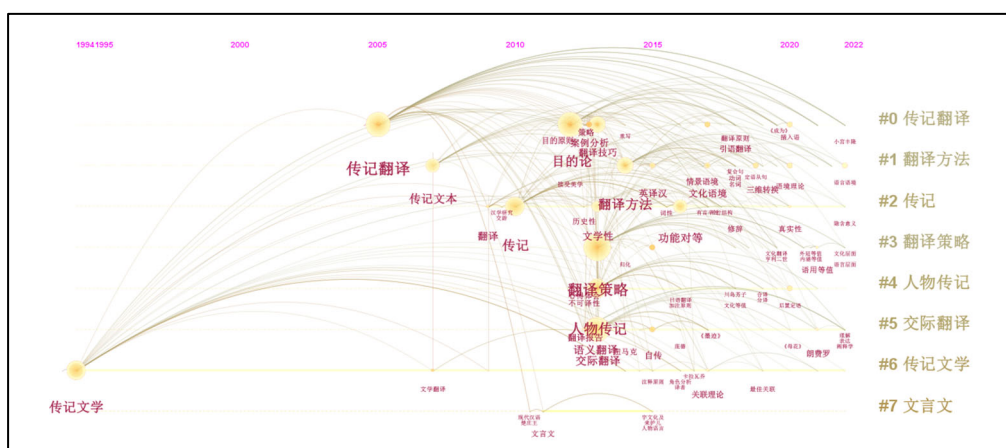


Figure 3. Keyword Timeline View Knowledge Graph

From this figure, it can be seen that since the first clustering of biographical literature (#6) in 1994, it has been in the

gestation period since then. It was not until 2005 that the clustering of biographical translation (#0) officially appeared, and then it was an initial period. From 2010 to 2015, the emergence of five clusters of translation methods (#1), biography (#2), translation strategies (#3), biography (#4) and communicative translation (#5) shows that the number of research results published in the past five years has increased, and this research field is in a prosperous period. Since then, relevant research has been on the rise, and keywords have been frequently used, indicating that the field of biographical translation has really entered the public's field of vision. As a special form of biography, the clustering of classical Chinese (#7) is its development period from 2010 to 2015. After this period, the attention has declined.

(3) Analysis of keyword emergence

Emergent words (also called “emergent subject terms”) are words that appear or are used frequently within a short period of time, and the change of their frequency can determine the frontier and development direction of the field. In this study, the top 20 high-frequency keywords from 1994 to 2022 are shown in CiteSpace based on the co-occurrence of keywords in the field of “biographical translation” (see Figure 4). The dark bold lines in the figure are the time period when the keyword occurs. “Year” refers to the time when the word first appears in the sample data. “Begin” refers to the starting time when the mutation occurs. “End” is the end time when the mutation occurs, and “Strength” is the intensity of the mutation. The greater the intensity, the greater the impact of the keyword in a specific period. Because the ranking of keywords in this figure is from far to near, the lower the keyword, the more cutting-edge the research.

