



**To cite this article:**

Wai-on, Law. "A Portrait of Literary Translators from Prefaces of Chinese-English Works." *The AALITRA Review: A Journal of Literary Translation* 16 (December 2021): 42-54.

[aalitra.org.au](http://aalitra.org.au)

Australian Association for Literary Translation

# A Portrait of Literary Translators from Prefaces of Chinese-English Works

LAW WAI-ON

The Chinese University of Hong Kong, China

## Abstract

The translator's preface (TP) is the major channel for the translators' voice to be heard in their works. The TP can reveal the translator's personal background, contact, expectations, operational norms, the various considerations in text selection, the translating process and strategies, and the historical background. This study aims to investigate the functions and organisation of 44 sets of TP of translated English literary works from Chinese in the last six decades; and the ways in which the TPs assist the translators in building up their identities and reveal their norms. The TPs are of diverse genres published in six geographical regions. From a discourse analysis perspective, five major moves and 20 sub-moves are identified. With four of the major moves, translators enable target readers to understand their role in the translation process and their translating action. However, apart from acknowledgments, most other translator-related moves are not prominent, indicating a weak identity in their own publications. Quantitative analysis of the linguistic features lends support to this claim. The methodology can be applied with other language combinations, text genres and regions for a greater picture of how TPs can serve for the study of translation history, translation theory, and the translator's identity.

## Introduction

The TP refers to the introduction written by the translator in a translated work. In general, the content comprises introducing the source text (ST) author, its theme, the translation purpose and norms, and the translator's comments or reflections. The aims of the TP are to point out the differences between the culture and language of the ST and the culture and language of the target text (TT); to help TT readers understand the ST culture; to assist readers in knowing the role of the translator, and to highlight the translation considerations (McRae 63). The TP is a collective term, under which separate texts may serve similar functions. The TP and other paratexts have a history of more than one hundred years. Some of them have even become essential texts in the studies of the translator's identity, translation strategies, and how diverse background forces influence translated publications. For example, in the TP of the Chinese version of *Evolution and Ethics* by Thomas H. Huxley (1893), Yan Fu (1898) propounded the translation criteria “*xin, da, ya*”, which means “faithfulness, communicativeness and elegance”. In this article, I aim to investigate the discourse characteristics and themes of the TP. I also examine the translator's identity as well as the translation norm through the TPs. The research perspective is primarily descriptive, and it is supplemented with a quantitative dimension.

## The TP – Sub-genre and Paratext

French literary critic G. Genette was the first person to systematically propose the concepts and analysis of the paratext. According to Genette and later Bhatia, the purpose of a paratext is to make readers more receptive to the main text, and to guide them through the reading. The characteristics of the paratext are dependent on its location, temporal background, form,

communicative means, author and audience, as well as functions. The most studied type of the paratext is the TP, which is discussed in anthologies of reflections on translation to establish translation studies as a discipline (Batchelor 25). In Genette's model, a translation only serves as a paratext to an original text. This presupposes a subservient relationship between translation and original (Tahir-Gürçağlar), a notion argued against in the present study. Instead, Batchelor's definition (142) of the paratext as "a consciously crafted threshold for a text, which has the potential to influence the way(s) in which the text is received" is adopted for this research. Specifically, Deane-Cox (29) calls it "translatorial paratext", which denotes material authored by the translator as opposed to the author, the editor, or other third party.

