



# A Study on the Translation Strategies of *Brothers* from the Perspective of George Steiner's Hermeneutics Translation Theory

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**Abstract:** *Brothers*, the English translation of *Xiong di*, is an important work of Chinese contemporary avant-garde writer Yu Hua. After its English version was published in 2009, it has received rave reviews in the English-speaking world. This article, guided by George Steiner's hermeneutics translation theory, takes comparative analysis to analyze the translation strategies of the translators in the process of the four-fold hermeneutic motion proposed by Steiner. Based on the comparison of the concrete examples in the source and target text, a conclusion can be raised that the translators have made the full use of translator's initiative in the four steps (trust, aggression, incorporation and compensation) to achieve a dynamic balance between domestication and foreignization by taking the target readers' acceptability and the effectiveness of cultural communications into consideration.

**Keywords:** Yu Hua, *Brothers*, George Steiner, Hermeneutic Translation Theory, The Four-Fold Hermeneutic Motion, Translation Strategies

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## 1. Background

### 1.1. The Importance of Yu Hua's Representative Work--*Brothers*

Yu Hua, a representative of contemporary avant-garde Chinese writers, was born in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province in 1960. So far, he has published 4 novels, 6 collections of short stories, and 3 collections of essays. His works have been translated into more than 20 languages, published in 30 countries and won many international awards, such as the Premio Grinzane Cavour Prize for literature in 1998, James Joyce Prize in 2002, the Barnet-Noble New Discovery Book Award in 2004, Chevalier de L'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres in 2004 and etc., which contributed a lot to his world-wide popularity. Until now, Yu Hua has become one of the most prestigious, award-winning and most translated Chinese contemporary novelists in the international literary world.

*Xiong di* was Yu Hua's representative work, which has sold more than one million copies since 2005, when it was first published by Writers Publishing House in China.

*Brothers*, the English translation of *Xiong di*, was translated by a couple scholars Eileen Cheng-yin Chow and Carlos Rojas and publicly published in 2009. *Brothers* won the First "International Courier" Foreign Novel Award (2008) established by the famous French *International Messenger weekly*. Maureen Corrigan reviewed the year of 2009 should be "the year of Yu Hua", because of its literary achievements [1]. Jess Row commented Yu has shared a similarity with Lu Xun in cultural inwardness [2]. In an exclusive interview with Yu Hua in *The Paper* on December 1, 2017, Yu Hua pointed out that *Brothers* was his most satisfactory work. He started the creation in 2003 and it was once called "a novel with no end in sight". The original novel was only composed of 100,000 characters, while the final length was more than 500,000. In these 500,000 characters, the history of four decades of China was condensed. Over the years of social changes, "a Westerner can live through these two vastly different eras after four hundred years, while a Chinese can experience them in only four decades." [3] The book was widely discussed once it was published and won both critical and public acclaim in the English-speaking world.

### 1.2. The Turn of "Translator's Subjectivity" and the Application of Hermeneutics in Translation Studies

For a long time, traditional translation theories have always emphasized the importance of the original work, comparing the original work and the translated work to the "master and servant" relationship. Translation has always been in a "servant" state of "covered", "suppressed" and "rejected"[4]. The translator has been living in the shadow of the author, struggling between the paradox of "shape" and "god"[5].

Since the last century, with the development of reform and opening up, the translation theory in China has gradually got rid of the original shackles and has shown a pluralistic development [6]. Zha Mingjian proposed both the translator and the author are the subjects of translation; therefore, the translator and the author are not in a master-servant relationship but a cooperative relationship [7]. In the article "Who is the subject of translation", Chen Daliang further emphasized the subject status of the translator, and illustrated the author's creative process and the translator's translation process as follows: The objective world→The author→The article//The article→Translator→Translation.

It is believed that the author has lost control of the text after creating the text, and the text that the translator is facing is no longer the text of the author. It must undergo re-creation by the translator to break away from the context of the original text and present it with a new look [8]. Xu Jun believes that translators are the most important part of translation activities, and illustrates the process of literary translation as follows: Writer→the source text→Translator→The translated version→The target readers, during which a translator is placed in the most important position in translation activities [9].

Hermeneutics is the theory and philosophy of understanding and interpretation of text, while translation also expresses the same thought in different languages and reproduces the meaning of the original text. On this level, translation and hermeneutics have a natural connection [10]. German theologian and philosopher Friedrich Schleiermacher is called the father of modern hermeneutics, because he was the first to propose constructing the conception of general hermeneutics as an art of understanding [11]. In 1975, George Steiner published his renowned academic work *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation*, in which he applied hermeneutics to translation field. Steiner inherited the thoughts of a host of influential hermeneutics philosophers such as Friedrich Schleiermacher, Wilhelm Dilthey and Martin Heidegger, Steiner greatly developed hermeneutics and proposed the famous four-fold hermeneutic motion in translation process.

Steiner's hermeneutic translation theory has triggered extensive discussions in Western academic circles, and many famous scholars in translation field have actively affirmed the academic value of Steiner's works. The famous American translator, Lawrence Venuti, once praised it as "the most authoritative work in translation field after the Second World

War [12]." Walter Benjamin put forward that a translator's task is to liberate the language imprisoned in work in his recreation of that work [13].

The famous British translation theorist Peter Newmark also proposed in his *Approaches to Translation* the necessity of applying hermeneutics to translation. He believed that when semantic translation cannot clarify the author's intention, some necessary interpretations need to be used as a supplement. He thinks highly of Steiner's theory and regards it as "the most exciting translation" [14].

American translation theorist Frederick M. Renner combined hermeneutics with traditional Western translation theories, and believed, "the hermeneutic perspective is throughout the history of the entire traditional western translation theory. Translation should be regarded as the interpretation of translation process rather than the operation of language." [15] British translator Susan Bassnett and Belgian-American translator Andre Lefevere also fully recognized the application of hermeneutics in translation, and regarded the translation process as a process in which the translator continued to use creativity to "decode the interpretation of the source text [16]."

### 1.3. The Value and Creativity of This Article

On one hand, compared with the research on the English translation of Nobel laureate Mo Yan, up to now, academic research on the translation and reception of Yu Hua's works has been very rare. In the existing literature, research on the English translation of Yu Hua's works and overseas dissemination has been very rare. Until now, there are only 19 relevant papers and 14 dissertations on CNKI. Among them, there are only 3 academic papers related to his novel *Brothers*, mainly related to the English translation strategy of culturally specific words in *Brothers* [17], The translation strategy of idioms in *Brothers* [18] and the translation and acceptance of *Brothers* in the English world [19]; there are only 5 dissertations involving the English translation of *Brothers*, mainly from the perspective of Toury's translation norms [20] and Bourdieu sociological perspective to study the English translation of *Brothers* [21], and research on the antonymous compound words in the English translation of *Brothers* [22], Culture-specific words [23] and the phenomenon of cultural filtering in the translation process [24].

