A Report on Translation of *Go Princess Go* from the Perspective of Feminist Translation Theory

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Abstract

This paper is a translation practice report on three parts of the long-form online novel *Go Princess Go*, selected as material for translation. This time-travel online novel, written by Xiancheng, is a major pioneer of Chinese online crossover novels because of the change in the gender of the crossover victim. This paper takes gender consciousness contrast as the focus of translation, uses feminist translation theory for case analysis, and makes a preliminary discussion on how to select translation strategies to translate female-oriented online novels.

Keywords: *Go Princess Go*, online novel, crossover novel, feminist translation theory

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction to the "Traversing" Online Novels

Chinese online traversing novels can be traced back to the 1980s and 1990s, and really exploded all over the Internet starting from 2010. In the publishing industry, male time travel novels are in no way analogous to female ones, which have progressively developed into a subgenre of female romance novels. Male traversing novels are not readily accepted by the market since males tend to consume more logically while women tend to consume more emotionally. As a result, traversing novels are more popular in the romance genre than in mysteries. The first decade of the twenty-first century witnessed an upsurge and a flourishing of time travel fiction in China, which is physically, logically, and humanly impossible. The boom of this new narrative genre has been fueled in no small part by the so-called "postmodernist turn" coupled with the "historiographical turn", to the degree that it is no longer possible to read it along the lines of traditional narrative theory (Shang, 2016). Then there are reasons for the popularity of time travel novels aimed at female audiences. Conflicts and fights between people exist in any society and any era, but when the palace is the place where such fights take place in, it has become more legendary. The palace was not only the place where the power of the whole country was most concentrated during the imperial period, but also a place where many women gathered to attract attention. Due to the influence and regulation of culture, women are mostly the image of the weak in history, which is more vivid in the palace (Wang, 2017).

1.2 Introduction to the Book

Go Princess Go is an online novel that tells the tale of a playboy who accidently time travels to the past while trying to flee his ex-girlfriends. He discovers that he has transformed into the crown princess with an unknowable fate. The princess with a man's heart within starts her ascent up the professional ladder after multiple unsuccessful efforts to travel through time. Additionally, it tells the account of a "woman's" battle within the harem. He has experienced every aspect of being a woman, including the period, giving birth, and raising a child. He finally regrets his earlier treatment to women with disrespect and discrimination, and he also falls in love with the prince.

1.2.1 Unique Points and the Reasons for Picking the Novel

The plot reflects the inner world of the heroine/hero using a male voice and the actual words she/he utters are done with a female voice. This unique and weird combination makes the story quite interesting, as men and women behave and think so differently.

You never know what the princess would do in the next second, just like men never really understand women's thoughts. In addition, the princess tries very hard to get used to the new identity but keeps making mistakes. This helps to produce unexpected storylines (NEWS Plus, 2016).

Another element of humor is the contrast between modernity and ancient periods. I believe that this book may demonstrate the differences in how men and women are viewed in both traditional and contemporary Chinese society. Her identity can serve as a reflection of how men and women are perceived differently in terms of gender through the heroine as well. From the male perspective, women are both playthings and prey, and they are the polymers of male sexual orientation. In the situation of gender inequality, men's "seeing" and women's "being seen" are ways of experiencing different pleasure for both sexes. Men get pleasure more by occupying and consuming women, while women find it difficult to achieve their own pleasure by consuming men. They get pleasure more by satisfying men's "peeping" (Wang, 2017). As a result, the theory of feminist translation may be perfectly applied to this text.

In conclusion, this novel might actually be a decent literary portrayal of gender equality that adheres to the philosophy I wanted to pick. I believe that all good works, whether they are traditional literature or online novels, should be translated as long as they can capture a spirit and an idea.

1.3 Introduction to the Theoretical Guidance

People increasingly become aware of the significance of women's status in society as civilization progresses. However, feminism developed to advance gender equality as a result of the deeply ingrained patriarchy. In recent years, there has been a notable increase in the amount of research and scholarship on the dyad "gender and translation," with several publications and conferences devoted to examining the many facets of translation theory and practice as viewed from a gender perspective (Sima, 2018).