In Luo Xinzhang's *Essays on Translation*, 25 TPs are selected out of a total of 30 modern essays. The following themes are identified and summarised: translation purpose, translation language, translation methods, readers' acceptability, and literary comparison between the West and China, in addition to the brief introduction of the author of the book and the main content (Jia). This finding resonates with that of Genette and of Bhatia. McRae surveyed 800 contemporary translated English fictions from other languages, and found that only 20% contained a TP. Newmark (170) wrote that "a translated novel without a translator's preface ought to be a thing of the past", asserting that "translators are in a unique position to act as ambassadors between cultures... their prefaces are an excellent locus for disseminating their understanding to readers". Nergaard (203-204) challenged the "marginalised position" of translators in the publishing process, and advocated for more of translators' input, combined with "a politics of visibility of translations and translators". The TP is the major channel for communicating with the reader, a significant resource for studying the translator's identity and the translation strategies, as well as a documentary source for historical research. The TP may become a scholarly work in its own right, a part of the body of metatext or literary criticism in a given field, and an opportunity for the translator to win over the reader to a certain viewpoint (Pallett). The voice which produces the TP is clearly a different voice, with an identity of its own (Hermans).

Having explored this sub-genre as paratext regarding its functions and use for translation studies, I now focus on the author of the paratext: the translator.

### **The Translator's Identity**

Translators are traditionally treated as merely transforming linguistic codes between two languages, and thus like a cultural tool, a wordsmith, and a translation human machine (Zha and Tian). Another conventional view is that translation is inferior to creation, as it is simply imitation based on the source text. The translators are expected to follow closely the ST; any "creative disobedience" is criticised (Zha and Tian 20). Such views indicate that readers look down on the independent identity of translators, treating them as mere affiliates of ST authors, and situating them on a marginal position in the polysystem of literature. Yet, according to the International Federation of Translators, the translator is "the holder of copyright in his/her translation and consequently has the same privileges as the author of the original work" (Translator's Charter, Section II, Article 15).

One of the focuses of translation studies after the 1990s has been the visibility of translators, after Venuti's (*Translator's Invisibility*) complaint of their "invisibility". In addition to textual analysis and cultural research, the translator's identity is now scrutinized within the space of social discourse. As initiators of the translating action, translators must employ their own creativity and repertoire of bilingual and bicultural knowledge and skills, somewhat independent of the ST. Concurrently, they are confined by the language style of the author of the ST, and the aesthetic standard and reading expectation of the TT reader. All of these exert an impact on the translators' purpose, approach, and strategies in the translating

process. Personal factors such as ideology, thinking method, affect, cultural identity and orientation, are also considered in the interpretation of the ST and rendering of the TT (Tu and Zhu). As stated by Freidson and Pym et al., the translators' autonomy implies that they could have authority in mediating interlingual communications.

Identity work of translators is performed through a range of both physical and discursive activities. For discursion, refined discourse analysis is called for to trace rhetorical strategies that individuals use to evoke or distance themselves from certain role-images, and to trace how norms are incorporated in the minds and practices of individual translators (Sela-Sheffy, "Translators' Identity Work"). In the examination of identity talk of around 23 elite translators in Israel, Sela-Sheffy ("Stars' or 'Professionals'") notes that the discourse of the translators was concentrated on and exclusive in adhering to a highly aspiring vocational ethos. But the discourse of 22 non-elite translators was for the most part ambivalent, wavering between embracing and dissociating themselves from this ethos for their professional dignity. Unlike the structural notion of the impersonalised habitus, identity work inevitably involves the person's own perception of oneself, which is not always identical with the social identity imputed to this person by others. It is precisely the ongoing interplay and calibration between the person's perception of oneself and the way one is assumedly perceived by others that creates their sense of self (ibid.). These are the areas that will be covered below.

## **Methodology**

This study aims to investigate the functions and organization of 44 sets of TP of translated English literary works from Chinese in the last six decades, and the ways in which the TPs assist the translators in building up their identities and reveal their norms. In regard to the research tool, the "move analysis" was developed by Swales as a top-down approach (where the focus is on meaning and ideas) for the discourse structure of texts from a genre. The text is described as a sequence of "moves", in which each represents a stretch of text serving a particular function, contributing to the overall communicative purpose of the genre. The moves and sub-moves for the TP as a sub-genre in translated literary works were developed based on McRae's and Law's studies, with minor modifications. When the preliminary moves and sub-moves were applied in analysis, a few of them did not match the communicative functions of the TP sample, and thus modifications were made. For illustration of this "move analysis", move 1 carries a communicative purpose of guiding target readers for reading. All the sub-moves are supportive to this communicative purpose, including sub-move 1a: author's background; sub-move 1b: source text writing background; sub-move 1c: socio-cultural background of TT, etc. The stretch of text can be very long, especially for introducing the socio-cultural background of the TT. Alternatively, a short paragraph can contain several moves or sub-moves, depending on the style of the translator.