On the other hand, since 2000, the number of academic papers studying translations from the perspective of hermeneutics translation theory has been increasing year by year. So far, according to the data of CNKI, there are 115 dissertations and 69 domestic academic papers related to this direction, which fully demonstrates Steiner's hermeneutics translation theory has been widely used in the study of English translations in China.

Based on George Steiner's interpretation of translation theory, this paper conducts a comparative study of Yu Hua's *Xiong di* and its English version *Brothers*, and uses a comparative analysis method to explore the concrete embodiment of the translator's initiative in the four steps of translation in the English version, in order to explore the

inner relationship between hermeneutics translation steps and translators' translation strategies from a large scale of concrete examples taken from the original and target texts.

## 2. The Application of Steiner's Four-Fold Hermeneutic Motion in the Translation of *Brothers*

### 2.1. "Trust" and the Choice of the Translator

In Steiner's hermeneutics motion, the first step is trust or an investment of belief. "All understanding and the demonstrative statement of understanding is translation, starts with an act of trust." There is initiative trust, an investment of belief. The premise of translation activities is to choose and trust the text [25]. The "trust of the text" here possesses many connotations: First of all, the translator must trust the author. Secondly, it marks the translator's recognition of the textual language features and ideological core, and the belief that the bilingual conversion ability he or she possesses is sufficient to complete the transmission of the author's original content and form. Thirdly, it means that the translator believes the author has enough target readers, which can ensure the economic profits of his or her labor to translate the original text.

At the author level, Yu Hua is a famous contemporary Chinese writer who has won the most foreign literary awards, whose works reflect Chinese social culture and enjoy popularity in the Western English-speaking world. The *Chronicle of a Blood Merchant* is extremely popular in South Korea, and even adapted into a localized movie. *To Live* won the highest literary award in Italy. *Brothers* was highly praised in France, Germany, the United States and Japan. In the United States, where foreign literature publishing is the most difficult, at least 34,000 copies of "To live" have been sold in the first year. Ten years later, it still sells nearly 4,000 copies every year. The most famous American publisher, Random House, continuously published Yu Hua's works. Even before *Brothers* was translated, they had decided to buy the copyright with 150,000 US dollars. These amazing records are enough to prove that Yu Hua has received enthusiastic attention and high praise in the international literary world [26].

At the textual level, "Brother" has been highly praised by readers and professional fields in English-speaking countries such as the United States, France, Germany, Japan, and Norway. "Brothers" is published in the upper and lower parts. It is Yu Hua's fourth novel, and it is also Yu Hua's longest novel so far. In an interview with Yu Hua in *The Paper* (Peng pai xin wen in Chinese) on December 1, 2017, Yu Hua pointed out that "Brothers" is his most satisfactory work. "Brothers" embodies the social changes of more than 40 years in China. In Yu Hua's view, "A Westerner can live for 400 years to experience these two vastly different times, and a Chinese can experience them in only 4 decades." [27] The book has been widely discussed since its publication. The

translator described the contemporary Chinese history shaped by Yu Hua as "tumultuous" in the translator's foreword in the 2009 edition. "Brothers" presents a unique perspective on contemporary Chinese history, viewing it through a gaze that is precariously balanced between beauty and perversity. The object of the gaze is often the female body, but just as often it is the Chinese body politic—the deeply schizophrenic national history that Yu Hua has lived through, and to which he attempts to give life in the pages of the novel" [28]. This undoubtedly represents the translator's full affirmation of Yu Hua himself and the value of his works.

In addition to his interest in Chinese history in *Brothers*, the translators also appreciate Yu Hua's personal language features and profound thoughts embodied in his text. The translators were deeply impressed by the "subversive humor" and "haunting sentimentality" that Yu Hua embodied in the textual structure. The translators were amazed by the plot of the "National Virgin Beauty Competition" designed by Yu Hua. They believed that it mirrored the beauty contest of Miss Artificial Women in China when Yu Hua was creating in December 2004, and both carried "an illusion of refurbished purity". Furthermore, they are also moved by the warm core of *Brothers*—the unremitting efforts of parents to "protect their children from the world gone mad. We ourselves began to appreciate this aspect of the novel more as we have, in the interim, found ourselves proud parents to the little Baldy Li of our own." [29]

At the market level, because Yu Hua's works have been translated and introduced more commonly overseas and won many international awards, they are welcomed by foreign literary criticism circles and ordinary readers. When the English version *Brothers* was released in the US in 2009, the Times made a special issue for a new Chinese book. The review of *Brothers* occupies the entire page, which shows Yu Hua's overseas influence. At the same time, Yu Hua's *Brothers* was finally published by the world-famous Anchor Books, which also ensured the smooth distribution and promotion of the novel overseas from the market level.

In summary, it is precisely the trust of Yu Hua, the appreciation of the language features and profound ideas in the text, and the trust of the market prospects that determine the translators Eileen Cheng-yin Chow and Carlos Rojas to make the final choice of translating the original text of Yu Hua.

### 2.2. "Aggression" and Domestication Translation Strategy

In Steiner's hermeneutics motion, the second step is aggression. According to Steiner, aggression means the translator invades the original so as to extract the meaning. During the process, the translator's task is to decode the source text and convey the intended meaning to target text [30].

Since the target language and the source language belong to two languages and cultural systems, conflicts are inevitably unavoidable and will inevitably cause violations between different systems and factors [31]. The "aggression" here means that the translator should introduce the content of the source text in a way that Western readers can understand in order to achieve the purpose of successful translation.

During the translation process, the translator may avoid or deliberately use omission, free translation or substitution to "invade" the cultural concept in the source text. The author of this thesis will discuss the translator's "aggression" from the following two levels: the syntactic structure level and the content level.

### 2.2.1. Aggression on the Syntactic Structure

The so-called "aggression" of the translator at the syntactic structure level means that the translator must satisfy the readers' reading habits of the target language in the translation process by changing the original sentence structure of the Chinese language in the source text.

Example 1:

This time though, it wasn't because of a migraine but rather, because she was breathless and flushed at the prospect of another wedding. [32] (All the following examples of the translated version are all quoted from this book. For the rest parts, the author will point out the author, the publication year and pages only.)

