

The Translation Criticism Paradigm in Multicultural Context

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Abstract: As times are progressing, so does the civilization developing. The development of translation practice and research results also evolves with the cultural progress, and drives the research development of translation criticism. Furthermore, translation criticism is an important link between translation theory and practice (Newmark, 2001). This paper introduces several translation criticism paradigms which are connected with cultural context and gives some examples of cultural background translation involved in the development of translation criticism. On the basis of previous research, this paper puts forward the theory of new translation criticism paradigm in the multicultural context, so that to enrich the relevant research of criticism paradigm under the cultural background, and provide reference ideas and directions for the research of translation criticism paradigm.

Keywords: Criticism Paradigm; Cultural Context; Multi-Culture; Translation Criticism.

1. Introduction

The Translation Criticism: the Potentials & Limitations has introduced the development of translation criticism, from linguistic criticism to structuralist criticism and deconstruction criticism. And the translation criticism presents three major research changes, from author to translator, then to reader. On the one hand, the progress transferred from artistic appreciation to scientific analysis, then to cultural criticism. On the other hand, it came from regulation to description, and then to explanatory research. According to the existing literature data query (up to August 2024), there is quiet a lot of published articles about the “the translation criticism paradigm in cultural context”, and also covers a wide range. When search with “translation criticism”, CNKI has a total of 2,811 related results. The relevant results even include 11 books and 104 conferences etc. Over the 2,000 items, plus the search terms for “culture”, there would be still one thousand left. It can be seen that the research on “translation criticism” has never stopped, whether from the perspective of translator’s behavior, text judgment, the development of cultural context or the exploration of translation criteria. At the same time, the thought-provoking research on translation criticism is still in practice, and the research on cultural development and translation criticism still has great space for development.

Recently, there is an increasing trend of cultural development and even academic research linking cultural vision and translation research. In a specific cultural context, the study of weighing the advantages and disadvantages of translation standards and translation criticism is also more fascinating. Nowadays, the diversification of development in the new era inevitably involves the diversification of people-to-people exchanges. In the current situation of diversified development, cultural development also affects the change of our research related to translation criticism. Therefore, it is necessary to explore learning translation criticism in the cultural context, and make relevant exploration and research on translation criticism from the perspective of the context of cultural development.

2. Translation and Cultural Context

Translation has always played a vital role in the long history of mankind. And the translation of Buddhist scriptures from the Eastern Han Dynasty to the Tang and Song Dynasties, while scientific and technological scriptures in the Ming and Qing Dynasties, the literary translation after the Opium War and the May 4th Movement, and the large-scale translation in various fields since the reform and opening up have exerted a great impact on Chinese society. With the continuous development of history, translation has gradually shouldered the responsibility of promoting mutual exchange, mutual understanding, knowledge dissemination, communication of ideas and common development of people of all ethnic groups in the world.

However, Translatology as an independent field of academic research only began in the second half of the twentieth century. In the study of translation theory and discussion of translation criteria, some scholars have mentioned that the context of translation is very important. And the context research of Language first started from the definition of “context” made by Bronislaw Malinowski (1923), the founder of the functional linguistics of London School. Malinowski believes that the context can be divided into “situational context” and “cultural context.” And cultural context refers to the history, culture, customs, value standards and the way of thinking in the specific speech society which any language belongs to. Furthermore, context is the main factor affecting the extraction of vocabulary. Without the full understanding of the sentence, the correct translation of the meaning of the words in the context cannot be achieved.

Considering the acceptance of readers, or considering the cultural background of the original author, personal expression intention, the cultural era and the translation purpose, all remind people of the close connection between the cultural context and translation.

All these researches had illustrated that translation can not be independent of its related cultural context. This also provides new ideas and new direction for the related research of translation criticism and appreciation of later people.

2.1. The Multicultural Context in Translation

Cultural diversity is the common heritage of mankind. Language diversity is closely related to cultural diversity. Maintaining language diversity and cultural diversity can also promote the democratization of international relations. In the context of multi-cultural culture, translation shoulders the mission of promoting exchanges among ethnic groups, developing cultural diversity and strengthening the cultural construction of world peace.