In addition, I employ Dimitriu's research framework. Dimitriu identified that TPs serve three functions: (1) an explanatory function that explains the TT to readers; (2) a normative/prescriptive function, which provides instructions or models to be followed by other practitioners; and (3) an informative/descriptive function that gives pertinent translation-oriented information. In my research, I adopt the classification above with the following corresponding labels: interpretive, normative, and informative. I also add two other functions: affective, to express the translator's feelings; and vocative, which calls for the reader's response. In a similar study, Law examined 60 editors' prefaces from 47 English/Chinese and Chinese/English bilingual dictionaries published in the last five decades. A discourse analysis of the themes concluded nine moves for five major functions: interpretive, instructional, informative, affective and vocative. Reference has also been made to Haroon's and Bikmaniené's respective research, both of which shared a similar research design as this study.

Haroon investigated the form and content of nine introductory notes in translations published in Malaysia. Bikmanienė analysed translator's preface as a genre, and probed into the differences and similarities of genre features in 30 Lithuanian and 30 English prefaces in accordance with genre elements, such as format, genre moves and functions. Bikmanienė's analysis was based on the 11 basic genre moves introduced by Xia and Sun. In Law and Ng's study of Chinese Christian translated publications, 17 sets of translators' prefaces from Hong Kong and Taiwan in the recent 40 years were reviewed. Their prefaces serve five major functions like Law's findings above, yet with a few unique sub-moves to reflect their special identity. This study would follow the discourse analysis model of Law and Ng, which is more comprehensive than those of Haroon and Bikmanienė.

For the purpose of my research study, I randomly selected 70 Chinese to English translated literary works published between 1960s and 2010s, and examined the TPs included in these literary works. I selected a variety of literary genres: novel, prose essay, poetry, and theatre. Within these literary works, I identified 44 sets of TP, 63% of the 70 translated works sampled. Given the sample number, it makes no claim to be representative. Compared with McRae's design, which extracted TPs from 800 works, a size of 70 seems minimal. Yet considerations must be made regarding the limited market in Chinese to English literature. According to Venuti (*Scandals*), the percentages of books translated in the UK and the US are extremely low, comprising only between two and four per cent of the total number of books published.

In the samples, the TP may be called "translator's note", "preface" by the translator, "translator's introduction" or "foreword". Sometimes, the acknowledgements, the introduction, and the translator's background are presented separately. They are collectively referred to as TP. My focus is on the TP's function, but not whether it is a continual piece of writing, or how it is named. Translators' footnotes or endnotes are not included, as they mostly supply supplementary information to a specific segment, instead of the whole text. Book covers with translators' background were not found in the samples. Prefaces or introductions of the source text author, editor, etc. are excluded, because they are not "translatorial paratexts" (Deane-Cox). The voices of the former differ from the voice of the latter.

## **Results and Discussion**

In this section, I provide details about the samples collected, and their communicative purposes and functions, with the support of statistical analysis generated by a software application. As control, TPs from 24 Chinese translated books in social sciences are compared for any differences in translation norms.