Source text:

她嘴里“啞啞”地响着，其实这时候她不头痛了，她啞啞叫着是因为她的喘气越来越急，第二次新婚即将来临，让她脸红耳热心里砰砰跳个不停。(余华, 2012: 41) [33] (All the following examples of the source text are all quoted from this book. For the rest parts, the author will point out the author, the publication year and pages only.)

Since Chinese emphasizes parataxis, Chinese sentences are often centered on verbs, and the logical order is usually based on the chronological order. In Chinese literature, it is not hard to find one short sentence is followed by another without any conjunctions, which is called flowing sentences. Flowing sentences are one of the unique sentence patterns in Chinese. They do not pay attention to the completeness of the sentence structure and form. They only require the semantic meaning of the sentence to be coherent, and generally do not need conjunctions. Lu Shuxiang once pointed out: "There are many flowing sentences in Chinese. One clause follows after another, during which many clauses can be broken or connected." [34]

The comma in Chinese can combine all the sentences describing the same scene or the same concept to develop into a long sentence, while English texts put emphasizes the syntactic rules. Two or more sentences need to be separated by a conjunction, or one of the sentences can be changed to an adverbial or participle structure. If the translator wants to translate English sentences that conform to the reading habits of Western readers, he or she needs to clarify the logical relationship between Chinese flowing sentences during translation process.

In Example 1, the translators clearly invaded the sentence structure of the original text, and decomposed the flowing sentences with multiple logical relations into two sentences that conform to the English grammatical logic: the first part of the original flowing sentences was disassembled into a short sentence. In the second sentence, the translators use "though" to guide the adverbial clause of concession,

explaining that Li Lan's gasping at this time is no longer because of illness, but because of the excitement about the second marriage. If the translators continue to use the original structure of flowing sentences, it will inevitably cause difficulty for target readers, which does not conform to the reading habits of Western readers. Therefore, the translators choose to invade the syntactic structure of the original sentence and rewrite the original sentence structurally.

Example 2:

Baldy Li and Song Gang didn't pay attention to them either. This was the first summer the two kids had enjoyed this sort of ice treat. Previously, the chilliest thing they had tasted was a bowl of well water. (Yu Hua, 2009: 39).

Source text:

李光头和宋刚也顾不上他们了，这是两个孩子第一次在夏天吃到冰镇的东西，在此之前他们吃过的最凉的东西也就是喝一喝井水。(余华, 2012: 40) (Yu Hua, 2012: 40)

Similar to Example 1, the translator breaks the original sentence into three short sentences with different subjects in order to conform to the habit of English syntax, so as to ensure the smooth reading of English readers.

In addition to the above long sentences, some short sentences in the original work have also been translated by the translators in a way that is more in line with English syntax.

Example 3:

They asked: "Could we come back again tomorrow?" (Yu Hua, 2009: 39).

Source text:

他们说：“明天再来吃，好吗？”(Yu Hua, 2012: 40).

The original Chinese sentence is "ming tian zai lai chi, hao ma?" That is a sentence without any subject, one of the typical sentence patterns in Chinese, which is a term in modern Chinese grammar and is a kind of non-predicate sentence. In most cases, the subject of such sentences depends on the context. When translating such kind of sentences, the translators adopt a translation method of complementing the complete subject to help the target readers understand who wants to eat tomorrow, so as to better suit the reading habits of Western readers. When dealing with sentences without subjects in the original text, the translators often use amplification by adding the supplementary subject to explain to the reader the perpetrator of the action.

Example 4:

Song Fanping suggested: "Why don't you go back inside?" (Yu Hua, 2009: 43)

Source text: 宋凡平……对两个孩子说：“进去吧。”(Yu Hua, 2012: 44)

Example 5:

They said, "Fine, then we'll let him off the hook." (Yu Hua, 2009: 47)

Source text: 他们说：“就这样吧，今天就放过他了。”(Yu Hua, 2012: 49)

Sentence structure transformation is very common in translation of Brothers. This kind of "aggression" at the level

of sentence structure is essential in the translation process. It can make the translation more in line with the reading habits of target readers and make Chinese modern and contemporary literature successfully “going out”.

### 2.2.2. *Aggression on the Content*

The so-called “aggression” of the translator at the content level means that in the translation process, in order to ensure the smoothness of the translation, the translator often omits or changes the content of the source text according to the specific circumstances, so that the translation is more in line with the cultural habits of the target language, so as to remove the reading barriers of readers. The translator’s “aggression” at the content level can be further subdivided into the following two parts: the omission or deletion of the content and the replacement or omission of images and idioms in the source text.

#### (i). *The Omission or Deletion of the Content*

Example 6:

With the sugar on the top dissolving like melting snow, each spoonful was sheer ecstasy. (Yu Hua, 2009: 39)

Source text:

白糖就像融化的积雪一样在冰绿豆上面湿了，变黑了，他们的勺子插了进去又舀了出来，一勺子的冰绿豆进了他们的嘴巴，他们舒服呀，他们高兴呀，他们的嘴巴在炎炎夏季迎接了又凉又甜的冰绿豆。(Yu Hua, 2012: 40)

In addition to the image of white sugar like snow in the original sentence, the underlined parts in the original work, including “the melting process of sugar on ice mung bean ice”, “the process of Baldy Li and Song Gang eating mung bean ice” and “the excitement of two kids eating mung bean ice”, are all omitted by the translator, and only simplified to one short sentence “each spoonful was sheer ecstasy”. The translator here simplified and deleted the original content based on the domestication translation strategy to ensure smooth reading of target readers.

Example 7:

Song Fanping scratched his head and said, “Well, okay, let’s use the nickname then. It’s impossible not to call him Baldy Li.” (Yu Hua, 2009: 51)

Source text:

宋凡平搔了搔脑袋说：“算了，还是叫绰号吧，叫李光的时候总是忍不住滑过去叫成李光头了。”(Yu Hua, 2012: 54)

It is easy to pronounce “Guang” in Chinese as “Guangtou (which means bald head)”. This language feature is difficult to be reflected in the target language. Therefore, the translator adopts the strategy of domestication and deletes the underlined content.

Example 8:

A crowd had gathered outside and now that they had examined the second-time-around newly-weds, they wanted to examine the two sons. (Yu Hua, 2009: 42)

Source text: 屋外挤满了看热闹的人，这些人把二婚的一男一女看够了，就像看看二婚的两个儿子。(Yu Hua, 2012: 43)

In the original text, the author repeated twice the adjective “二婚的 (second-married)”, a culture-loaded word in Chinese, which refers to the second marriage after divorce or widowed. In the social culture of China in the 1960s, people generally value the first marriage; therefore, the adjective “second-married” often has a derogatory meaning. The second-married wedding is often lower-key than the first marriage. The children brought by both parties are also called “拖油瓶” (the children from the previous marriage)”, which means to increase the burden on the new family.