As a translator, in addition to proficient in two languages, he/she should understand the culture behind the language. What's more, Xu Yuanchong once said that translators should strive to promote Chinese culture into the advanced ranks of world culture and make world culture more brilliant (Zhang Pei, 2023). Translation is essentially a kind of cultural communication (Xu Jun, 2009), its ultimate purpose is two things: to learn the cultural connotation of the source language country or nation, or to explore the historical background of the culture and historical significance, and to find the applicable means of external publicity to the target language country or nation, hoping to promote the inheritance of their own language and culture. Translation is not only for communication, but also for cultural inheritance. In the process of learning, understanding and conveying the cultures of other countries or other nationalities, systematic translation standards have also been circulated in translation practice. No matter what it is, non-literary translation or literary translation, the target language and its culture have always tested the quality and character of translators, and also accepted the test of public scrutiny. Multi-cultural exchanges should always be a two-way exchange of equality and mutual benefit.

Different contexts, different times, but the general purpose is similar. The same language expression has its special effect in different historical and cultural backgrounds and contexts. Just as the suspicion or hesitation of human history, it is caused by different contexts and language. The pluralistic influence of culture is not overnight; and the translation practice in the multicultural context is not overnight.

2.2. The Multi-culture and Translation Criticism

The traditional translation definition has two core ideas, one is language reproduction or imitation, the other is faithful or equivalent (Liao Qiyi, 2020). As for the concept of translation criticism, there are broad sense and narrow sense. This paper aims to discuss the broad basic concept of translation criticism. According to the definition of translation, the principles and standards of translation criticism are preset, and then the "good or bad" of the text is divided. From "language transformation", "the reproduction and loyalty of original text" to "the equivalent of language", "faithfulness, expressiveness and taste." However, it should be known that "translation is not a phenomenon whose nature and scope have been determined, but an activity that changes according to various relationships within the culture (Zohar, 2000)."

Basnett (1996) also had mentioned that "there is no absolute meaning, and there is no undisputed originality." Translation is the communication within and between cultures. Generally understood translation includes two aspects: when translating the source language text, it is necessary to ensure that the surface meaning of the two languages is roughly the same, and the original structure is retained as much as possible, without forming too close and seriously distorted

translation structure. It is the forefront of the "middle -- translation and renegotiation, and the middle space -- carries the heavy burden of cultural significance (Bhabha, 1994)." And the translator, as an "intermediate" component, pays equal attention to his responsibilities and rights. But "the assumption that meaning is under and between the language creates a stalemate for the translator (Bassnett, 2002)." The embodiment of culture in the process and results of translation is also given to different identities by translators in this sense. Cultural embodiment in the translated text, or implicit or explicit, or deep or shallow.

However, from the cultural perspective, it is very necessary to analyze the translated text, and then highlight the important role of translation in the cultural development and cultural communication. Most of the translated texts mentioned here are still taking literary translation as the main body, but in the translation of some applied texts, it can be found the shadow of multiple cultures. The diversity of culture and the explicit characteristics of cultural context are also increasingly bright in the process of translation development.

3. The Translation Criticism

In 1540, the French translation theorist, Dolet, published *La manire de bien traduire d'une langue en aultre* (How to translate 60 translation studies from one language to another). It established five principles for translators, among which they discussed the richness of understanding meaning and knowledge of language. At the beginning of the 19th century, Goethe also advocated that in translation, "there should be both a new concept of 'originality' and the vision of a universal deep structure that the translator should strive to achieve (Bassnett, 2002)." As early as at the beginning of the study of translation theory, there is the concept of missing language and culture, but there is no exact concept expression such as cultural context. However, it has begun to show the correlation between translation criticism research and cultural context. In the book, *Drama as Literature*, Jiri Veltrusky (1977) presented characteristic descriptions of written theatrical texts and states that "the relationship between dialogue and extra-lingual context is close and mutual." And "the actual meaning of a single unit of meaning depends on both the linguistic context and the extra-linguistic context." Translation is not studied as an independent subject, but as a way of demonstrating applied linguistics (Catford, 1965).

Translation criticism, especially the literary translation, as a medium for translation to exercise cross-cultural cultural activities, it reflects the spirit of spreading and promoting national culture, or enriching and enriching mass culture for both source language countries and destination language countries. As times are progressing, so does the civilization developing. All these have put forward new requirements for the development of cultural construction, and at the same time affects the development and research direction of translation science, and inspires the critical research of translation science to be good.

There are few journal articles on translation criticism in China and abroad, as well as the conference seminars. But as a translator, every one may get similar thought "mistakes are really difficult to avoid (Yang Wu'neng, 2023)." The study of translation criticism is not only about making mistakes, but also needs to go deep into literary criticism, cultural development and overall criticism.

