Translation Definitions in Different Paradigms

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Abstract

In the field of translation studies, owing to the factors such as the interests of scholar, cultural and historical reasons, scholars usually choose a definition of translation as the research orientation in a certain period of time. That is, as a scholastic community, they study under the same paradigm. Since the definition of translation not only describes and interprets the basic properties of translation, but also determines its connotation and extension, it is the core and basic part of translation studies. From the academic perspective and on the basis of Thomas Samuel Kuhn's paradigm theory, this article discusses the definitions of translation in the paradigms of translation studies. It chooses the definitions of translation proposed by the most famous theorists to analyze. And, the mainly two turns and the new trend of contemporary translation studies are attributed into three paradigms (linguistic paradigm, cultural paradigm, and social and psychological paradigm) to discuss. By a careful research, the article comes to a conclusion that the definition of translation determines the scope of translation studies. With the widening or narrowing of the definition in question, the study scope orients accordingly.

Key words: Definition of translation; Translation studies; Paradigm

INTRODUCTION

In *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Thomas Samuel Kuhn puts forward his paradigm theory which relates closely to normal science. Paradigm originates from one or some famous people's achievements and Kuhn maintains that achievements which share the following two characteristics can be referred to as paradigms: firstly, the achievement is "sufficiently unprecedented to attract an enduring group of adherents away from competing modes of scientific activity"; secondly, the achievement is "sufficiently open-ended to leave all sorts of problems for the redefined group of practitioners to solve" (Kuhn, 1962, 1970, p.10).

On the basis of the theory, this article analyzes the definitions of translation in different paradigms. Throughout the history of translation studies, hundreds of theorists have pointed out various kinds of definitions for translation. They defined translation from the perspectives of object, character, purpose, role, etc. And the concept of translation, therefore, is developing and improving for years. According to *Dictionary of Translation Studies*, translation is an extraordinarily broad notion and can be comprehended in many different respects:

> One may talk of translation as a process or a product, and identify such sub-types as literary translation, technical translation, SUBTITLING and MACHINE TRANSLATION; moreover, while more typically it just refers to the transfer of written texts, the term sometimes also includes INTERPRETING (Shuttleworth & Cowie, 1997, 2004, p.181).

Although there are many definitions for translation and their understandings of it are so different, only a few of them are recognized and favored by the theorists in the realm of contemporary translation studies. Therefore, the definition of translation discussed in this article is in wide sense. And in the following, most famous and representative definitions will be chosen to analyze and with aims to see why they are so popular and how they influence the paradigms of translation studies.

1. TRANSLATION DEFINITIONS IN LINGUISTIC PARADIGM

As mentioned above that according to Kuhn's paradigm theory, contemporary translation theories can be attributed into three paradigms. As the first paradigm and to some extent, the first stage, the linguistic paradigm demonstrates the role of translation from the perspective of language. Under the leading of this paradigm, translation is always regarded as the exchange of message between languages. The following part will introduce the representative definitions of translation at that time. They are, of course, based on Roman Jakobson's division of the three types of translation (intralingual, interlingual and intersemiotic translation) and define translation from the perspective of structuralism.

1.1 John. Cunnison Catford's Definition

Catford attempts to describe translation in terms of a specific linguistic theory. In his opinion, the theory of translation is concerned with a relation between languages; therefore it is unseasonable to study translation without considering its relationship with linguistics. And he believes that translation should be guided by linguistics. These ideas are best expressed in his work *A Linguistic Theory of Translation*. In the beginning of the book, he proposes: "Translation is an operation performed on languages: a process of substituting a text in one language for a text in another. Clearly, then, any theory of translation must draw upon a theory of language— a general linguistic theory." (Catford, 1965, p.1) Here, the general linguistic theory mainly indicates M.A.K. Halliday's systemic functional linguistics.

