

A Contrastive Analysis on Two Chinese Translations of *Love of Life* from the Perspective of the Theory of Advantage

1 Introduction

This section firstly concerns the research background of analyzing *Love of Life*, a widely circulated short story written by Jack London, from the perspective of the theory of advantage proposed by Xu Yuanchong. Secondly, the part of the significance of this study in which the justification and two research questions related to this research are included is presented. Finally, the organizational structure of the entire thesis is narrated so that the logical relationship between the different parts becomes clearer.

1.1 Research Background

With the world-widely cultural collision and fusion, especially between western countries and China, more and more distinguished western novelists and their outstanding pieces have been introduced to China. Jack London is undoubtedly one of them whose works, taking *Love of Life* for example, have received much popularity among Chinese readers. However, the fact that two distantly different languages applied in the two different cultures requires translating of those original novels and thus an avalanche of translation versions of a certain piece of work appeared, which consequently cause the situation that readers may be overwhelmed and confused in the process of finding an appropriate translation of a fascinating novel. *Love of Life*, a prestigious short novel whose author is Jack London, is also embroiled in such a predicament.

1.2 Significance of This Study

As one of the masterpieces of Jack London, *Love of Life* occupies a prominent position in the domain of novel literature because of its pervading description of the profound theme of life and unique style of writing. In this novel, Jack London described an adventure story of a gold digger struggling for survive in a deserted wasteland. In the bitter winter, abandoned by his companion, the protagonist of this novel is finally saved by a couple of members of a scientific expedition after being

tortured by severe cold, starvation, a threatening wolf and cruel nature. Through objective and emotionless description, the author reflects profound theme of life and presents his unique writing style at the same time.

This thesis focuses on conducting a contrastive analysis of the two Chinese translations of *Love of Life* from the prospective of the theory of advantage, trying to illustrate the guiding significance of the theory of advantage in novel translation and evaluate the selected Chinese translation versions at the same time.

1.2.1 A Justification of This Research

Novel occupies an unchallengeable position in world literature and novels from different cultures have received global popularity in the process of cultural collision and fusion. Among those plentiful and prestigious novels, *Love of Life* is one of the most popular masterpieces which was written by Jack London and it has been widely translated and dispersed among Chinese readers who are obsessed with the profound theme of life contained in this novel and its unique writing style.

However, the differences between Chinese and English languages results in that not all Chinese translations of this novel have delivered and conveyed the original text correctly and accurately. This may occur in such aspects as wording, phrasing and discourse restricting. Therefore, contrastively analyzing existing translations of this novel with a developed and advanced literature translation theory is necessitated. Two Chinese translations, translated by Su Fuzhong and co-translated by Wan Zi and Yu Ning respectively, are chosen as materials to be analyzed under Xu Yuanchong's theory of advantage. Additionally, the guiding significance of the theory of advantage in novel translation could be further proofed.

1.2.2 Research Questions

After explaining the significance and necessity of conducting this research, the feasibility of this thesis is also need to be considered, and the two following research questions concerning the research are supposed to be solved in this thesis.

- 1). How does the theory of advantage significantly instruct the novel translation?
- 2). Which one between the two selected translations better meets the requirements of the theory of advantage?

1.3 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter is introduction part in which research background, significance of this study, theoretical approach and

structure of the thesis are included. The second chapter concerns literature review. The third and the fourth chapters involve the theoretical framework and contrastive analysis of the selected translations respectively. Finally, the chapter of conclusion is presented.

2 Literature Review

Cultural collision and fusion witnesses the phenomenon that literature works are no longer restricted geographically and culturally. One who lives in oriental countries could easily get access to occidental literature works in the form of translations. Therefore, translations of literature works have been paid attention to by many scholars and researchers. This section examines the research status of Chinese translations of *Love of Life* of former researches. Based on the previous researches, the consciousness of innovation of this paper is proposed.

The study topic relating to Chinese translations of *Love of Life* has not stirred widespread concerns among academic scholars. From 2010 to 2012, all the available references suggest that only Zhang Zhe has paid attention to Chinese translations of *Love of Life* and has published two researches of this topic.

In accordance with existing references, only Zhang Zhe “tries a new way to apply quantitative analysis to evaluation of literature translations, that is, to set stylistic markedness grade indices, and to apply the combination of both stylistic markedness theory and Numerical Equivalence Value method to judge the stylistic conformity degree of three translation versions of *Love of life*^{Error! Reference source not found.}” Besides, Zhang Zhe “uses two translations of *Love of Life*, a work frequently evaluated by others as her target to discuss the stylistic conformity degree compared to source text in terms of wording, image, rhetorics and cultural markedness^{Error! Reference source not found.}P81-84.”

Entitled the prestigious reputation of the greatest person who translates Chinese poetry into English and French, Dr. Xu Yuanchong is renowned for his English and French translations of ancient Chinese poems and lyrics. Both epistemologically and methodologically, the theory of advantage plays a leading role in Xu’s theoretical system of translation. By now, there are rare references which analyze and research translations of the literary genre of novel from the perspective the theory of advantage. More importantly, the field that analyzing Chinese translations of *Love of*

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