1.3.1 Key Concepts of Feminist Translation Theory

The source text and the translation should have equal status, according to feminist translation. Translation is a creative endeavor intended for cultural intervention and manipulation, not just a mechanical language transfer. And from this perspective, it stresses the subjectivity of the translator and works to foster their subjective initiative and inventiveness. Furthermore, feminist translation theory strongly supports rewriting techniques, which are necessary to portray female traces. In my perspective, the term "women" in feminism refers to more than only translating from a female perspective and taking into account women's skin tone (Simon, 1996). Additionally, it alludes to the reality that the original and translation are equivalent to men and women. Women and the translator both occupy a weak spot in the hierarchy and ought to promote equality. As a result, the core of feminist translation is the ability to rewrite the original work with your own interpretation (Flotow, 2016: 34), without being purposefully loyal to the original author or speculating on their original intention, or being willing to submit to the submissive status, while still trying to appeal to the readers of the target language. It will be found that the overall effect of 'women's language' — meaning both language restricted in use to women and language descriptive of women alone — is this: it submerges a woman's personal identity, by denying her the means of expressing herself strongly, on the one hand, and encouraging expressions that suggest triviality in subject-matter and uncertainty about it; and, when a woman is being discussed, by treating her as an object — sexual or otherwise — but never a serious person with individual views (Lakoff, 2004: 198). In order to lessen opposition and seek balance, we must reexamine the relationships between the original work, the translated work, the original author, and the translator. Translation should not only take into account translation skills and strategies, but also discover and appropriately handle the cultural, historical, political, and other factors hidden behind the text (Jiang, 2003).

1.3.2 Strategies Used in Feminist Translation Theory

Flotow summarized three rewriting strategies to assist in the feminist translation. Supplementing, Preface and Footnotes and Hijacking. The term "supplement" refers to the active participation of feminist translators in the translation process, which incorporates personal interpretation of the text and at the same time makes up for the intralingual referential loss experienced by readers of the target language due to cultural, register, and other differences. The translator makes the translation show gender equality on the basis of fluency and naturalness by purposefully lengthening expressions that emphasize femininity and image and by imaginatively flipping the absolute status of the "faithfulness" criteria. Another way the translator can explain the author's purpose and mobilize judgment is in the prologue and footnotes. Some techniques used in feminist translation tactics are unusual processes, and translators will unavoidably run across cultural default when rewriting and fine-tuning translation styles (Sui, 2019). Therefore, they need to be clarified through firm intervention and explicit

adjustment. The most controversial and radical tactic that can accurately represent the demands of feminist translation viewpoints is hijacking, often known as "misappropriation" or "treasonable rewriting." The translator expresses his admiration for women groups, adds his own subjective logical judgment, and decodes the cultural information in the original text under the guise of respecting the author (Zhou, 2012). It is hoped that this will be helpful in the effort to achieve equal discourse power for women in the social and cultural context (Fang, 2018).

2. Feminist Translation Theory into Chinese Online Novel *Go Princess Go*

Luise von Flotow has proposed three feminist intervention strategies, namely, supplementing, prefacing and footnoting, and hijacking, which aim to stop hiding women behind language and to give them a certain. The aim is to stop hiding women behind language and to give them a certain amount of power.

2.1 Prefacing

Example 1:

Translator's Preface

Xiancheng's *Go Princess Go* is a novel about the liberation of women, insight into women's lives, and the power of women. It tells the story of a modern man who crosses over to become a crown princess in ancient times. Its greatest feature is the novel's novelty, which exhausts the ups and downs in the rebirth of a man as a woman. Also in a male-sovereign society, the protagonist goes through the transformation from man to woman, and after experiencing various events such as love, menstruation, childbirth, and court battles, she understands the hardships of being a woman and awakens to the awareness of equal rights for men and women. The book brings the characters to life through the portrayal of the protagonist's psychology, dialogue and behavior, while also giving the novel entertainment value and amusement. At the same time, the novel implies many questions for consideration, such as whether the current situation of women's existence has been improved in both ancient and modern times; the correlation between women's status and dress; and the contradiction between women's success in the workplace and women's status.

Since the translator and the author are both women and have feminist ideas, and since the book aims to expose the hardships of women's lives, she chooses feminist translation theory as her guide and applies the "preface and footnotes", "additions" and "hijacking" translation strategies summarized by Luise von Flotow. The translation strategy of "preface and footnotes," "additions," and "hijacking," as summarized by Luise von Flotow, is used to reveal the female consciousness expressed through the male voice in the original work, and to convey the author's intention based on a deep understanding of the original text, projecting the translator's perceptions and experiences into the novel's characters in the hope that the author can empathize with them.