From the perspective of functional linguistics, he defines translation as: "the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL)" (p.20). There are two key words in this definition: textual material and equivalent. To begin with textual material, it means only one level or some levels of a language and it is used here to stand for a part or some parts of the source text. In normal conditions, it is quite difficult to translate an entire text, so textual material, to some extent, reflects just a part or some parts of the source text for it is equivalent only on the level of lexis and grammar. This raises the question of equivalence. In general, a TT is not a complete translation of its ST, but a replacement of the ST by TL equivalents, then what is the nature and conditions of translation equivalence, and how can we find the TL equivalents? Obviously, equivalence is the central task of the theory. In the same manner, Catford demonstrates equivalence from linguistic angle. First of all, he divides translation into different types in terms of extent, levels and ranks. For extent, there are full translation and partial translation. From the perspective of level, there are total translation and restricted translation. Considering rank, there are free translation, literal translation and word-for-word translation. Then he makes a further distinction between textual equivalence and formal equivalence.

> Textual equivalence is any TL text or portion of text which is observed on a particular occasion, to be the equivalent of a given SL text or portion of text. A formal correspondent, on the other hand, is any TL category (units, class, structure, element of structure, etc.) which can be said to occupy, as nearly as possible, the 'same' place in the 'economy' of the TL as the given SL category occupies in the SL. (p. 27)

On the basis of these, he finally defines textual translation equivalent as "any TL form (text or portion of text) which is observed to be the equivalent of a given SL form (text or portion of text), and that portion of a TL text which is changed when and only when a given portion of the SL text is changed" (pp.27-28).

There are three kinds of limits in Catford's definition of translation.

Firstly, Catford regards translation studies as a sub branch of applied linguistics. In the light of the present view, this point hinders the development of translation as translation studies has been acknowledged to be an independent discipline.

Secondly, he viewes translation as a uni-directional process. "Relations between languages can generally be regarded as two-directional, though not always symmetrical. Translation, as a process, is always uni-directional: it is always performed in a given direction. 'from' a *Source Language* 'into' a *Target Language*." (p.20). As a matter of fact, only regard translation as a uni-directional process is not enough, for it is a quite complicated process.

Thirdly, he emphasizes on equivalence, but only the equivalence on the level of surface structure of language, and pays little attention to the deep semantic relations between languages. This might be related to the development of linguistics at that time.

The last but the weakest one is that "his model never goes beyond the sentence to incorporate the text as a unit of meaning" (Fawcett, 1998, in Baker, 1998, 2000, 2004, p.121).

1.2 Eugene Albert. Nida's Definition

Nida's views of translation are mainly embodied in *Toward a Science of Translating* and *The Theory and Practice of Translation*, in the former work, he regards translation as a scientific subject and points out that "the transference of a message from one language to another is a valid subject for scientific description" (Nida, 1964, p.3). In the latter one, He proposes the concept of dynamic equivalence and defines translation as "the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style" (p. 12).

In his opinion, translation is an art; the best translations are those which are not usually viewed as translation but the original. And he believes, in order to achieve this, it is

quite important to consider of the response of the receptor in translating. He further proposes that the fundamental difference between the traditional translating and the new concept of translating is due to their focuses. The older focus in translation studies is the form of the message, whereas the new focus is the response of the receptor. Here the receptor refers to the average reader. The consideration of the responses of readers is the most important part of his respectable principle——Dynamic Equivalence. In his view, the principle of translation is to make the readers of translated text response the same as the original readers. Moreover, Nida recommends new attitudes with respect to receptor language and proposes new attitudes concerning the source language. He believes that "each language has its own genius, and anything that can be said in one language can be said in another, unless the form is an essential element of the language."(p.4) Regardless of the difference between culture and language, one can translate the works through the process of finding equivalent words and recombining them in a new form. Then on discussing the nature of translating, he defines translating as the "closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style" (p.12). This definition contains three signification——the closest, natural and equivalence. From these points, the translators need to find the closest words and recombine them in a proper way opposing to translationese. The proposition of Dynamic Equivalence plays a great role in translation study and it is an improvement for the traditional translation. Unlike the traditional Free Translation, it demands the translation reproducing the meaning of the source text to the largest extent.