In the original work, those on-lookers have seen enough of the “second-married” hero and heroine, and turned their attention to the two sons, obviously with malicious ridicule, which further paves the way for the next plot. The crowd asked the two sons of “the second-marriage” to hold the lids of two white porcelain cups, imitating the nasty behavior of holding Li Lan’s teats. The translator omitted the adjective “second-married” that appears for the second time, which is obviously full of cultural connotations, may cause the semantic loss of the author’s implicit meaning in the source text.

#### (ii). *The Replacement or Omission of Images and Idioms*

Susan Bassnett once compared language to the heart of culture. It is the interaction between culture and language that sustains life energy [35]. The dilemma of the translator does not only lie in finding the equivalences of the source language, but also conveying the culture-loaded connotations in the target text. In *Brothers*, many idioms or images with cultural connotations have been replaced or omitted by the translator.

Example 9:

Baldy Li and Song Gang rushed outside, their mouths stuffed so full that their eyes squinted and their cheeks puffed out, making everyone burst out laughing. “What treasures do you have in there?” (Yu Hua, 2009: 42)

Source Text:

李光头和宋刚嘴里鼓鼓囊囊地走了出去，两个孩子的脸被挤肿了，眼睛被挤小了，屋外的人看到两个孩子就哈哈地笑，他们说：“嘴里塞了什么山珍海味？”(Yu Hua, 2012: 43)

The unique expression “Shan zhen hai wei” in this sentence is a unique expression in Chinese culture. It comes from *Chang’an Taoist Poetry* written by Wei Yingwu, a poet of the Tang Dynasty. That expression generally refers to rich and delicious dishes. In the source text, the expression obviously serves as a mockery made by the crowd of Liu Zhen towards the children. This culturally loaded expression is omitted from the target text, and it is translated as “treasures” to ensure smooth reading by readers of the translated language.

In addition, this case is also a typical example of the translator’s “intrusion” in the original sentence structure mentioned above. In the original work, “嘴里鼓鼓囊囊地” in Chinese is used as an adverb to modify the state of the two children going out. The translator conforms to the habit of English syntax, and uses “their mouths stuffed so full” as an

independent nominative structure to modify the state of the two children when they go out.

In the original text, the independent short and flowing sentence has also been changed to the present participle structure to supplement the results of the two children's behavior, so that the logical arrangement at the sentence level is undoubtedly more in line with English sentence formation habits.

Example 10:

Song Gang lifted his head and said stubbornly, "I have already severed my relationship with him." (Yu Hua, 2009: 440)

Source text:

这时宋刚抬起头来倔强地说:“我和他已经一刀两断了。” (Yu Hua, 2012: 445)

In example 10, the original Chinese expression “一刀两断” was translated into “severed one's relationship with somebody”.

Example 11:

It seemed to her that telling him about her humiliation now would merely add salt to his wounds. (Yu Hua, 2009: 440)

Source text:

林红心想这时候把自己的委屈告诉宋刚, 对宋刚只会雪上加霜。 (Yu Hua, 2012: 445)

In this example, the Chinese idiom “雪上加霜” was translated into “add salt to one's wounds”.

Example 12:

Baldy Li cried out, “She is playing cat and mouse with me.” (Yu Hua, 2009: 249)

Source text:

李光头欢呼起来, “我要说的就是欲擒故纵。” (Yu Hua, 2012: 257)

In Example 12, the Chinese expression “欲擒故纵” was translated into “Playing cat and mouse with somebody”.

Example 13:

“Pursue her every day without giving up, until she finally gives you her hand in marriage.” (2009: 250)

Source text:

“天天去追求她, 契而不舍, 直到她以身相许。”宋刚说。 (Yu Hua, 2012: 258)

In Example 13, the Chinese expression “以身相许” was translated into “give somebody one's hand in marriage”.

Example 14:

After Lin Hong told this confused and anxious young woman the full truth, she warned her, “Your boyfriend fancies himself Liu Town's resident Don Juan.” (Yu Hua, 2009: 262)

Source text:

林红将真相一五一十地告诉了这个迷茫忧愁的年轻女子后, 警告她: “你的男朋友是个刘镇陈世美。” (Yu Hua, 2012: 270)

In Example 14, the Chinese proper name “Chen Shimei” was translated into “Don Juan”. The image of Chen Shimei was first derived from a Chinese novel in the Ming Dynasty. In the novel, Chen Shimei is an ungrateful man, abandoning his wife and his son. In the end, he was sentenced to death by Bao Zheng, a famous official of the Northern Song Dynasty

and therefore became synonymous with the heartless person in later generations. Don Juan is a well-known legend in Spain. He is known for being handsome and romantic. He has dealt with countless aristocratic women throughout his life and is often used as a synonym for love saints in literary works.

The common feature of the above examples is that the translator replaces the expressions with culturally loaded connotations in the source text with expressions that conform to the cultural context of the target language. Although the words used by the author in the source text have been replaced or omitted, they are basically in line with the author's original intention. In the process of “aggression”, the translator converts expressions with Chinese cultural characteristics into corresponding expressions in the target language and cultural system. Although it has not reached the complete cultural level, it does not affect the reader's reading experience.

However, the omission and modification of some imagery or idioms in the translated text cannot effectively convey the social meaning or irony implicit in the source text, resulting in a semantic defect in the translation.

Example 15:

The tagalong children followed behind. (Yu Hua, 2009: 41)

Source text:

拖油瓶李光头和宋刚走在板车后面。 (Yu Hua, 2012: 42)

Example 16:

All along the street, people pointed at Baldy Li and Song Gang, debating which of the kids would be considered the proverbial excess baggage in the new family. After much discussion, they eventually concluded, “Both of them are excess baggage.” (Yu Hua, 2009: 42)

Source text:

他们说这样两家人合在一起, 哪家孩子才算是拖油瓶? 他们商量到最后说: “两个都是拖油瓶。” (Yu Hua, 2012: 43)

In the above two examples, the expression “拖油瓶”, which means children from the previous marriage in Chinese, is mentioned. This expression has a special meaning in Chinese culture. It is a dialect in Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces, referring to the children brought by remarried women to their husbands' families after the remarriage in the old society. The original statement should be “拖有病”, which refers to children who have illness before coming to the new family in Chinese, rather than “拖油瓶”. In ancient times, widows usually remarried with persons in poverty. Once the children brought by the widow were sick, it would often arouse censure from the ex-husband's relatives and bring troubles to the remarried husband. In order to avoid this kind of entanglement, the remarried husband must ask someone to write down some written evidence when marrying the widow, stating that the former husband's children were ill when they came, so any accidents in the future have nothing to do with the husband. Therefore, people call the children of remarried women “拖有病”.