As described in the novel, women go through many difficult things in life that men cannot understand. Only when one becomes a woman can one empathize with them. The novel is a humorous but profound piece of online literature that calls for men to care more about women. The translator hopes that this book will bring joy to the readers while thinking about the status of women, hoping that one day women will be brave.

Analysis:

The importance of the translator's preface is threefold. First, to give readers background knowledge. Because this online literary novel is based on a Chinese crossover novel, there are cultural differences for English readers. Therefore, a preface is needed to prompt the reader. Secondly, the preface mentions "translator" several times, which is actually to give respect to the translator. Finally, as a novel about feminism, the reader needs to get some understanding from the preface and then substitute it into the plot of the novel. If this important step is missing, the main idea of the novel will be missed, which is against the author's intention. In addition, the translator's foreword can also enhance the translator's subjectivity and better highlight the core of feminist translation theory.

2.2 Footnoting

Example 2:

走路由大步流星改成了弱柳扶风。

He walked with a long stride instead of a soft willow.

1) Willow is often used to stand for girls. Because willow has slender branches and a thick trunk, he resembles a woman with a very slender figure and soft hair. Because the willow swaying in the wind makes people feel pity, so the thin figure of women will be loved by men, and it also reflects the morbid aesthetic of women's figures.

Example 3:

坐着由大马金刀改成了状似鹌鹑。

He sat like a quail instead of being like riding a big horse with weapons.

1) The quail is a timid bird by nature, shrinking its neck for food and does not like to interact in groups. It describes people as timid, cowardly, and cowering. It is mostly used to show that women dare not do things and have no courage.

Example 4:

你是要做皇帝的人啊，后宫三千佳丽，环肥燕瘦千娇百媚的，要什么样的没有？

You're going to be the emperor！You can have thousands of wives as you want, each of whom is attractive in her own way!

1) Chinese "Huan" in the original text indicates a plump woman, while "Yan" means a thin woman. The original meaning was that women in the world have their own beautiful characteristics, and as emperors can choose at will.

Analysis:

In examples 2, 3 and 4, when the protagonist first transforms into a woman, he has a stereotype of the woman's figure, thinking that women should be weak and slender so that men can love them. After changing his view, he believed that women's bodies should have their own merits and be worth liking. Once the protagonist was a playboy in modern times, so after crossing over, he still expressed his envy for the emperor who could play the role of the beauty of the harem in example 4. At this time, the plot progressed to the middle of the stage, and the two personalities of the male and female in the protagonist's heart began to show contradictions. While feeling sorry for other concubines who are also women, she still longs to become a man again.

Example 5:

第二：劳动没有保障，且不说三险一金没有，还随时可能辞退你，而且还不允许你再就业！

Second: there is no guarantee of labor, not to mention the three social insurance and one fund, but also at any time may dismiss you, and you are not allowed to re-employment!

1) The three insurances are endowment insurance, unemployment insurance, and medical insurance. One fund is the housing provident fund. But in fact, "three insurances and one housing fund" has become a thing of the past, according to laws and regulations, enterprises must give employees to participate in "four insurances and one housing fund", that is, work-related injury insurance and maternity insurance are also mandatory. As a modern man, the protagonist does not take maternity insurance into account, reflecting the neglect of women by men in the modern working environment.

2.3 Supplementing

Adding to the original text is one of the feminist intervention strategies that Simon describes as "bridging the gap between languages". Feminist translation theory has stated that translators can modify texts for feminist social values and political purposes, but they can also think outside the box and creatively add their own interpretations in the process of making additions. The strategy of additions in feminist theory is one of the means of intervening in the text. In this way, the translator compensates for the differences between the source language and the target language.

Example 6:

齐晟就真能是坐怀不乱的柳下惠！

I do not believe, Zane can really be sitting with like an ancient officer, who wrapped a homeless girl without any indecent behavior just in case that she would get cold!"

Example 7:

你是要做皇帝的人啊，后宫三千佳丽，环肥燕瘦千娇百媚的，要什么样的没有？

You're going to be the emperor！You can have thousands of wives as you want, each of whom is attractive in her own way!