In addition, Nida seeks to establish a scientific theory for translations studies and he introduces the linguistic theory transformational generative grammar into his studies. He regards the translations as surface structure, whereas the source texts are underlying kernels. For the sake of dynamic equivalence, translators may render the works into different forms and the styles according to their focuses in different environments. On the basis of his studies, he also conceives translating as a process of communication. Translating is not only a kind of linguistic activity but also a kind of cultural interaction. Jin Di gives a great praise to Nida's this understanding of translation:

> The great contribution Eugene Nida made was to shift the focus from the comparison of a pair of texts, the source-language and the target-language texts, to a comparison of the two communication process involved. As the message in a communication is carried by means of the text (written or oral), the new method of comparison does not disregard the important of the text, but the shift of focus implies the consideration of various linguistic and cultural complications that can affect the receptor's perception of the message carried by the text. (Jin Di, 1997, p.231, my translation)

From the analysis above, it comes to the conclusions: the proposition of dynamic equivalence helps us to view translation from a new perspective. The consideration of the receptors' responses is a milestone in translation studies as it shifts the previous author-oriented theory to reader-oriented theory. Besides, Nida convinces the ideas anything that can be said in one language can be said in another and the cognitive ability of a particular nation is not restricted by its language structure. This is a beautiful response to the persons who stress meaning cannot be reproduced and view translation as a worthless job. Despite of the contributions, Nida's views on translation also have limitations. His definition of translation is restricted in the field of linguistics and still focuses on equivalence. Although the Dynamic Equivalence has lots of advantages, "the word dynamic is usually misunderstood, and for some people, it only refers to the thing having influences."(Liu Chongde, 2003, p.160). The Dynamic Equivalence is replaced by the Functional Equivalence in later. What's more, according to Wang Dongfeng, Nida's translation theory is not a "general translation theory" but a "religious translation theory"; the principle—"let the readers of translated text get the same response as the original readers should not be viewed as the perfect criterion" for it is not in line with culture (Wang Dongfeng, 2000, p.203). In addition, over focusing on intercommunication and understandability of the translation restrict its applied scope, e.g. it is not fit for literary translation. To put understandability to the first place can lead to the simplifying of words and make the literature works un-literature.

1.3 Peter Newmark's Definition

When it comes to talking about contemporary western translation theorists of the linguistic group, in addition to Catford and Nida, Newmark is the person that must be mentioned. Newmark emphasizes on text analysis, from the viewpoint of him, the meaning of the text is extremely abundant. Focusing on text is the pillar of his theoretical framework. What is translation? According to him, "often, though not by any means always, it is rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the author intended the text" (Newmark, 1988, 2001, p.5). In his opinion, translating a text should begin with a detailed analysis of a text, such as the intention of the text and of the translator, its readership, attitude, to name just a few. In addition, Newmark also considers translation as "a craft consisting in the attempt to replace a written message and/or statement in one language by the same message and/or statement in another language" (Newmark, 1982, 2001, p.7).

Newmark makes two greatest contributions to translation studies. The first one is his defining and illustrating of semantic translation and communicative translation. According to him, the semantic translation is inclined to the source language emphasis and mainly confined to expressive texts, whereas communicative translation is inclined to the target language emphasis and

mainly confined to informative or vocative texts. And we should not divide the two, but see them as a whole. The second one is his understanding of translation. It, to some extent, can be seen as a kind of philosophic cognition. As far as Newmark is concerned, there are no absolute in translation and everything is conditioned. Therefore, he never goes extremism and always gives his own definition of some notions in a conditioned sense. For example, when discussing what can be regarded as a unit of translation, he suggests that we cannot simply regard the whole text as the unit of translation. Meanwhile, we cannot deny that a whole text can sometimes, to some degree and under certain circumstance, be regarded as a unit of translation. From the perspective of him, the unit of translation is "a sliding scale, responding according to other varying factors and still ultimately a little unsatisfactory" ((Newmark, 1988, 2001, p.67). As responding to the traditional duel between translatability and untranslatability, he makes his position: "everything is translatable up to a point, but there are often enormous difficulties" (p.73). Again, he takes a compromising attitude, not going extremism.

Although Newmark's definition and knowledge of translation have its own progressive significance, from the analysis above, it is obvious for us to see his understanding of translation is still restricted in linguistic level, his focus of translation is still equivalence, and what is worse, his approaches for translation studies are still dichotomies and taxonomies.

2. TRANSLATION DEFINITIONS IN CULTURAL PARADIGM

The definitions of translation listed below have been selected. They are chosen in accordance with two criteria. Firstly, they are proposed by the most famous and representative theorists in the field. Secondly, they themselves have quite strong influence on translation studies.