3.1. The Translation Criticism Paradigm

Yang once mentioned in Chinese Translation that critics of literary translation can be basically divided into two types: explicit and recessive. Most of the explicit ones are the scholar who combine critical practice with academic research, such as Xu Jun, Xie Tianzhen, etc. For the recessive ones, most of them are literary translators and editors who take literary translation criticism as their daily work and do not play the role of critics. Such as Li Wenjun, Lv Yuan, Liu Shuoliang and Li Jingduan, as well as some outstanding foreign literary publishers. Examples of scholarly translation critics are almost well known in the industry. Due to the limited space, only some hidden literary translation critics are listed here. “Now the classic translation of *The Sorrows of Young Werther* was judged and recognized by the editor Lu Yuan and the editorial office director Sun Shengwu, who received the ‘birth certificate’ (Yang Wu’eng, 2023).” As a representative of the recessive literary translation critics, Li Jingduan established the “Ge Baoquan Literature Translation Award, the Association of Literary Translation and Publishing, and awarded excellent literary translations in the association, that is, to conduct high-level literary translation criticism (Yang Wu’eng, 2023).”

As mentioned in his research on the criticism of translators’ behavior by Zhou Lingshun, the construction of a society-centered evaluation system forms a trinity evaluation system of “text--behavior--society” (composed of “text--language horizon”, “behavior--text horizon” and “behavior--social horizon”). The words “‘reality’ was originally in language, seeking the truth of the meaning carried by language (Zhou Lingshun, 2022).” The meaning of language bearing returns to the study of cultural context. In the domestic translation criticism research (1992-2016): review and foresight, Li mentioned “translation criticism is not always in the performance of ‘improve the quality of translation’ function (Li Jinshu, 2020),” which needed is to “mainstream political discourse, ideology, play a cultural and political function (Li Jinshu, 2020).” Later, the study of translation criticism may rise to the height of criticism. Just like the study of English and Chinese translation and language translation, it has risen to the height of translation today. Culture is progressing, translation is developing, and translation criticism should be constantly improved. And “the complexity of criticism is determined by the nature of critical practice (Li Jinshu, 2020).”

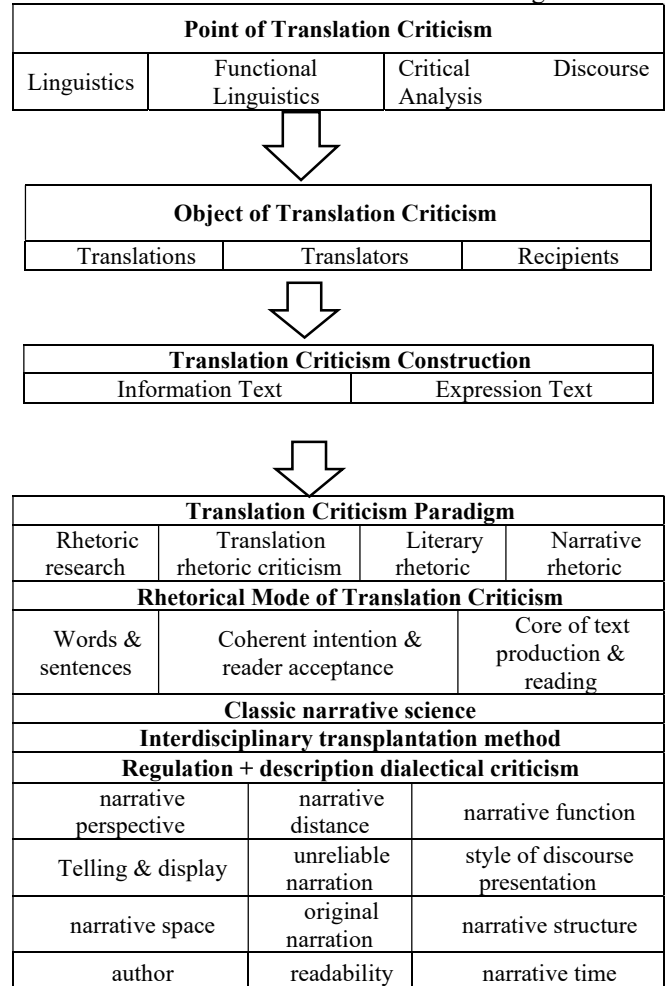
Table 1. Translation criticism of Li

Translation Criticism	
Prescriptive	Descriptive
Temporal	Diachronic
Text	Subtext
Internal	External
Translation Behavior	Translation Psychological

The translation criticism paradigm can be divided into five categories: prescriptive translation criticism and descriptive translation criticism, temporal translation criticism and diachronic translation criticism, text translation criticism and subtext translation criticism, internal translation criticism and external translation criticism, and translation behavior criticism and the translation psychological criticism. The entry point of the research is from linguistics path to

functional linguistics, then to critical discourse analysis. Most of them take translations, translators and recipients as the object of criticism. Reiss once mentioned the study of the translation criticism paradigm of literary nature, which is oriented by text type and divided into the translation criticism construction of information text and expression text.