### **Basic Statistics of the 44 TP Samples**

Among the 44 samples collected from 1960s – 2010s, 33 come from the recent three decades (1990s – 2010s), comprising 73% in total. The main publishers were from the United States (48%), followed by Hong Kong (32%), although most STs are originally written by mainland Chinese and Taiwanese authors. The other four regions of publication were China (9%), UK (7%), Canada (2%), and Taiwan (2%). Half of those in the United States and Hong Kong were university presses: Columbia University, and Oklahoma University in the US, and The University of Hong Kong, and The Chinese University of Hong Kong. The other publishers were commercial, or occasionally independent entities. The operational mode matched these two regions. All the four books from the Chinese mainland came from the 1980s, when the country reopened to the world in 1976 after the Cultural Revolution. In a planned economy as China, the government-financed Panda Books produced all four books.

In terms of genre, novel (68%) was the favourite of publishers, with poetry (24%) the second. Drama and prose essay only comprise 7% altogether. The length of the TPs varies, from half a page (*Twentieth Century Chinese Poetry: An Anthology*. Translated by K. Hsu 1964), to 20 pages (under separate sections, e.g., Introduction, Acknowledgments: *No Trace of the Gardener*. Translated by L.R. Smith & M. Yeh, 1998; *Three Kings*. Translated by B.S. McDougall, 1996).

### Communicative Purposes and Functions

I categorise the 44 sets of TP into five major moves in terms of communicative purpose, which are summarised in the table below.

Move and sub-move	Communicative purpose	Function	Percentage (%)
Move 1	Guidance to target readers for reading		98 <sup>1</sup>
Sub-move 1a	Author's background	informative	70 <sup>2</sup>
Sub-move 1b	Source text writing background	informative	73
Sub-move 1c	Socio-cultural background of TT	informative	59
Sub-move 1d	TT analysis (content, theme)	interpretive	64
Sub-move 1e	Quoting other critics on the ST or the author's style	informative	30
Sub-move 1f	Citing other people's work in relation to the TT	interpretive	52
Sub-move 1g	Book recommendation	informative	5
Move 2	About the translator		75
Sub-move 2a	The translator's background	informative	18
Sub-move 2b	The translator's reflections on the translation process, difficulties, principles, etc.	interpretive / normative / affective	45
Sub-move 2c	The translator's contact with the ST author	informative	50
Sub-move 2d	Comment on other translations of the ST <sup>3</sup>	interpretive	11
Move 3	Translation strategies		68
Sub-move 3a	Allusions / metaphors	interpretive	20
Sub-move 3b	Colloquialisms / period words / jargons	interpretive	11
Sub-move 3c	Linguistic differences between SL and TL / structural change in TT	interpretive	36
Sub-move 3d	Proper names and transliteration	interpretive	48
Sub-move 3e	Pun	interpretive	5
Sub-move 3f	Taboo words	interpretive	2
Sub-move 3g	TT title	interpretive	23
Move 4	Acknowledgments	affective	70
Move 5	The translator's wishes / invitation	vocative	25

**Table 1:** Full list of the moves and sub-moves of the TPs, with their respective functions and average percentage

<sup>1</sup> The average percentage of TPs with an individual major move is calculated by dividing the presence of any sub-move in the major move by the total number of TP samples, i.e., 44. For example, 43 samples contain at least one sub-move of move 1, so the percentage comes to 98% ( $43/44 = 0.9813$ ).

<sup>2</sup> The calculation of the average percentage of TPs containing a sub-move is similar. For instance, 31 TPs have sub-move 1a, so the result is:  $31/44 = 70.45\%$ , rounding up to 70%.

<sup>3</sup> A metatext: a text commenting on another text (Batchelor).

Out of the 20 sub-moves, the average is 7.2; out of the five major moves, the average is 3.4. Almost all TPs (98%) incorporate at least one sub-move of move 1, while the percentage of moves 2 to 4 are about three quarters (75%, 68%, 70% respectively). Only one-fourth of the samples consists of move 5. That means the three major functions in the samples are informative (move 1), interpretive (moves 2, 3), and affective (move 4). The normative function (by sub-move 2b) and the vocative one (by move 5) are under-served by less than 45% and 25% of TPs. The figures indicate that guiding target readers to read the TT is deemed the most important to translators, while all other themes related to translating and the translators themselves less so, especially their direct address to readers (move 5).