2.1 André Lefevere's Definition

Belgian scholar Lefevere is recognized as one of the leading theoreticians of his time in the field of literary translation. His work *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* is a classic of translation studies. In this book, Lefevere views translating as a process of rewriting and points out that rewriting is basically determined by two factors—ideology and poetics. Unlike the traditional translation theorists, Lefevere shifts the focus of translation to the relationships among politics, culture and translation, which present a new perspective for translation study.

In the preface of this book, Lefevere states that "translation is, of course, a rewriting of an original text" (Lefevere, 1992, 2004a, p.xii). In his opinion, the readers of literature can be divided into three groups:

professional readers, translators who sometimes belong to professional readers and non-professional readers. The profession readers can read literature works directly, whereas the non-professional readers, who constitute the great majority of readers, basically depend on translation to understand the works. To non-professional readers, magazines, newspapers, journals, articles, films or TV and so on are the main channels to meet literature. That is to say, the literature work they contacts are almost rewritings. Rewriting plays an important part in their daily life. Therefore Lefevere puts forward an idea that "in the past, as in the present, rewriters created images of a writer, a work, a period, a genre, sometimes even a whole literature" and he also points out that "the basic process of rewriting is at work in translation, historiography, anthologization, criticism, editing, etc". (pp.5, 9)

Rewriting is closely connected with ideology and poetics. What is ideology? According to Jameson's definition, "ideology is not limited to the political sphere; rather, it would seem to be that grillwork of form, convention, and belief which orders our actions."(Jameson, cited in Lefevere, 1992, 2004a, p.16) In *Literary Theory: an Introduction*, Terry Eagleton writes that "by 'ideology' I mean, roughly, what the ways in which what we say and believe connects with the power-structure and power-relations of the society we live in" (Eagleton, 1996, p.13). As to poetics, derived from Aristotle's Poetics,

> It refers to the inventory of genres, themes and literary devices that comprise any literary system. In translation studies, the term also refers to the role a literary system plays within the larger social system and /or how it interacts with other (foreign) literary or semiotic sign systems. As a comparative field, the poetics of translation is concerned with the relationship between the poetics of a source text in its own literary system and that of the target text in a different system. (Gentzler, 1998, in Baker, 1998, 2000, 2004, p.167)

In Lefevere's opinion, a poetics is comprised of two parts. One is "an inventory of literary devices, genres, motifs, prototypical characters and situations, and symbols"; the other is "a concept of what the role of literature is, or should be, in the social system as whole." (Lefevere, 1992, 2004a, p.16)

Rewriting is basically determined by ideology and poetics. From Lefevere's point of view, literature is a subsystem of culture. The introduction of system into literary theory can trace back to the description of Russian Formalist theorists. According to them, a society provides the environment of a literary system. In accordance with the logic of the culture in the society, the literary system and the other systems influence and interact each other. Literature is, thus, controlled by two factors. One is inside the literary system and is represented by "the professional" such as critics, teachers, and translators and so on; the other called "patronage" is outside of that system and contains three elements: "an ideological component, an economic component and a status component" (pp.14-16). Basing on these ideas, Lefevere proposes rewriting is

constrained by four aspects which are ideology, poetics, universe of discourse and language. Furthermore, he presents ideology and poetics are the two factors which greatly determine the image of a work of literature.

As a social phenomenon, translation is inevitably influenced by the ideology and the poetics dominating in the society. It is indispensible for a translator to rewrite the text according to the requirement of the society. In most cases, the influence by ideology is bigger than by poetics and linguistics, thereby it is hard to find a complete equivalence between the source text and the target text. Besides, the translator's works have to meet the need of the powerful institutions. Under these circumstances, what the translator needs to do is to rewrite.

The introduction of rewriting is a great contribution to translation study. A translation, in essence, is a rewriting. On one hand, literature is composed of words. As is well known, the meanings and forms of words are changing with the development of society. In order to help readers understand the works of literature, translators have to change the forms, or paraphrase them. On the other hand, as a social phenomenon, translation is under the control of the government and some organizations. Translators are compelled to rewrite the text according to the purposes of these powerful institutions and try their best to make the target text fit for the mainstream culture. Translations, on the whole, are rewritings of culture. Rewriting plays a great role in our society. Due to it, cross-cultural communication is successfully made, meanwhile, new concepts, new genres, new devices were born.