Analysis:

In both cases, because traditional Chinese allusions are used, literal translation is bound to bring ambiguity to English readers, so the relevant definitions have been added. And these two allusions are indispensable. Because in example 6, "柳下惠" actually praises her integrity, but in the modern sense, it is always used to ridicule men for being too conservative. It satirizes modern society that shames men for their integrity and cares about society's respect for women. The "环肥燕瘦" in example 7 refers to the body anxiety of women in modern society. In the translation of such novels, female translators are better able to understand the meaning that female authors want to express.

Example 8:

我闭上眼，仔细地<u>回想了一下女人走路的样子</u>，然后使劲地加紧屁股，卖力地扭着腰，迈着小碎步走了过去。

I closed my eyes, carefully recalled the way the woman walked, and then tightened my ass vigorously, twisted my waist hard, and walked over with small broken steps, <u>pretending to be a lady.</u>

Analysis:

Here, the translator adds "pretending to be a lady" as an adverb to modify the previous description of the action. Because the portrayal of women's walking posture in the previous article is stereotyped, the detail of men pretending to be women walking, plus this addition is reasonable, and it takes into account the reading experience of female readers.

Example 9:

"长得倒也不错，就是<u>这脸苦点</u>。"

"Indeed, she's pretty, but for this bitter face, <u>it cannot please men</u>"

Example 10:

"绿篱低低念着，面容祥和语调温柔，听得我心中也渐渐沉静了下来，听着听着竟觉得困了，正迷瞪间，突听得绿篱音调一转，兀地怨毒起来："只可恨江氏那贱人也要回去，<u>少不得又要勾引太子殿下！</u>"

Lyla whispered, her face was peaceful, and her tone was gentle, and my heart gradually calmed down when I listened, and I felt sleepy when I listened, and I was staring, and suddenly heard Lyla's tone turn, and she became resentful: "I can only hate that slut Kline will also go back, and I have to seduce Prince again! <u>Delay your time with Prince and make you angry!</u>"

Example 11:

我想了想，狠声说道："他们不是要一生一世一双人吗？我偏偏不叫他们如愿，非得叫<u>他们一生一世一群人不可</u>！选美！我要给齐晟广选佳丽，以充后宫！"

I thought about it and said fiercely: "Aren't they going to be a couple for the rest of their lives?" I don't want them to get their wish, I have to pick a few more beautiful women for <u>Zane to get in their way! What I can't get, no one can get!</u>"

Analysis:

Feminist translators believe that women's perceptions, experiences, and inner feelings are sometimes not perceived by men, so female translators are gifted with a talent for resonating with feminist works (Chen 21). The above examples are actually women, including Lyla and the protagonists who have embraced Daugherty's female thinking, their words. Among the other wives against Zane and him, Daugherty as Princess must have been disgruntled, as must his handmaiden, Lyla. Therefore, the implication of speaking is jealousy. This kind of jealousy is completely absent for the protagonist in the early stage of the article, because at that time, the protagonist is actually jealous that Zane can have a lot of beauties around. Then, in the middle and later stages of the novel, it is important to appropriately supplement Daugherty's female thinking, which can reflect the gradual change of attitude towards female thinking.

2.4 Hijacking

Hijacking refers to the manipulation of texts without a sense of femininity. Most feminist translators believe that discriminatory terms in modern society should be revised, for example, "he" is a male term, while "they" is often used to refer to other people, and women are included in this term. Feminist translators prefer to use non-mainstream expressions that resonate with readers in order to raise the status of women in the minds of the general public, and to create empathy and reflection as a result. The ultimate effect of these discrepancies is that women are systematically denied access to power, on the grounds that they are not capable of holding it as demonstrated by their linguistic behavior along with other aspects of their behavior (Lakoff, 2004: 21).

Example 12:

"这小妞<u>丰乳肥臀小蛮腰</u>，不可不谓之极品了，反观之旁边那个穿白衣的就太过清瘦了些，减肥减过了的那种，我不喜欢。"

Men <u>all like this plump body</u>, on the other hand, the girl in white is too thin, just like losing too much weight, I don't like it.

Analysis:

The original article here is a man's evaluation of two women's figures. One has a fat buttock and a small waist, which is the best, while the other is too thin. Here the translator rewrites the word "best" as "Men all like", thus

reflecting the ubiquitous judgment of men to women.

Example 13:

<u>勾引</u>个男人都得用下药的手段，还落人口实，张氏啊张氏，你真是白瞎了你这副好身材啊！

You have to use drugs to make men <u>fall in love with you</u>, Daugherty, obviously you can rely on this good figure.