Because it sounds similar with “拖油瓶” in dialect, people are getting used to calling such kids that way.

In addition, the misrepresentation of “拖油瓶” also possesses a metaphorical meaning. Most of the oil bottles dragged by poor villagers in the south of the Yangtze River were not their own belongings, and it was very burdensome to drag those oil bottles by hands. Similar to this image, the children brought by the remarried widow, who bear the surname of the former husband, are also belonging of other people's family in the eyes of the remarried husband, and raising those children, like dragging oil bottles, will bring heavy burden to the new family. Therefore, it is not difficult to understand the comparison of such children to “拖油瓶”.

In the above two example sentences, that concept is mentioned three times, but the translator uses three different methods to translate them. In Example 15, it is translated into the adjective “tagalong”, and its cultural connotation is deleted. The translator only uses a positive structure to translate the accompanying state of children following their parents.

However, the cultural irony of the term in Example 16 is too obvious to be omitted, so that the translator did not continue to use the previous translation method but translated it into “excess baggage”. The translator deliberately italicized the term and added the adjective “proverbial” to inform target readers that this expression is a Chinese idiom, which means “excess and cumbersome luggage.” However, in fact, the two are by no means equivalent. In the second step of Steiner's Four-fold Hermeneutic Motion, in which the translator's domestication strategy dominates, the complex social connotations and irony of the term have disappeared, and therefore it can be said that the successful conversion of the source text to the target text has not been achieved in the above examples.

Example 17:

Finally, the newly melded family arrived at Song Fanping's house, and with that the wedding parade reached its destination. (Yu Hua, 2009: 42)

Source text:

终于到了宋凡平的家门口，这游街式的婚礼终于进站了。(Yu Hua, 2012: 43)

In Example 17, the author used the adjective “游街似的” to modify the wedding. The term “游街” (means Street-walking) has existed for a long time in China. It specifically refers to people marching on the streets purposefully, mostly to escort criminals to show punishment. Sometimes it is also a show of merit for flocking heroes and model characters. In the special historical period described in the first part of *Brothers*, “游街似的” has become an absolute derogatory term. In the historical context of the “Cultural Revolution”, the low classes such as landlords and capitalists often needed to accept criticism from the just masses in the form of parade.

The adjective “游街似的” in the source text, combined with the derogatory concept of “拖油瓶” mentioned above, shows the derisive and mocking attitude of the people in Liu Zhen towards the double “second marriage” of Song and Li. The

conversion of the adjective into the noun “parade” does not demonstrate the political and cultural meaning in the source text, nor can it reflect the author's pungent satire on Liu Zhen's masses, which undoubtedly results in the lack of cultural meaning in the source text.

Example 18:

Though the joy was always short-lived, she remained undaunted. (Yu Hua, 2009: 139)

Source text:

虽然这样的喜悦都是昙花一现，她还是继续着她的激动。(Yu Hua, 2012: 142)

The idiom “昙花一现”, citing from Lotus Sutra “佛告舍利弗，如是妙法，诸佛如来，时乃说之，如优昙钵花，时一现耳”，is translated into “short-lived”, which removes the unique Chinese image of “ephemeris”. The original text uses the image of the “beautiful, fragile and short-lived” ephemeris to refer to the short-lived joy Li Lan obtains in beautiful love. The meaningful image was directly omitted, resulting in a semantic defect in translation.

Example 19:

Finally, he firmly gripped Zhang's hand and said, “I will now hand everything over to you while I go to Shanghai to secure the final ingredient.” (Yu Hua, 2009: 332)

Source text:

最后李光头抹了一下满嘴的唾沫，使劲握一下张裁缝的手，豪迈地说：“这里就交给你了，我要到上海借东风啦。”(Yu Hua, 2012: 340)

The term “借东风” originated from the classical novel *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. During the Three Kingdoms period, Cao Cao established a strong Kingdom of Wei and the other comparatively weak kingdoms of Wu and Shu united against Wei. Zhou Yu, a general of Wu, wanted to attack Wei with fire, only to find that Wu was located in the southeast and Wei was located in the northwest, so if he attacked Wei with fire, he would burn his own kingdom without hurting the enemy. Seeing that his general is ill, Lu Su, the official of Wu, seeks advice from Zhu-ge Liang, a famous strategist in Shu. The latter pretended to be able to heal the disease, and wrote a prescription to Zhou Yu, in which he wrote, “If you want to win the war against Wei, you must attack it with fire; since everything is ready, what we need is the east wind.”

In the translator's aggression, the cultural factors of the original text have been omitted in the translation. The translator simplified the culture-loaded allusion to directly tell the target reader what Baldy Li is going to do. The location, manpower, shareholders, capital and other elements are all available. There was only one thing left for Baldy Li to do—to go to Shanghai to find a sales outlet. Although removing cultural barriers, the translator also reduced the cultural content of the source text.

Example 20:

Baldy Li was not at all impressed, and without even bothering to look up he retorted, “Haven't you noticed that I am sorting through thousands of opportunities every day?” (Yu Hua, 2009: 398)

Source text:

李光头一点都不领情，他头都没抬地说：“你没看见我正在日理万机？”(Yu Hua, 2012: 142)

Originally referring to the emperor's daily handling of complicated government affairs, the Chinese idiom “日理万机” is now often used to describe the heavy work of leaders. The use of the expression in the original work is obviously a deliberate improper term. Since it is used to describe important leaders have to deal with a lot of affairs every day, Baldy Li, a common citizen in Liu Town, is not supposed to use this term to describe himself, which is obviously inappropriate and not suitable. This is why the county magistrate was furious when he heard Baldy Li's statement. However, the translator did not sense the author's humorous sarcasm conveyed by the inappropriate expression, so that the translator mistakenly adopts the literal translation method, and loses the anaphora of the original text, which results in an obvious mistranslation of the source text.

### 2.3. “Incorporation” and Foreignization Translation Strategy

In Steiner's hermeneutics motion, the third step is incorporation, during which the translator would extract the content of the source language and import it into the target language. The import, of meaning and of form, the embodiment, is not made in or into a vacuum [36]. The focus of this step lies in the translator's self-digestion of the original text in order to add some new components of the original text into the target one, or introduce some foreign concepts to the target readers.