Although Lefevere provides a new perspective to analyze translation, certain limitations can be found in his ideas. Lefevere realizes the roles of ideology, poetics, universe of discourse and language to translation, however, only focus on ideology and poetics is a major limitation. In fact, besides these factors there are also lots of factors which control rewriting, such as high-technology, receptors, culture of source language and so on. In addition, the book mainly talks about the literature rewriting. As a matter of fact, all the translations are rewritings.

Besides the views on translation above, in *Translation/ History/Culture: a Sourcebook*, Lefevere also agrees with Petrus Danielus Huetius's definition of translation and gives it's a quite great appraise:

> A translation, says Petrus Danielus Huetius in a text translated in this collection, is a "text written in a well-known language which refers to and represents a text in a language which is not as well known." This, to my mind, is the most productive definition of a translation made within the tradition represented here, simply because it raises many, if not all of the relevant questions at once. (Lefevere, 1992, 2004b, p.1)

That's to say, though Lefevere also views translation as a process of language transference, he emphasizes more on the influence of cultural factors to translation.

2.2 Susan Bassnett's Definition

Bassnett, a scholar and professor in the Centre for Translation and Comparative Cultural Studies at Warwick University, wrote over 20 books and has great influence on the study of translation. She won great reputation for her cultural views on translation and is well known for expanding the field of Translation Studies.

In Bassnett's opinion, translation is not only a kind of pure lingual activity but also a kind of communication intra-culture and inter-culture. In other words, translation is not a mere linguistic transfer but a cross-cultural activity. She proposes that the cultural aspects should be taken into consideration for the study of translation, especially for the equivalence of source text and target text.

Bassnett's views on translation can be reflected in her two books: the *Translation Studies* and *Constructing Cultures: Essays on Literary Translation*. In *Translation Studies*, Bassnett mainly talks about the central issues of translation, the history of translation and specific problems of literary translation. As to equivalence the central issue of linguistic study, she points out that there is no full equivalence exists. Language and culture are two interwoven concepts. While there are no two identical cultures, there are no two languages sufficiently similar either. Owing to the gap between cultures and languages, no exact sameness can be produced in the process of translation. Later on, she studies the process of decoding and encoding and proposes untranslatability is inevitable. For in the process, equivalence is achieved usually on certain levels but not all levels, and something is doomed to be lost whereas something else gained. In *Constructing Cultures: Essays on Literary Translation*, Susan Bassnett agrees with Andre Lefevere and considers translation not as a mere linguistic transfer but a cross-cultural activity. And together with Lefevere, she points out that "there are different types of faithfulness that may be adequate in different situations (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1998, 2000, p.3)". She moves on to state that there are two important elements about the different situations: the context of history and that of culture. This idea then diverts the focus away from the linguistic text itself to its environment, or we say, to its context. In brief, from Bassnett's attitude toward translation, it is obvious that she emphasizes on the factor of culture.

Besides, on the basis of cultural turn, Bassnett also proposes translation turn. In the essays *The Translation Turn in Cultural Studies*, she summarizes development of cultural turn during 1970s and 1980s and mainly analyzes Leuven group's polysystems approach which stresses the correlations between the translated works and the targets culture. Then, she proposes translation turn in culture studies. In her eyes, translation is "a primary method of imposing meaning while concealing the power relations that lie behind the production of that meaning (p.136)".

2.3 Else Vieira's and Edwin Gentzler's Definitions

Both Vieira and Gentzler and have proposed their definitions of translation by studying translation in fiction writings. Vieira, the Brazilian translation studies theorist, is the first person to realize the fictional turn.

> In her essay (In)visibilidades na tradução: Troca de olhares teóricos e ficcionais [(In)visibilities in Translation: exchanging Theoretical and Fictional Perspectives], Vieira coins the phrase the "fictional turn" in translation studies to refer to this phenomenon. She writes, "Denominaria esta etapa o fictional turn dos Estudos da Tradução" [I call this stage the fictional turn in translation studies] (Vieira, 1995—1996a, p.50, cited in Gentzler, 2008, pp.108-109).

