

切斯特曼翻译伦理模式下《死神永生》英译研究

摘要

《死神永生》是中国当代杰出科幻作家刘慈欣继《三体》和《黑暗森林》后的又一部科幻巨作。由刘宇昆翻译的英译本出版后大获赞誉，并成功斩获 2017 年度“轨迹奖”最佳长篇科幻小说奖，这无疑是中国科幻作品走向世界的又一次成功。

自翻译的文化转向后，翻译伦理在西方译学界实现了沉寂后的回归，成为翻译研究的另一个重要方向。翻译学者开始探索不同文化的伦理哲思与翻译的关系以及译者伦理在翻译活动中的作用。切斯特曼以价值为基础研究翻译伦理，将其分为五种模式，即再现伦理、服务伦理、交际伦理、规范伦理和承诺伦理。其中，再现伦理强调翻译应再现原文文本，原作者意图与源语文化；服务伦理强调译者应为目标语使用者服务，满足目标语读者的阅读需求；交际伦理强调译者应充分发挥自身主体性，做跨文化交流的传播者和促进者；规范伦理强调译者的翻译活动要符合目标语读者的期待，符合自身职业规范；承诺伦理强调译者要秉持基本的职业素养和道德要求，对翻译活动面向的各方和翻译职业负责。

本文以切斯特曼翻译伦理模式为视角，采用对比分析的方法，研究《死神永生》英译本的翻译方法和翻译策略、译者的翻译行为以及翻译过程中的伦理问题，即译者如何通过发挥其主体性，最大限度实现了文化传播的目的。研究得出结论：刘宇昆在《死神永生》的翻译过程中，充分考虑了源语作者、译者、目的语读者、源语文本与目的语文本之间关系的平衡，在最大程度再现源语文本的同时满足了目的语读者的阅读体验，成功地完成了译者的文化沟通任务，体现了译者的伦理责任。具体表现为：一、再现伦理的实现。译者忠实于原文，坚持异化策略，采用音译、零翻译和直译的翻译方法再现了原文，原作者意图及源语文化；二、服务伦理的实现。译者忠诚于译文使用者，坚持归化策略，采用释义法、套译法和转换法让译文流畅地道，可读性强；三、交际伦理的实现。译者充分发挥自身主体性，平衡异化和归化策略，采用替换、劫持和转写达到了文化间的交际目的；四、规范伦理的实现。译者遵守期待规范和职业规范，采用增译、减译和加注的翻译技巧满足了目标语读者的阅读期待，体现译者极强的责任意识；五、承诺伦理的实现。译者恪守职业操守，对原文段落进行重组与分割，体现其优秀的职业

能力和对翻译职业的尊重与承诺。

关键词：切斯特曼翻译伦理模式；《死神永生》英译本；翻译策略和方法；伦理责任；

A Study of C-E Translation of *Death's End*

Based on Chesterman's Models of Translation Ethics

Abstract

Death's End is another science fiction masterpiece written by Liu Cixin, an outstanding contemporary Chinese science fiction writer, after *The Three-Body Problem* and *The Dark Forest*. Its English version translated by Ken Liu was greeted with considerable popular acclamation upon publication, and won the Locus Award for Best Science Fiction Novel in 2017, which is generally reckoned another undoubted success of Chinese science fiction works going to the world.

Since the “cultural turn”, translation ethics, again, after a quiet silence, has become one of the important tendencies of translation studies in the West. And the research focus of translation scholars diverted to the study of relationship between ethics of different cultures and translation, and the role of translator ethics in translation activities accordingly. Based on the study of values, Chesterman proposes his famous five models of translation ethics: Representation, Service, Communication, Norm-based and Commitment. Among them, the ethics of representation emphasizes that translators should represent the original text, the original author's intention and the culture source text represents; the ethics of service stresses that translators should meet the reading needs of target readers so as to provide better service; the ethics of communication holds that translators, as disseminators and promoters in cross-cultural communication, should give full play to their subjectivity; the norm-based ethics goes that translators should measure up the expectations of target readers in conformity to the professional norms; the ethics of commitment reckons that translators should upholds basic professional qualities and ethical requirements, being responsible for both the translation profession and all parties involved in translation activities.