Table 2. Translation criticism of Wang



Wang Shuhuai once put forward the rhetorical criticism theory of the literary critic, Northrop Frye, as the theoretical basis, extending from rhetoric research to translation rhetoric criticism, thus forming the rhetorical mode of translation criticism, from literary rhetoric to narrative rhetoric. It tries to construct a rhetorical mode of translation criticism by “conducting the study of words and sentences, coherent intention, distance control and reader acceptance, and grasping the core of text production and reading (Wang Shuhuai, 2023).” From rhetoric research to translation criticism research, Wang put forward the literary translation narrative criticism paradigm construction in March 2023, using classic narrative science, interdisciplinary transplantation method and “regulation + description dialectical criticism” construct contains the narrative perspective, the style of discourse presentation, telling and display, narrative time, unreliable narration, narrative distance and space, the author, original narration, readability, narrative structure and narrative function, the 12 aspects of translation narrative criticism mode. Some other scholars explored the research from another detail, mentioned the relevant research of applying the standard of translation criticism, and put forward the study of non-individual and

non-subjective characteristics of translation purposes.

Table 3. Other translation criticisms

The Others		
standard of translation criticism	translation purposes	non-individual & non-subjective characteristics

3.2. The Translation Criticism Paradigm in Multicultural Context

Each mode of translation criticism has its own particularity. The study of translation criticism from the perspective of multicultural context may start from the historical background of language and culture and the development of different contexts of multicultural culture.

Translation criticism plays a promoting role in the review and perfection of translation. The development of same language, or in different times, is accepted by people to different degrees. Compared with the translation characteristics of the language, it is also different. For example, in the early 19th century, “the afternoon tea” invented by Anna Maria Russell (the British royal wife and the 7th Duchess of Bedford), later evolved into “British tea”, namely “Low Tea” and “High Tea.” In some way, it highlights the class concept of that period, and the cultural characteristics of “high table tea” and “low table tea” behind it are prominent. But with the change of times, there is no more reflection about the prominent “class culture” in “British tea.” Therefore, the translator may examine the significance of “British tea” in different texts from the perspective of cultural class reflection, whether it needs to be translated, or both are desirable. Another is the difference between “Black English” and “White English”, all of which are the cultural characteristics behind the language and the differences of these languages, which record the culture of the Times, and also provide new ideas for the research and exploration of language development and translation career.

Since the translation criticism is the proper judgment and the value judgment, then the criticism paradigm and the standard must be diversified. Modern translation criticism especially emphasizes the difference of translated text types, “the content-based text must be the precise transmission of information, the form-based text must be the structure of the content, the infectious text must be the priority to the appeal of the text, and the audio text must be the limitation of non-linguistic media factors (Xie Tianzhen, 2007).” At the same time, the expansion of the field of translation research also makes the criticism mode and standards become diversified. The main part of translation is the language and text. Each text has its central theme, expresses certain thoughts and feelings, and has a complete organizational structure, and the corresponding form of language expression.

Wellek and Warren (1985) have divided the literary text into sound level, phrase level, “word level, viewpoint level and metaphysical level. It comes down to the mode of translation criticism in the cultural context, that is, to evaluate the quality of the translated text as different in the tendency of cultural input and output. That is to say, it is no longer the analysis of language syntax, but more emphasis on the evaluation of the expression and analysis of the same group or different groups in the source language in different cultural contexts.

Table 4. W&W’s translation criticism

Literary Texts		
sound	phrase	word
viewpoint		metaphysics
Quality of Translated Text		
cultural input		cultural output

Actually, there are different cultural absorption and translation and reading experience for different readers and different literary works in different contexts and different situations. This is exactly the effect of translation work under the different translation criticism research paradigm that translation criticism scholars have been pursuing. The emergence of text records the development of language, the research paradigm of translation criticism, and also records the development of translation literature.

In the study of cultural context, there is also the understanding of diachronic and synchronic. And, the study of the cultural context in the translation discussed here focuses more on the criticism and appreciation of the literary translation. It is not so much a study of translation criticism in a cultural context, or it can be placed under a broader cultural background, and can be better understood. Different cultural contexts and different backgrounds, different research and development of translation literature, and then different development of translation criticism literature. In the analysis of target text, whether we can compare the cultural background of the translation and the original text with the era of the literary works and the application of the translation. It will involve the development and change of style or literature, and the study of translation criticism and appreciation also has certain benefits.