Focusing on the translations in fiction works, and on the basis of the translation theories proposed by Bassnett, Venuti etc., Vieira rethinks the definition of translation. Unlike the traditional view which emphasized fidelity, Vieira regards translation as a creative activity. She further proposes translator is never invisible, on the contrary, always visible through his translation----writing himself into the text.

Gentzler on the other hand takes an unusual route to discussing the situation of translation in Latin American, he focuses on the wealth of fiction writers and argues that "translation in South America is much more than a linguistic operation; rather, it has become of one of the means by which an entire continent has come to define itself" (Gentzler, 2008, p.108). He mainly analyzes three authors' works: Jorge Luis Borges's *The Translator of 1001 Nights*, García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and Mario Vargas Llosa's *The Storyteller.* "For Borges, translation is more than a metaphor for the cultural conditions of the twentieth century; it is the determining aesthetic characteristic of all writing from antiquity to the present." (p.110) Borges dissects the basic concepts of translation in the past such as faithfulness and equivalence. In his opinion, total integrity is impossible for some translations are actually not the translations of the original texts but the translations of the translations. Márquez, in his writing Melquíades story, shows translation is the key for us to understand the people in the world. In the fictitious translation, Llosa "presents a translation model that develops a cultural context within the story to allow fields of association to arise that may allow for understanding or access without assimilation" (p.130). By connecting their ideas with Derrida and Benjamin's views, Gentzler therefore makes a conclusion: translation blending together with fiction and theory offers a new perspective for us to see the world. Different understanding of a work can be all called translation.

2.4 Walter Benjamin's and Jacques Derrida's Definitions

Benjamin and Derrida are the forerunners of deconstruction. Their ideas on translation are rewarded and respected as the theoretical basis for fictional study in Latin America. As Benjamin's *the Task of the Translator* and Derrida's *What is a "Relevant" Translation* are recognized as the cornerstones of deconstructive translation study, the two essays will be analyzed in the following section with aims to see their definitions of translation.

Benjamin's essay *the task of translator* is not only a masterpiece for literary translation studies, but also one of the representatives of post-modernism theories. It is in this essay that he demonstrates his main ideas on translation: translation is a part of afterlife; it gives new life to the original. Owing to translation, the foreign texts can survive. Besides, he suggests that it is unnecessary to consider the reactions of the receivers. Just as he says in the essay: "no poem is intended for the reader, no picture for the beholder, no symphony for the listener."(Benjamin, 1999, p.279; Tr. Chen) Besides, he proposes the transparency of translation and appeals for literal translation:

> A real translation is transparent; it does not cover the original, does not block its light, but allows the pure language, as though reinforced by its own medium, to shine upon the original all the more fully. This may be achieved, above all, by a literal rendering of the syntax which proves words rather than sentences to be the primary element of the translator. For if the sentence is the wall before the language of the original, literalness is the arcade. (Net.1.)

Bush gives the highest praise to Benjamin and points out "Walter Benjamin is only really concerned with translation that reaches out to the pure language which is potentially present in select body of writing in any language" (Bush in Baker; Baker, 1998, 2000, 2004, p.194). For Benjamin, pure language is hidden within every text, and the task of the translator is to release the potentiality of the original text and to make the seed of the original resurrect and mature. Translation, therefore, gives new life to the original. Besides, he proposes that it is not the task of Benjamin's translator to seek for a likeness of the original because the original undergoes changes.

In the paper *What Is a "Relevant" Translation*, Derrida proposes his definition of translation: "the relation of the letter to the spirit, of the body of literalness to the ideal interiority of sense is also the site of the passage of translation, of this conversion that is called translation" (Derrida, 2001, p.184; Tr. Venuti).

In order to understand this definition well, it is necessary to analyze a famous concept put forward by Derrida----différance. Différance is connected with the French word différer which refers to both to defer and to differ. On the basis of Saussure's description of language, Derrida observes that meaning made by language depends on systematic play of difference. And he does not regard meaning as presence, but difference. Since meaning cannot precede difference, there can be "no pure, totally unified origin of meaning" (Davis, 2001, 2004, p.15). So there can be no fixed source text for a translation, for the

source text is endowed with multiple meanings and inter-textual crossings. Therefore, translation is not work but actually process.