In the translation process, the translator certainly needs to reduce, omit or replace the culturally loaded words in the source language in order to reduce the barriers for the target readers, but in order to help the readers better understand the culture of the source language, the translator also needs to preserve the content and form of the original text by adopting the foreignization translation strategy in some cases on the basis of ensuring that the target language readers can understand. Therefore, in the following examples, it is not hard for us to find some Chinese specific expressions, images, metaphors, and concepts are integrated or embedded into the target text.

Example 21:

The onlookers were now so giddy that they repeatedly stomped their feet, sensing that this was even better than returning to the Three Kingdoms period and watching Cao Cao beat Liu Bei and Sun Quan. (Yu Hua, 2009: 266)

Source text:

让大街上围观的群众急得连连跺脚，好比是三国时期的曹操揍了刘备，又揍孙权，刘备与孙权却不知道联手还击。(Yu Hua, 2012: 274)

Example 22:

It is said that it is difficult for a hero to resist the wiles of a beautiful woman. Turns out it is true for idiots, too.” (Yu Hua, 2009: 258)

Source text:

李光头说着转向了林红家的邻居们，他向这些看热闹

的邻居解释：“都说英雄难过美人关，傻子也难过美人关。”(Yu Hua, 2012: 266)

*The Romance of the Three Kingdoms* is quoted in many places in *Brothers*, which is the most frequently cited Chinese classical literature in the author's statement. Therefore, in the translation process, the translator should adopt foreignization translation strategy by briefly introducing the storyline of the author's analogy and the identities of characters to guide the target readers to learn more about the content and culture expressed in the source text.

Example 23:

Lin Hong's father gestured at Baldy Li with his broomstick, said: “You are the proverbial ugly toad who thinks he can have the swan.”

“I tell you”—Lin Hong's mother pointed at him with her feather duster as she shouted—“My flower of a daughter will never be planted in a pile of cow dung like yourself.”

The ugly-toad-and-cow-dung humiliation that Baldy Li had suffered at the hands of Lin Hong's parents left him annoyed for an entire week.

(Yu Hua, 2009: 259)

Source text:

这时林红父亲当着满街的群众，用扫帚指着李光头骂道：“你是癞蛤蟆想吃天鹅肉！”

“告诉你，”林红母亲举着鸡毛掸子对他喊叫：“我女儿这朵鲜花不会插在你这堆牛粪上。”

李光头在林红父母那里遭受了癞蛤蟆和牛粪之耻，让他窝囊了整整一个星期。(Yu Hua, 2012: 267)

The “toad” in the last sentence of the example is a simplified version of the Chinese proverb of “lai ha ma xiang chi tian e rou” (which means that the toad wants to eat swan meat), which is quoted from *Water Margin*, one of the four classic novels in ancient China.

When Baldy Li asked Lin Hong to marry him, Lin Hong's father compared him to an ugly toad wanting to eat a swan. Undoubtedly, in this metaphor, his daughter Lin Hong is the swan. In addition to that, Lin Hong's mother compares Baldy Li to cow dung that wants flowers to be planted in it. Those are all images that do not exist in the English context. The translator retains the couple of images, “a toad and a swan” and “cow dung and flower”, and makes a slight modification to the proverb, changing ‘the toad who wants to eat swan meat’ to “the toad who thinks he can own the swan”, by which the translator can reflect the author's original imagery metaphors, but also help the target readers understand the content. By sizing up the concrete situation, it is possible for the translator to achieve the incorporation of two cultures to some extent.

Example 24:

As they say, as long as you own the mountain, there's no need to worry about firewood. (Yu Hua, 2009: 25)

Source text:

这叫留得青山在，不怕没柴烧。(Yu Hua, 2012: 26)

This example is a proverb in Chinese. In the English context, the translator could use the English proverb “Where there is a will, there is a hope”, which is a similar expression



in the target language, however, it is not so hard for the target readers to infer the connotation of the proverb from the relationship between “firewood” and “mountain”. Therefore, the translator retains the images in the translation based on the foreignization strategy to achieve cultural compatibility.

In addition, a large number of vivid metaphors in the original work are retained in the translation, which helps to retain the language characteristics of the original work and effectively helps the target readers further understand contemporary Chinese society and culture.

Example 25:

Even if someone were to, as the proverb has it, pick up a sesame seed only to lose a watermelon, he would still get a better deal than Baldy Li's father had. Meanwhile, Baldy Li felt that he himself was the second-unluckiest person in the world. (Yu Hua, 2009: 24)

Source text:

就是丢了西瓜捡芝麻的买卖也比他父亲的上算;李光头觉得自己是其次倒霉的人,他也就是做了一笔拿西瓜换芝麻的买卖。(Yu Hua, 2012: 26)

“Lose a watermelon for picking up sesame seeds” is a famous allegorical phrase in Chinese. It expresses the concept of “try to save a little only to lose a lot”, which can also find a similar expression in English such as “penny wise and pound foolish.” The translator chose to faithfully retain the metaphor in the original text, adding “as the proverb has it”, and the literal translation of the proverb is italicized to remind the target readers that the sentence is a Chinese proverb. Furthermore, the translator uses a free translation method in the following text to translate the unlucky degree of the business that is likened to “lose watermelon for picking sesame seeds” can be equivalent to “be the second-unluckiest person in the world”, to help the target readers fully understand the cultural connotations underneath the proverb.

Example 26:

You could bend over like a competitive swimmer at the starting block about to dive into the pool, and the deeper you bent over, the more butt you would be able to see. (Yu Hua, 2009: 5)

Source text:

你的动作就像游泳选手比赛时准备跳水的模样,你的头和身体插得越来越深,你看到的屁股面积就越来越大。(Yu Hua, 2012: 5)

In this example, Yu Hua ingeniously compares the action of the rogue peeking at others' butts to the action of a swimmer preparing to take off. The translator retains the author's vivid and lively metaphor in the original work, enabling target readers to fully perceive the author's witty and humorous language characteristics.

Example 27:

His punch was swift and devastating, and the man promptly topped over like an old blanket being tossed aside. (Yu Hua, 2009: 46)

Source text:

他的转身,他的出拳,又快又准又猛,把那个人打翻了过去,就像一条扔出去的旧被子。(Yu Hua, 2012: 47)

In the original text, the author made a very vivid metaphor for the lethality of Song Fanping's fist, making the man top over “like an old quilt”, and the translator replaced the original expression “a quilt” with “a blanket” which is more familiar for Western readers. By making some necessary conversions, the translator aims to achieve a balance between domestication and foreignization strategies.