### **Linguistic Analysis**

The software application AntConc is a common freeware corpus toolkit in the academic setting. AntConc hosts a comprehensive set of tools, including concordance, word and keyword frequency generators, tools for cluster and lexical bundle analysis, and a word distribution plot (Anthony). The software was used in the present study for keywords and word frequencies based on MacDonald's suggestions. The statistics can shed light on the concerns, themes, and the writing styles in the TPs, indirectly verifying the findings in section 4.2. On the syntactic level, nouns are likely to be key to creating the abstractions in an article. The majority of the 44 sets employ concrete nouns. The keywords used most often are: "Chinese" (67 times), "China" (51 times), "Taiwan" (51), "novel" (49), "first" (46 times), "fiction" (31), "translation" (31), "Beijing" (30), "story" (30), and "author" (29). The frequency of abstract nouns is far much lower than that of concrete ones. Temporal (or related) words are conspicuous: "years" (35 times), "time" (30), "old" (26), "new" (24), "history" (20), "during" (19), "year" (18), and "century" (16). These data, coupled with the frequent move 1 for informative function in the samples, evidence the source and target texts introduction as reading guidance.

The statistics of pronoun use are as follows: "he" (143 times), "his" (136), "we" (25), "her" (21), "him" (18), "our" (13), "me" (12), "us" (12), "you" (6), and "your" (4). The first two male personal pronouns mostly refer to the ST authors, indicative of the emphasis of the TPs, aside from the disproportionate high percentage of male writers. Fourteen TPs address the reader, among which all but two use the third person ("the readers", "western readers", altogether 7 times). A quote from one of the two exceptions is cited below:

Quote (1): "If Cantonese Opera really interests you, I hope the translation serves to give you some idea of what is going on...." (*Waiting Heart*. Translated by K.-H. Cheung, 2016, 183)

According to Hyland, academic prose is not completely impersonal, but writers gain credibility by projecting an identity invested with individual authority, displaying confidence in their evaluations and commitment to their ideas. This is also instrumental to building up a relationship with readers. The most visible manifestation of such an authorial identity is the use of first-person pronouns and their corresponding determiners. The discursive choices align the writers with certain values and beliefs that support identities (ibid.). While the TP cannot be considered an academic article, as it is not persuasive in nature, the two share similar functions: expository and informative. Seen from the linguistic analysis above, less than half of the TP writers use the first-person pronouns (refer section 4.3), and that most use is to express gratitude to work partners. Direct or indirect address to readers is very uncommon, a sign of the weak identity of the translator.

On the meta-discourse level, some findings are made in reference to the language strategies listed by Kopple: text connectives, code glosses, illocution markers, epistemology markers, attitude markers, and bits of commentary. Among these strategies, the commonest in the samples is text connectives for guiding readers through texts, and for helping them construct appropriate representations in memory. The mostly seen textual connectives are “and” (480 times), “after” (33), “when” (32), “however” (18), “while” (15 times), “before” (11), and “although” (6). The first predominant connective aims to link up parallel structure. The other six mainly serve for temporal sequence, or for concession. This characteristic demonstrates that TPs present primarily an informative nature, and secondarily an expository nature. Citations of critics’ opinions on the ST (sub-move 1e, 52%) are commoner than citing other related works to the TT (sub-move 1f, 30%), or recommending books for further reading (sub-move 1g, 5%). This indicates that subject knowledge sharing in these TPs is unusual.

### **Translator’s Voice and Identity**

This article proposes a greater presence and voice of the translator with the TP. The TT is produced with negotiations, which not only occur on the translator’s part, but also among many other parties’, including the editor, the source text author, reviser, and other technical assistants. This is especially true for literary translation. Moves 2 to 5 all represent the voice of the translator, ready material for cognitive study of the translating process. Below are some quotations on the various aspects of the translating act.