Table 5. Translation criticism from target texts

Translation Criticism		
Cultural contexts		Different backgrounds
Translation Literature		Translation Criticism Literature
Cultural backgrounds	The era of literary works	The application of translation

For example, whether the cultural context translation of the poem should be corresponding to the style or the meaning of the text. Walter Fisher pointed three possible tendencies of reciprocal variation in literary translation criticism in Style: The Concepts and The Should in Rhetorical Criticism. It can be applied to the absolute standard of generalization to evaluate literary works, or define and classify literary phenomena according to fixed research methods, or purely discuss the so-called theoretical problems. The study of translation criticism paradigm applied in cultural context can discuss the application and practice of translation criticism paradigm in cultural context on the basis of different theories of literary translation.

The critic has “different understandings and expectations of the theory, and the motivation behind it will lead to the theorists paying attention to different aspects of the translation quality (Liao Qiyi, 2020).” Critics and professional translators are also difficult to reach an agreement on the focus, methods, standards and many other aspects of criticism because of the “huge differences in the needs of the real world.” Lu Xun once said, “A Dream of Red Mansions, because of the eyes of different readers, the scholar

sees the Classic of Changes, the Taoist sees the lingering, the revolutionaries see the full, and the gossip sees the secrets.” The award evaluation of various kinds of translation literature clearly reveals the sharp conflicts of critical patterns and standards caused by different translation concepts.

There are conflicts, so will there be improvements. The former chapters emphasizes the importance of cultural context in translation criticism. While linguistic context and communicative context are two major aspects of cultural context. “Physical world, social world and psychological world are three aspects included in communicative context, among which social world is the key factor in communicative context, and culture is the main aspect affecting social context (Verchueren, 2000).” And literary translation criticism theory is a kind of functional theory, changed the word-to-word corresponding to the original translation of fixed, rigid translation mode, expand the translation behavior, to broaden the translation means and vision, for translation translator and readers to form a good translation behavior category, to reflect the function of text communication. The translation of the text correspondence, more reflects the context of the adaptation in translation. And the contextual compliance is mainly reflected in four aspects: dynamics, contextual relationship compliance, consciousness degree of compliance process and structural object compliance. Wilhelm von Humboldt also mentioned about the relationship between language and culture, “language is the expression of self, but also a reflection of culture.” Humboldt believes that the geographical environment, climate, animals and plants, myths, legends, fables and history will all have an influence on the culture, and then form an environment conforming to the cultural context.

For example, the Chinese expression of “in smooth water” can be translated into “in the silent lake” or “everything is fine”; for the “fishwife”, it can be “the fisherwoman” or “the woman who scolded on street”, and the “odd fish” can be “strange fish” or “monster.” These are the literary translation that conforms to the natural environment and the semantics, as well as the different meaning in different cultural contexts. Considering the humanizing translation, translator will take the meaning of “Pandora’s box” as “jewelries” or “devils”. In the criticism of literary translation, the differences in thinking patterns, values, religious beliefs, geography, culture and humanistic history will all affect people’s cognitive ability of cultural context.

There is nothing only or absolute. Only with the continuous development of translation research can the future related research of translation criticism mode be clearer and clearer. Due to the limitation of space, the translation criticism paradigm in the multicultural context mentioned in this paper is only for directional discussion. However, the research details of the translation criticism paradigm in the cultural context need to be further examined and studied in detail.

4. Conclusion

The research direction of translation criticism is wide and far-reaching, and the discussion in the multicultural context is only a small branch, but it is particularly important. The inheritance and development of culture all rely on cultural exchanges and translation development. The development of translation practice and research results also evolves with the cultural process, and drives the research development of translation criticism. This paper aims to try to combine the study of translation criticism with the context of cultural

development, hoping to enrich the research scope of translation criticism, and provide a brief idea for the multi-dimensional mode exploration of cultural development and translation criticism. It is hoped that the simplification of the relevant research and study of translation criticism can be helpful. On the other hand, this paper aims to express that the research of translation, which can be more close to life and absorb cultural characteristics, so that the relevant research on translation criticism is no longer so difficult and obscure. In other words, the research and development of translation criticism can help, and can further attract more scholars to join this ranks.

The study of translation in the multicultural context promotes cultural development, language inheritance, and is a test of translation practice. It has a profound study on both the translator and the translator's cultural expression and grasp of the source language and the target language. It is hoped that the relevant discussion of translation criticism in the multicultural context mentioned in this text can provide a little learning and exploration idea for the majority of translation research scholars.

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