3. TRANSLATION DEFINITIONS IN SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PARADIGM

Gentzler demonstrates the psychological turn in his new work *Translation and Identity in the Americas* in detail. The turn is closely related to the new insights and ideas of the researches by the translation scholars in the Americas. American here is in a broad sense, besides the United States, it also refers to Canada, Latin America, Brazil, and the Caribbean. In the survey of the different social groups in these areas and its study of the geographic, social, political and cultural aspects of translation, the scholars found translation is not a marginal activity in the society but a quite important activity which plays great roles. Based on their studies and the researches from the scholars in linguistics, philosophy, literary theory, feminism, ethnic studies, and cultural studies in the 1990s and early 2000s, they found that translation plays great role in the formation of identity of a nation.

3.1 Sherry Simon's and Emily Apter's Definitions

Canadian translation theorist Simon, in the book *Translating Montreal: Episodes in the Life of a Divided City*, challenges the deficiencies of earlier definitions of translation and proposes new definition. Unlike the previous theorists who studied translation in the places with one dominant language, she chooses Montreal (a cosmopolitan city with double language background and history of language inequality) as the place to carry out research. Based on the analysis of multicultural life in the city and the hybrid forms of communication there, she puts forward translation has strong social role. Translation plays great role in communication and manipulates cultural exchange. In her view, some translations are "manoeuvres that represent shifts in cultural history or which consciously exploit the limit, raising the temperature of cultural exchange (Simon, 2006, p.16). In other words, translation influences the limits of cultural exchange. Whether communications attenuate or persist culture difference is determined by translation. Complying the developing trend of translation studies in the Americas, she then offers a new definition: "I give translation an expanded definition in this book: writing that is inspired by the encounter with other tongues, including the effects of creative interference". (p.17)

Apter expands the boundaries of translation studies. In *The Translation Zone: A New Comparative Literature*, She uses the term zone to refer to a theoretical mainstay, one that broad enough to include the aftershocks of translation. She further explains that "a broad intellectual topography that is neither the property of a single nation, nor an amorphous condition associated with postnationalism, but rather a zone of critical engagement that connects the 'l' and the 'n' of transLation and TransNation" (Apter, 2006, p.5). The concept of the zone has threefold meaning: a geographical space, social-political zone and psychological repercussions. Translation is connected with not only our culture, society, economy and politics, but also our psychological conditions. It is an indispensible part of our life. On the one hand, translation is influenced by the government, organizations, social groups, institutions etc.; on the other hand, it reforms the organizations, reconstructs our culture. Apter therefore regards translation as "a means of repositioning the subject in the world and in the history", "a means of rendering self-knowledge foreign to itself", "a way of denaturalizing citizens", and "a significant medium for subject re-formation and political change" (p. 6).

3.2 Edwin Gentzler's New Definition

Based on the recent studies in the Americas, especially multiculturalism in the United States, feminism and theater in Canada, Cannibalism in Brazil, the fictional turn in Latin America and border writing in the Caribbean, Gentzler comes to the conclusion: translation is not a marginal activity in the America but one of the central activities there which plays great roles in forming a nation's identity. He suggests including social and psychological aspects to broaden the definition of translation.

To begin with the multiculturalism in the United States, although the United States today seems to be a monolingual society with only one official language----English, various kinds of languages exist there. In the process of forming a melting-pot, translation plays a great role. Owing to translation, people of different cultural background can understand each other and come all together to form a new nation.

Turning next to Canada, Genztler pays close attention to its feminism and theater. Translating for theater and feminist translation are quite prosperous and vigorous and have far reaching impact in the society. The translator for theater has a wide range of choices for dialects, archaisms and modernism, sociological variations etc. The translator's very involvement in the selection of language and the booming of translation for theater have two great significances: in the first place, the language of translation becomes the important tool for "empowering regional groups and articulating repressed social and political concerns"; in the second place, translation moves from "the margins of cultural formation to a more central position" (Gentzler, 2008, p.47). As to the proliferation of feminist translation, it provides new perspectives and develops a new paradigm for translation studies. Traditional translation theory is filled with binary