(Sub-move 2d) About the translator: Comment on other translations of the ST  
Quote (2): “Père Amiot appears to have enjoyed no small reputation as a Sinologue in his day, and the field of his labours was certainly extensive. But his so-called translation of Sun Tzū, if placed side by side with the original, is seen at once to be little better than an imposture” (*Sun Tzū on the Art of War*. Translated by L. Giles, 1964)

By sharing his evaluation on a former version, the translator explains one of the reasons for the re-translation, and that translating is not merely transforming linguistic codes. Both the translator’s interpretation of the ST and the translator’s writing matter.

(Sub-move 2b) About the translator: the selection of the ST for translating  
Quote (3): “I have selected more undisputable masterpieces of romantic love, some of which could be quite amazing, for translation....” (*Ten Excellent Works of the Chinese Classical Literature*. Translated by C.-W. Hwang, 1996)

The translator Hwang shows his autonomy by mentioning his initiative and the factors in selecting the source texts, which are not reported in all TPs.

(Sub-move 2b) About the translator: translating process and difficulties  
Quote (4): “... I was often on the phone or buttonholing friends, colleagues and shopowners for terms in English.... when I told them that I was working on a literary translation..., they were all more than delighted to help.” (*Taipei People*. Translated by H.-Y. Pai & P. Yasin, 2000, xxxii)

By such citation, TT readers could visualise and realise the translating process involving the translators’ efforts, decisions and struggles.



(Move 3) Translation strategies: allusions, metaphors, proper names  
Quote (5): "... I have, with the author's permission... cut down on mixed metaphors which the Chinese delight in, or shortened lists of names or events such as the Three Anti or Five Anti Movements which would require footnotes or need to be paraphrased to make them intelligible to foreign readers." (*A Small Town Called Hibiscus*. Translated by G. Yang, 1983, 11)

Through the TP, readers understand why the English version is as such concerning the above three culture-specific items. These are traces of the translator's negotiation in the TT. This information helps readers realise that the source language does not automatically change to the target one after going through the "black box" of the translator's mind. The author and the ST do not dictate the translator and the TT, and that the translator, as the "creator" of the target text, enjoys the same individuality as the ST author, deserving the same respect.

Dimitriu (204) found that translators' discourse in the prefaces is frequently vague, emotional, impressionistic, and unsystematic. In agreement, this study discovers that there is no order in the presentation of moves in the TPs. The categorisation of moves and sub-moves with the five functions gives evidence to the translators' communicative intention. Yet the target readers of TP are not clearly stated. This discloses the weak identity of translators, as they are not used to speaking directly to their readers.

Translators' background is seldom introduced (in only 18% of TPs), but about half of the TPs relay contact with the ST author, an indication of the translator's role as mediator of the source and target texts, as well as the possibly authoritative status of the ST author. Comparable findings were shared by Bikmaniené. Her Lithuanian translators tended to be more invisible in their prefaces than their English counterparts. The translators centered on the author, and provided little of their own evaluation and explicit explanations of translation issues encountered. The informative function was more prominent in Lithuanian prefaces than in the English ones.

### **Translator's Norms**

Norms operate in each phase of the translation process: in the selection of texts, by determining what source languages and what (literary) models should be selected for the target literature, and in the selection of translation strategies that illustrate the relationships between the two cultures involved (Wolf 8). Chesterman's expectancy norms reflect the expectations that people from a target language community have regarding what translations should be like, the translation tradition existing in a culture, ideological factors, as well as the existence of texts belonging to the same genre.