In a summary, based on the foreignization translation strategy, the translator actively retains the vivid, vivid and interesting metaphors in the source text for the purpose of achieving successful cross-cultural communications, so that the language characteristics of the original work can be retained in the target language culture. At the same time, it also meets the interests and needs of readers in the English-speaking world to further understand Chinese society and culture. It also helps Chinese culture go abroad and realize the successful implantation of the characteristic language styles of Chinese contemporary novels in the target language culture.

#### 2.4. “Compensation” and the Achievement of Translator's Tasks

In Steiner's hermeneutics motion, the last step is compensation, which can be considered as an act of reciprocity and also the moral of translation [37]. After a series of movements of trust, aggression and incorporation, the original text loses its balance for translator has taken too much—he has padded, embroidered read into or too little—he has skimmed, elided, cut out awkward corners [38]. Compensation is also called ‘enactment of reciprocity’, and it's the crux of the métier morals of translation [39]. There has been an out flow of energy from the source and an inflow into the receptor altering both and altering the harmonics of the whole system [40] It can be considered as an attempt to restore the balance that has been broken in the previous translation process.

Baker defined the compensation in hermeneutics in Encyclopedia of Translation Studies as the translator's satisfaction in this translation process because he improved reading experience of the original translation [41]. In General History of Western Translation Theory, Liu Zhijun put forward the two meanings of “compensation”: first, the translator compensates the source text from the perspective of linguistics, so that the “untranslatable” parts of the original text such as the language style, syntax, idioms and so on can be compensated in some forms; second, it means that the translator tries to supplement the source text based on his understanding, thereby enhancing the expressive power of the source text. [42]

##### 2.4.1. Translator's Compensation for Untranslatability

Benjamin emphasized in The Task of the Translator that the so-called “faithfulness” of translation is not mechanical and rigid loyalty to the original text, but requires the translator to fully demonstrate bilingual talents and give full play to the translator's subjective initiative in the cross-language conversion to make the untranslatable parts

translatable [43].

Yu Hua's *Brothers* spans more than forty years in China. It contains many cultural meanings, features of different times, and individualized expressions. Without sufficient language skills and understanding of certain social backgrounds, it is really difficult for any translator to get equivalent or even corresponding expressions in the target language and culture. Even Yu Hua himself admitted in an interview that some expressions in *Brothers* are difficult to be properly transformed [44]. But in *Brothers*, Chow and Rojas made great attempts to solve the "untranslatable" parts in the original text, and tried their best to remove the linguistic or cultural barriers in the source text with superb language skills.

Example 28:

Baldy Li and Song Gang didn't recognize the characters on the placard,

LAND X LORD X SONG X FAN X PING X ..... (Yu Hua, 2009: 84)

Source text:

他头戴纸糊的高帽子，胸前挂着一块大木牌，木牌上写着“地主宋凡平”，他们不认识上面的字，他们只认识字上面打了红色的五个X。(Yu Hua, 2012: 77)

The expression of "di zhu song fan ping" in the source text is composed of five Chinese characters, but the English version contains only three words "Landlord Song Fanping". The translator tactfully disassembled both "Landlord" and "Fanping", making the number of Chinese characters in the source text equal with the number of English words in the target language. In the translation process, the translator uses his own language ability to achieve translation compensation for the source text, making the "untranslatable" translation possible.

In addition to that, there is another place in the source text that is also difficult to be converted.

Example 29:

Baldy Li continued: "Therefore, I wrote the number 8 on my palm, which, read out loud, sounds like the word for 'bar', right?" (Yu Hua, 2009: 410)

Source text:

李光头继续说：“我就把‘98’两个数字写在手掌上，‘98’念起来不就是‘98’吗？”(Yu Hua, 2012: 416)

The analysis of this example sentence needs to be analyzed in context. After Baldy Li came back from Japan, he claimed that the Japanese were uneducated. When the crowd in Liu Town asked him the reason, he told them a story to explain his viewpoint in detail.

When he earned a lot in Japan, he decided to go to some upscale districts like bars. Since he didn't understand Japanese, he couldn't speak the Japanese "bar". In order to solve the problem, he wrote two numbers "9" and "8" on the palm of his hand. He thought since the combination of the two numbers is pronounced like "jiu ba (which means bar)" in Chinese, but surprisingly none of the Japanese could understand his meaning. Therefore, he got the conclusion that the Japanese were all uneducated.

The author designed this plot very exquisitely. When

translating, the translator had to face the following problems: First, the Arabic numbers "9" and "8" are pronounced as "酒吧" in Chinese, which means "bar" in English. Second, Baldy Li is really smart to decide to let the Japanese understand his intentions in digital form. Thirdly, the people in Liu Town approved of what Baldy Li said in the Chinese context. Fourth, in fact, Baldy Li only fancies himself clever, because the combination of "9" and "8" in Japanese is not pronounced like "bar".

The translators used their own bilingual advantages to reconstruct the text, simplifying the combination of numbers "9" and "8" to "8", making it correspond to the word "bar" in English, and therefore got the almost impossible translation task done very creatively.

Example 30:

The boys giggled and hollered in unison, "Baldy Li wants to court you!" (Yu Hua, 2009: 243)

Source text:

几个男孩咯咯笑着齐声喊叫：“李光头要向你求爱啦！”(Yu Hua, 2012: 251)

They shouted in unison in the direction of the closed iron gate, "Baldy Li wants to have intercourse with you." (Yu Hua, 2009: 245)

Source text:

五个孩子对着关上的大门齐声喊叫：“李光头要和你性交啦！”(Yu Hua, 2012: 253)

In addition to the above two cases, there is a very interesting statement in the original text. When Baldy Li asked the children on the street to woo Lin Hong for him, he chose an elegant vocabulary "court", but the children were too young to understand the expression and quickly forgot it. Poet Zhao, Baldy Li's potential love rival, deliberately taught the children to shout out a vulgar expression "intercourse" to substitute the original "court", which completely disrupted Baldy Li's strategic plan of wooing.

The ignorance of the children combined with the schemes of the adults thoroughly demonstrates humor of the author. The translator could simply literally translate it as "sex", but in order to help the target readers understand that this is a cute mistake made by the children and also a deliberate mistake designed by the author. The translator chose a more complicated word "intercourse" which seems similar in spelling to "court", which improves the readability and vividness of the translation without changing the author's original intention.