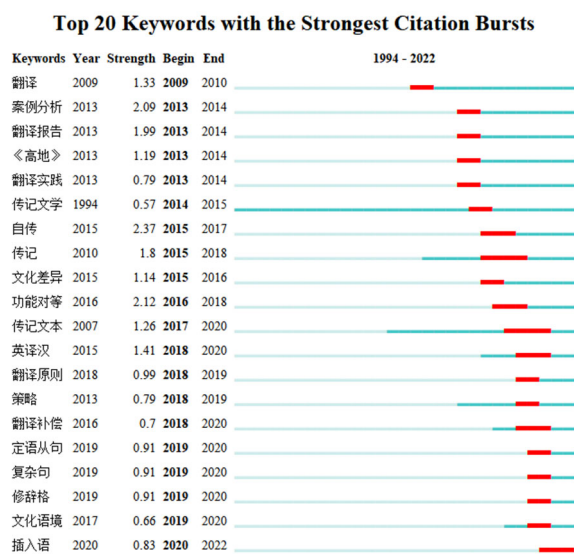


Figure 4. Keyword Burst Graph

It can be seen from the diagram that the frontier content of biographical translation studies from 2009 to 2010 focuses on translation. The research frontiers from 2013 to 2014 are “case analysis”, “translation report”, “translation practice” and “*Higher Ground: Biography of Wiley B. Glass, Missionary to China*”, which has been repeatedly used by many scholars to analyze. “Autobiography”, “biography”, “cultural difference” and “functional equivalence” are the research frontiers from 2015 to 2018. The research frontiers from 2017 to 2020 are “biographical texts”, “English-Chinese translation”, “translation principles”, “strategies”,

“translation compensation”, “attributive clauses”, “complex sentences”, “figures of speech” and “cultural context”. From 2020 to 2022, parenthesis is the research frontier. The keywords with higher intensity (>2) are “autobiography” and “case analysis”, while the lowest is “biographical literature”, “Parenthesis” is a recent hot spot and the most cutting-edge research direction at present. From the beginning, scholars’ research on the general framework of biographical translation has gradually shifted to the study of translation principles, translation strategies and translation theories. Nowadays, they pay more attention to the sentence characteristics of biographical literature itself, such as attributive clauses, complex sentences, figures of speech, parenthesis and so on. These fields indicate the research frontier of biographical translation, which deserves scholars’ attention.

5. Conclusion

In this paper, a systematic review of the literature related to biographical translation within CNKI based on CiteSpace was conducted to explore the current status of research, focal themes and development frontiers within this research field. Firstly, the literature on biographical translation in China is reviewed, and secondly, the volume of articles issued during 1994-2022 is counted, and the highly cited literature is studied and analyzed, followed by the mapping and analysis of keywords for co-occurrence, time zone, and burst using CiteSpace to detect emerging research hot spots and frontiers.

From the study, several conclusions can be drawn. First, 2014, 2017 and 2020 are the three peaks of the number of publications, with 2020 being the most published year in the past 20 years, with 52 articles. Second, Ye Zinan’s *Talking about the Translation of Biographical Texts* is the most cited literature in the field of biographical translation, with 371 citations, which plays a guiding role in biographical translation research and provides reference for many scholars. Third, biography translation, translation strategy, Skopos theory, biography, and communicative translation are the first five keywords with high frequency, reflecting the hot spots of today’s academic research. Fourthly, the current research can be divided into “biography translation”, “translation method”, “biography”, “translation strategy”, “communicative translation”, “biographical literature”, and “literary language”. Fifth, the research on “rhetorical patterns”, “cultural contexts” and “interjections” is more cutting-edge.

At the same time, some problems have been found. First of all, the published journal literature is relatively small, and the level of journals where research results are published needs to be improved. In CNKI, there are only 333 biography translation-related literatures, among which there are only 39 journal literatures, and only 4 PKU core and CCSCI literatures. Therefore, the state and universities should increase the investment in biography translation research. Since biography translation is a part of the current cultural exchange between countries, strengthening the research in this area will undoubtedly enhance the cultural soft power of China. Secondly, there is still room to broaden the field of research on biographical translation. At present, the focus of scholars’ research is similar, and there are few original arguments, mainly because of the selection of materials. It is found that the number of studies on biographies of party history figures is almost zero, and China is now emphasizing the need to strengthen the education of party history and carry forward our revolutionary traditions and heritage, so the translation of party history biographies should be a better

entry point and worth studying and exploring.

Biographical translation, as an emerging field, has great prospects for development. We hope that more scholars will pay attention to biography translation research in the future, and at the same time contribute to the spread of Chinese culture.

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4.Educational Science Planning Project of Heilongjiang Province in 2021: Research on Innovative MTI Talents Training Model Based on Serving Border Economic Development (GJB1421367)

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