From the perspective of Chesterman's ethics models of translation, the thesis applies method of comparative study in analyzing the translation methods and strategies of the translation of *Death's End* for the exploration of the translator's behavior and ethical problems in the translation activity, that is, how does the

translator achieve the goal of cultural communication by exerting his subjectivity? The conclusion is that in the translation process of *Death's End*, Ken Liu strikes a good balance between the author, translator and target reader as well as the source text and the target text by employing proper translation strategies and methods, accomplishing satisfactory cultural communication and embodying the ethical responsibility, which concurrently satisfies the reading expectation of the receptors and represents the source text to the greatest extent: 1. The accomplishment of representation ethics. Being faithful to the original text, the translator represents the content of the original text, the author's intention and the culture of source language through foreignization and adoption of transliteration, zero translation and literal translation methods; 2. The accomplishment of service ethics. Being loyal to the users of the translation, the translator ensures the smoothness and readability of the version through domestication and employment of the paraphrase, idiomatic translation and shift; 3. The accomplishment of communication ethics. For better intercultural communication, the translator alternatively applies foreignization and domestication in different contexts and uses substitution, hijacking and rewriting, which is the proof that he gives full play to translator's subjectivity; 4. The accomplishment of norm-based ethics. The translator meets the reading expectations of target readers by adopting addition, omission and annotation, representing his sense of responsibility, which is in line with expectancy and professional norms; 5. The accomplishment of commitment ethics. The translator shows his excellent professional competence and respect to the translation profession by rearranging and splitting the original paragraphs, which is in conformity to professional ethics.

Key words: Chesterman's Translation Ethics Models; English Version of *Death's End*; Translation Strategies and Methods; Ethical Responsibility;

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Chapter One Introduction

This chapter, consisting of five parts, gives an introduction to the research: the background, significance, objective, questions, methodology of the research as well as thesis structure of the thesis.

1.1 Research Background

With the advancement of China's strategy of "going out" and the initiative of "One Belt, One Road", China's international status and influence has been further consolidated, and thus Chinese traditional cultures has gained greater recognition and popularity around the world. In this context, further dissemination of Chinese culture through intercultural communication has been taken as the necessity of the age and development of our country, which is one of the important missions of literary translation. However, the present focus of translation study has been on the English translation of classic Chinese literary masterpieces, emasculating and marginalizing the translation of Chinese science fiction literature, an important branch of Chinese literature, in spite of its advantage of cultivating the scientific and cultural literacy of the readers and provoking their thinking about the future of mankind.

Science fiction grounded in reality, is full of audacious imagination and mystical aspects that speaks to the material and cultural life, the spiritual realm, and the future advancement of science and technology. Compared with other Western countries, the development of Chinese science fiction is unsatisfactory. *The Three-Body Problem*, however, caused a huge stir among readers and writers of science fiction after being serialized in the *Science Fiction World* magazine in May 2006. Liu Cixin and Ken Liu wrote and translated *Death's End* respectively, the final book in the series. *Death's End* was published in English in October 2016, it swiftly gained popularity both domestically and overseas. *Death's End* has currently received nominations for the 2017 Hugo Award and won the 2017 Locus Award. Undoubtedly, the success is inseparable to the exceptional translation of the great work, which is a great contribution to Chinese science fiction going global and arousing translator's interest in Chinese literature translation.