Example 31:

Baldy Li started yelling, "You lied to us. You didn't teach us how to do the sweeping leg kick. You lied to us about the characters on the wooden placard. They mean 'landlord', but you told us they meant 'Chairman Mao of the land.'" (Yu Hua, 2009: 90)

Source text:

这时候李光头喊叫起来了：“你是骗我们的，你根本没教会我们扫堂腿……你还骗我们木牌上的字，明明是‘地主’两个字，你说是‘地’上的毛‘主’席。”(Yu Hua, 2012: 94)

Example 31 should be the most difficult part to be

translated in the whole text. The child's unscrupulous words eventually led to the tragic death of his stepfather Song Fanping. Song Fanping mentioned "land" and "Chairman Mao" when guiding his children to recognize the words "land" and "lord" on the wooden sign. However, in the political environment at the time, the unintentional words the children shouted out became the key proof of Song Fanping's "reactionary thoughts". Although the translators combined the expression of "landlord" with "Chairman Mao of the land", it is still very difficult for target readers to recognize the lethality of such an expression. From the example, it can be safely concluded that although the translator can give full play to the translator's initiative in the "compensation" step, the "untranslatability" of the original text still exists objectively due to the huge gaps between two different cultures, which is so hard to be changed thoroughly at the translator's subjective will.

#### 2.4.2. *Translator's Task: Providing Supplementary Explanation*

In the fourth step of hermeneutics operation, the translator needs to add annotations or explanatory texts according to the specific situations, and supplements the parts of the source text that the target language readers may not thoroughly understand.

##### Example 32:

Even though Writer Liu was in the thick of his wedding preparation, he was still dreaming of greener pastures. (Yu Hua, 2009: 14)

##### Source text:

刘作家虽然筹办婚事了,可是他身在曹营心在汉,他对林红的美色垂涎三尺。(Yu Hua, 2012: 15)

In this example, the idiom comes out of the classic novel *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. It is recorded in Chapter 25 to Chapter 27 that after Guan Yu and Liu Bei separated with each other in the war, Guan Yu was left in Cao Cao's army. Although Cao showed great respect for Guan, Guan Yu still missed his brother, Liu Bei. Later, when Guan learned that Liu was at Yuan Shao's place, so he still chose to return to Liu. It is an analogy about a person keeps thinking about his former owner when being in the opposition camp, which is worth respecting in ancient China. However, in this sentence, Lin Hong, whom Writer Liu fancies, is not an opponent to his own fiancée, and the act of coveting someone in his heart while planning the marriage with another is really shameful. Therefore, in the example, the translators didn't choose to use literal translation, but translate it into an English proverb "greener pastures", which means "a new place or activity that offers new opportunities". This English proverb is similar to the Chinese idiom "eating with a bowl while looking at the pot", which is, in fact, more in line with the potential connotation of the original text.

##### Example 33:

Baldy Li didn't attend. Neither did Writer Liu. While Liu suggested that he was disdainful of attending Song Gang's wedding banquet, the real reason was that he was simply too cheap—if he come, he would have had to give the

newly-weds a red envelope full of money. (Yu Hua, 2009: 313-314)

##### Source text:

李光头没来,那个刘作家也没来,吃喜酒就要送红包,他表示不屑于参加宋刚的婚宴,其实是他不舍得花钱。(Yu Hua, 2012: 323)

The "red envelope" in the original text has a clear meaning in the Chinese context, but target readers who do not understand Chinese culture may not be able to understand the social and cultural meaning of "the red envelope". Therefore, in this sentence, the translator supplements the cultural meaning that people in China would put cash in the red envelope and give it to the newlyweds as a gift, which will help Western readers understand the cultural connotations in the source text.

##### Example 34:

The young women of Liu, meanwhile, were not so polite, instead comparing them to the Buddhist monk Tripitaka in the folktale *Journey to the West* and his companion Pigsy. (Yu Hua, 2009: 220)

##### Source text:

刘镇的姑娘就不会这么客气了,她们私下里议论这两人:一个像唐三藏,一个像猪八戒。(Yu Hua, 2012: 228)

Due to different social and cultural backgrounds, "Tang san zang" and "zhu ba jie" in the source text may cause barriers for Western readers who are not familiar with Chinese classical literature. Therefore, when translating this sentence, the translator supplemented the allusions by explaining the identities and the relationship between the two in the translation to provide target readers with a detailed supplementary explanation of the cultural concept in the source text.

### 3. Conclusion

In the translation process of Yu Hua's *Brothers*, the translators realized a dynamic balance between domestication and foreignization by implementing the four steps in the translation hermeneutics theory according to the specific conditions in the source text. In the translation process, the translator not only needs to adopt domestication translation strategy in order to reduce the reading barriers of target readers, but also be extremely careful when dealing with culture-loaded proverbs, idioms, and specific expressions in the source text. In this process, the translator needs to pay special attention to whether the vocabulary or expression of the source language culture has been missed or even mistranslated to avoid the loss of cultural factors in the target text.

At the same time, in order for target readers to have a deep understanding of the language culture of the source text, the translator also needs to find a junction between domestication and foreignization according to the actual translation situation, so as to ensure that the target readers can understand and the foreign flavor of the original text can be preserved, to the largest extent, in both the content and form.

Only in this way can the characteristics of language, images, metaphors, and concepts in the original text can be effectively integrated into the target language culture.

While taking into account both domestication and foreignization translation strategies, translators also need to rely on their own advantages in bilingualism and socio-cultural cognition to challenge the "untranslatable" parts of the source text, and provide further supplementary explanations for parts of the source text that may cause reading barriers for the target readers.

The successful translation of Brothers overseas highlights the important position of the translator in the translation process. Successful translations are no longer limited to complete domestication or foreignization translation strategies, but based on different translation content and translators' bilingual ability. By using various and appropriate translation methods such as literal translation, free translation, deletion, replacement, adding annotations, etc. to increase the attractiveness of the source text to the target readers, and actively absorb the cultural images in the original text, it is possible for excellent translators to compensate for the cultural loss of the original text in the conversion.

The great acclaim of Brothers in the English world is inseparable from the translators Eileen Cheng-yin Chow and Carlos Rojas' superb bilingual and socio-cultural cognition, which also proves the successful translations of Chinese modern and contemporary novels do need more and more translators give full play to their subjective initiatives to interpret the source texts. At the same time, the success of the translation in Western critics and market also provides great enlightenment to the "going out" attempt of Chinese modern and contemporary novels, which is worthy of a more comprehensive and in-depth study in the academic world.

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