dichotomies such as the dichotomies between source text and target text, primary and secondary, fidelity and infidelity, center and peripheral, author and imitator. However, with the improving of cognition, the binary dichotomy is hindering the development of translation studies. Taking fidelity for instance, although it was seen as the cardinal principle of translation for a long time and is still pursued by many scholars nowadays, it is impossible for a translator to translate in a completely faithful way. For translation, completely fidelity is inexistent. "A famous Swedish poet and man of letters of the 19th century once said: 'Beautiful translations are like beautiful women, that is to say, they are not always the most faithful ones'." (Malmqvist, 2006, p.19) The feminist in Canada also makes two significant contributions: firstly, they "reshape the field of associations from which translators conceptualize their options, which in turn has had an impact upon the way theorists conceptualize the role of translation in cultural formation"; secondly, they defines translation in another way. They redefine translation not as "form reproduction or opposition but rather as a form of productive writing in and of itself, meshed or interconnected with 'original' writing, thus making such secondary status or such legal contracts unnecessary." (Gentzler, 2008, pp.51, 54)

In addition, by dealing with the cannibalism in Brazil, he redefines translation as recreation. He presents the views of cannibalism by contemporary translation studies at first. Then, he traces back to the history of Oswald de Andrade's Cannibalist Manifesto in 1928. He points out the Brazilians' concept of cannibalism is quite different from the Europeans' understanding. The cannibalistic theory greatly influences the translation studies in Brazil. By examining the work of De Campos brother, Haroldo and Augusto, Gentzler puts forward translation in Brazil is rewriting and recreation, which leads to "new definition of translation as transcreation and transculturalization" (p.82).

Furthermore, Gentzler takes an unusual route to discussing the situation of translation in Latin American, he focuses on the wealth of fiction writers and arguing that "translation in South America is much more than a linguistic operation; rather, it has become of one of the means by which an entire continent has come to define itself" (p.108). He analyzes three authors' works: Jorge Luis Borges's *The Translator of 1001 Nights*, García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and Mario Vargas Llosa's *The Storyteller*. Borges dissects the basic concepts of translation in the past such as faithfulness and equivalence. In his opinion, totally faithful is impossible for some translations are actually not the translations of the original texts but the translations of the translations. Márquez, in his writing Melquíades story, shows translation is the key for us to understand the people in the world. In the fictitious translation, Llosa "presents a translation model that develops a cultural context within

the story to allow fields of association to arise that may allow for understanding or access without assimilation" (p.130). By connecting their ideas with Derrida and Benjamin's views, Gentzler therefore makes a conclusion: translation blending together with fiction and theory offers a new perspective for us to see the world. It is translation that forms our identity.

From the analysis of the border writing in the Caribbean, Gentzler finds the border writing there is a kind of creative writing which resists to the language and cultural oppression of the Europeans. In the process of self-translating, the Caribbean writers usually find ways to manipulate the ideology and poetics of the English so as to introduce creole sound, cultural traits, and previously invisible histories etc. Through their writings and translations, the borders are crossed. The writers make their voice and find their identity by translation. What's more, translation has become a way to develop a national style.

To sum up, translation is not a marginal activity but a primary activity in the Americas. The history of translation is a history of identity formation. Translation plays a great role in developing a nation's culture, constructing its image and forming its self identity.

4. SUMMARY

From analysis above, it is easy to get a clear understanding on the main theorists' definitions of translation in different paradigms. In linguistic paradigm, the core issue of the definition is equivalence. Whether uses replacement or transformation, whether focuses on author or reader or takes text as center, whether emphasizes on reception of target text reader or source text reader, whether proposes functional equivalence or dynamic equivalence, the main propose is the equivalence. In cultural paradigm, translation is usually seen as a rewiring. And the central issue is to study the mutual influence of cultural aspects such as poetics, ideology and patron. Besides, translation is also viewed as reading and understanding. As a fiction usually has multiple plots and can be lead to multiple results, all understanding can be called translation, not merely the version to the original one. And what's more, to some extent, there is even no original one; all texts are translations of translations. In social and psychological paradigm, as psychological aspect is introduced into translation studies. Translation is not only connected with text, but also with a nation's identity.

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