Following the “cultural turn”, translation has been assigned additional responsibilities and has received more attentions as a result of the ongoing globalization and the growing demand for cross-cultural communication. The translation process is taken as, by necessity, one involving a variety of interpersonal relationships, including those between the author and the translator, the translator and the reader, the translator and the customer, etc. In fact, how these coexisting relationships are handled and balanced can make direct impacts on the outcomes of translation. Thus, the consideration of translation ethics, which focuses on these human ties, is of great necessity.

1.2 Research Objective and Research Questions

Despite the international recognition of Liu Cixin’s *Three-Body* series novels, there are many excellent science fiction writers and works at home unknown and unfamiliar to the public, especially foreign readers, for translators who only possess superb translation skills are not competent for the role of intermediary in cross-cultural communication. They are required to have a strong sense of translation ethics. It is proved in this thesis that the strong sense of professional responsibility and ethical awareness of translator which makes him a competent intercultural communicator, is the key to the successful translation. It is also hoped that more translators of ethical responsibility can contribute to the diversity of world cultures and the harmonious exchange of cultures of various ethnic groups.

Based on Chesterman’s five models of translation ethics, this thesis probes into the translation strategies, the specific translation methods and techniques the translator adopts as well as the ethical responsibilities he fulfilled in completing the translation activity. The following are the three questions to be discussed:

- (1) What are the translation strategies, methods and techniques the translator adopted in the process of translating?
- (2) How do the strategies and methods represent the ethical responsibilities of the translator from the perspective of Chesterman’s five models of translation ethics?
- (3) How does the translator strike a balance between the original author, the

translator, target readers as well as source text and the target text in pursuit of successful dissemination of the translation by exerting his subjectivity?

1.3 Research Methodology and Data Collection

The research object of this thesis is *Death's End* and the English version by Ken Liu. The method of quantitative and qualitative study as well as comparative analysis are adopted for the exploration of the translation strategies, methods and techniques employed by the translator in his effort to contribute to Chinese science fiction going global in the translation practice. The whole process of the study involves investigating thoroughly the translation strategies, reflecting the models of translation ethics inherent in the translation activity and assessing the communication of the translation based on a comparison of the source and target texts.

Si Shen Yong Sheng and its English version of *Death's End* are the source of the data collection of this study. Through the text peruse to the Chinese and English versions of *Death's End*, the author obtains detailed corpus facilitating the comparative analysis. Also, the worldwide acceptance and popularity of the English version as well as its pivotal place in science fiction literature ensure the convincing quality of the English version the author selects.

1.4 Research Significance

The theoretical significance and the practical relevance are the two key components of this thesis' research significance.

Theoretically, as a burgeoning branch of translation research, the study of the translation ethics of literary works is rarely covered at home. Guided by Chesterman's models of translation ethics, this thesis goes deep into the analysis of the English translation of *Death's End*, which can broaden the perspective of translation ethics research and further promote the integration of translation ethics with specific translation practice.

Practically, despite the fact that more and more Chinese literature has recently been translated and published abroad, the international influence of Chinese literature is still unsatisfactory compared with that of the United States and European countries.

As is known translation ability and cultural literacy of translators who play a pivotal role in the process of Chinese literary works going to the world greatly affect the quality of translations and spread of cultures. However, presently, many translators do not even have basic professional accomplishment. Hence, the study of what kind of translation principles the translator should adhere to and what's should be the priority in weighing the factors involved in the translation activity is of significance. This research is conducted in hope of inspiring translators to explore how to better handle the relationship between all parties in translation activities under the guidance of translation ethics, so as to achieve the ultimate goal of translation- cross-cultural communication.

1.5 Thesis Structure

The first chapter is the introduction to the thesis, including the background, significance, objective and questions to be discussed, methodology and data collection of the study as well as thesis structure. The second chapter mainly provides the information about the English translation of *Death's End*, the awards, etc. highlighting the multiple cultural identities of the translator Ken Liu and the acceptance of his relevant English translations. Then, a relatively comprehensive review and evaluation of the previous studies of English translation of *Death's End* and translation ethics are made. The third chapter expounds the theoretical framework, focusing on the five models of Chesterman's translation ethics. The fourth chapter analyzes in detail how the translator complete the translation task under the guidance of translation ethic models and explores the translation ethics models embodied in the translation practice as well as the communication effects. The fifth chapter, as conclusion of the study, presents the major findings, implications and limitations of the study.