Analysis:

The original "seduce" was deliberately rewritten as fall in love with, and the translator wanted to give women respect. Improving women's personality by rewriting content that discriminates against women. In the past, the women in the palace were appendages of the emperor, they were just pursuing love, not seduce the emperor.

Example 14:

我这话便有些说不下去了，停了片刻，改口道："女子青春短暂，一旦韶华失去，怕更是天颜难近。<u>黄氏她们几个又都是跟着皇上从东宫里过来的老人，没有功劳也有苦劳，皇上即便不喜她们，看在她们无辜的份上，也该多怜惜怜惜。</u>"

I couldn't say this anymore, paused for a moment, and changed my words: "A woman's youth is short, and once she gets old, I am afraid that it will be more difficult to survive." <u>Like Ruby, they have taken care of you since they were young, even if they have no merit, they are very hard, even if you don't like them, for their innocent sake, you should have more pity.</u>"

2.5 English Translation of Female Consciousness in the Language Styles

In this translation theory and practice, because the original text is longer, in the selection of translated texts, the focus is on the first, middle and last three stages. They are that Daugherty, as a male, just became a princess in ancient times, still maintained a male sovereign thinking, and in the middle of the conflict, and finally the process of full acceptance.

First of all, on the whole Chinese original language of the novel is vivid and humorous, especially in the early stage of identity change, there are many laughing psychological descriptions, which require the translator to express the characteristics of the language.

Secondly, in the tone of the humorous web novel, the slightly tragic psychological transformation of the final ending Daugherty is particularly abrupt. As a man, after feeling a woman's life of stress in love and the workplace, he succumbed to reality and chose to accept fate. From a cynical fancy boy to a "victim" woman, his compromises are worth considering. Then the change of language in the process of transformation also needs to be considered by the translator, and the writing gradually changes from the perspective of men grinning to the sensitive and emotional perspective of women.

Finally, the female perspective is presented in the text in various identities such as Daugherty, Lyla, Ruby, etc. There are maids who fight for their masters, concubines who are slightly scheming, and so on. Considering their character characteristics, both the psychology and language of these characters need to be translated.

3. Conclusion

Language serves as so much more than just a means of communication. It represents society, culture, and beliefs. There are countless cultures in the globe, and each one uses its own language to communicate the particulars of its daily activities. Imagine the tremendous cultural treasures that would be lost if people abruptly stopped speaking their national languages and just used one universal language. At the same time, other languages might not be able to adequately convey particular sentiments, emotions, or detailed descriptions. The following are the importance of translation practice in my opinion. I can start by translating non-traditional Chinese to English articles to practice my translation skills. This is an exam of my four years of college coursework as well. This translation practice is an excellent chance because it is challenging to perform such a huge quantity of translations at school. Second, rarely do we have the opportunity to integrate theory and practice while learning in a classroom; instead, we often either learn theory or practice. My personal physiological aspects and societal feminism, as a female translator, contribute to a deeper knowledge of women and a more delicate translation process. Female translators must take into account the psychology and thought processes of women, take the initiative to protect women's dignity, modify and remove derogatory language, stress women's equality and independence, and unintentionally uphold and respect women's responsibilities. Feminist translation forces people to acknowledge the influence that the translator and the translated text have on the original text and helps them to understand that this influence is mutual rather than one-directional from the original text to the translated text. At the same time, it advocates women's self-determination. Women are free, equal and independent individuals with ideas. It attempts to start with literary works and pursue gender equality (Jiang, et al., 2022). It is not difficult to find that many feminist translation strategies are involved, such as forewords, additions, hijackings, etc. The translations not only reflect the fidelity to the original work, but also show a strong gender

consciousness and female ideology, which has a certain political significance, and also aim at giving a voice to women through language and reflecting the value of women in language. This has also given experts in the field of translation studies a different perspective, not only in terms of "fidelity" to translated works, but also in terms of improving the social status of modern feminist translators. However, feminist translation does have some shortcomings, such as the tendency to form new dichotomies. However, feminist theory still embodies a historical reciprocity in translation and an inherent vitality in it. Although it has been criticized and questioned in the process of development, it continues to improve and develop as a theoretical doctrine of translation that has broken through traditional concepts and seeks to provide more assistance to translation theory and practice.

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