Chapter Two Literature Review

Highlighting the multiple cultural identities of the translator Ken Liu and the reception of his relevant English translations, this chapter, in four parts, mostly gives information about the English translation of *Death's End* and the awards, etc. Also, the previous research on the English translation of *Death's End* and translation ethics is reviewed and evaluated in a very thorough manner.

2.1 An Introduction to *Death's End* and its Translator

This section gives a brief introduction to *Death's End* and its translator, Ken Liu, especially his multiple identities.

2.1.1 A Brief Introduction to *Death's End*

Death's End (Chinese name: 死神永生) is a native Chinese science fiction written by Chinese writer Liu Cixin, who is regarded as the most outstanding representative of modern Chinese science fiction writers. The novel vividly presents us with the individual and collective helplessness of human beings, the alienation of the repressed side of humanity, the panic and madness of human beings in the face of adversity, and the anger and unease of lack of belonging.

It is no exaggeration in saying *Death's End* is the best Chinese science fiction so far. Besides the widespread scientific descriptions, this novel also brims with splendid future imagination and profound humanist thinking. It won the Special Award of the 22nd China Science Fiction Galaxy Award in July 2011. It also won the Best Novel Award of the 2nd Chinese Nebula Awards in December 2011. In 2016, its English translation by Ken Liu was published by Tor Books and won the 2017 Locus Award for Best Novel, an approximately equivalent honor of the Nobel Prize for literary works, which can be deemed as the highest honor to be granted to an science fiction. No doubt it is a successful continuation after winning the Hugo Award by *The Three-Body Problem*, which also proves that the success of the original work and its English translation is not accidental. Then, its influence at home was enhanced, promoting it from a marginalized science fiction novel to a widely popular bestseller.

2.1.2 The Translator-Ken Liu

This section consists of the translator's multiple identities, his translation and reception.

2.1.2.1 Ken Liu's Multiple Identities

Ken Liu, the translator of *Death's End*, has received great attention with the popularity of this book. What is interesting and notable about him is his multiple identities.

In more than one aspect, Ken Liu's multiple identities are shown. Ken Liu is first and foremost a Chinese-American. He arrived in the US at the age of 11, despite being born a Chinese citizen in 1976 in Lanzhou, Gansu Province. He admits that his way of thinking and living is fundamentally American because he was educated in an American-style and grew up in an American cultural environment. On the other hand, he is captivated by and aware of the sense of responsibility for Chinese culture because of his ties to China. Also, he has distinctive cultural identity. He has a bachelor's degree in English from Harvard University and has worked in the IT industry for a while. After being granted J.D. at Harvard Law School, he entered the field of tax law. He used to work as a software developer full-time and is now a full-time lawyer.

Before he began translating, Liu was already a well-known fantasy and science fiction author in addition to his day job. Although only writing part-time, he has received or been nominated for awards like as the Hugo Award, Nebula Award, World Fantasy Award, etc., all of which are among the highest accolades that can be bestowed upon a writer of his caliber. His literature also exhibits a distinct cultural identity. Liu CiXin once commented in his self-statement of 2014 that among the modern science fictions in America, Ken Liu's works left the deepest impression on him----his works differ from the other American ones in the cultural aspect, being a perfect combination of the Western scientific style and rich Eastern elements. Take his novella *The Paper Menagerie* for example. This short story of 2011, which has swept the Nebula, Hugo, and World Fantasy Awards, tells, in the manner of science fiction, a story of a second-generation immigrant, who struggled between his American life and Chinese ancestry and thus regretfully missed the deep love of his mother--- a Chinese

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