In relevance to Dimitriu's study, this research learns that "faithfulness" to the ST message is underscored in all the quotations above, no matter in the 1960s or 2000s, a valid and consistent norm for decades. Yet none of the translators recounts the rationale behind that norm, and thus, possible manipulation cannot be traced. Among the 20 sets of TP which reflect on the translation process (Sub-move 2b), 13 discuss the translation principle, the norm. There are two ends in the translation spectrum: taking style precedence over literal translation, or follow the surface meaning and structure as much as possible. The majority of translators favour the former based on what they claim in the TP, while the minority the latter. An example of the former is presented in quote 6 below, while an example of the latter is shown in quote 7:

Quote (6): "I have regarded it of paramount importance to try to retain the easy-flowing style of the original, and to this end it has occasionally been necessary to

sacrifice strict accuracy to the Chinese text.” (*Secrets*. Translated by D. Deterding, 1985, iii)

Quote (7): “My versions are exceptionally literal.” (*The Harmony of the World: Chinese Poems*. Translated by D. Lattimore, 1980, 46)

The translation norm that the translator must choose is whether to transfer both the language form and literal meaning of the ST to the TT, or to convey the underlying meaning of the ST, while adopting TT language for readers’ acceptance. The decision is linked to the translator’s autonomy.

As control regarding translation norm, 24 sets of TP from 104 Chinese translated books in social sciences were randomly selected. The percentage of books containing a TP is only 23%, significantly lowered than the 63% of the literary TPs in this study, but close to that of McRae’s 20%. The subject areas entail economics, management, psychology, sociology, social work, counselling, public policy, etc. They were all published in Taiwan in the 1980s, before the influx of English to Chinese translations from the Chinese mainland in the last thirty years. Among the TPs, only four explicitly state their translation principle. As expected of informative texts, the translators all highlight content faithfulness, and the use of the literal translation approach. The quotes below are rendered from the source Chinese.

Quote (8): “... the literal approach is adopted in translation...” (*Organization Theory: Integrating Structure and Behavior*. Translated by T. Wu, 1983, II)

Quote (9): “... in pursuit of faithfulness, and communicativeness...” (*Handbook of Political Science*, Book Six. Translated by Editing Department of Youth Literary, 1984, 2)

This comparison highlights the distinct translation norm of the literary genre from that of the social sciences. The former employs the liberal approach much more often than the latter, the literal one.

## **Conclusion**

In this paper, I analyse how the TP assists the translators in building up their identities. While it can never be definitive, a few conclusions can be drawn. Overall, translators are eager to be cultural mediators in introducing authors and their works to the target language society. Some translators are aware of the strategies and norms employed in the translating process, and assume the role of the writer of the target text, as they communicate to their readers. Translators prefer a more liberal translation approach to the source text, for the purpose of rendering the target texts fluent and acceptable to target readership. Yet they focus their attention more on introducing the ST authors and the target text content, and less on the translating process and themselves. When publishers or editors afford translators the opportunity to write a TP, translators do not necessarily regard it as their arena. This is because translators perceive it as a sign of intentional or unintentional self-imposing invisibility of the translator’s identity. A few of them uphold their professional standard as literary translators, but the overall data suggest a weak image. It seems, if we are to advocate that the translator is as important to the TT as the ST author to the ST, it is not just the readers who need to change their perspective, but also the translators.

This study could have enlarged the scope to encompass a greater number of TPs to render the findings more conclusive, if given more resources for more systematic and targeted

searches. A comparison with TPs from the other language direction, i.e., English to Chinese, could boost its significance, and provide a broader picture of the TPs in published literary translations in this language pair. To better understand how translators build up their identities, more attention could be drawn on how they weigh and envision the readers' expectations. Norberg suggested that larger-scaled studies on translation comments in the TPs might concentrate on the historical development of the genre in different cultures, and on the historical development in an international context. Future studies may also address the complex issue of the reliability of the translation principles expressed in TPs, as compared with the actual translation. Another possible topic is to investigate how the translator's identity differs in translated works of different genres through the TPs. As well, other paratexts, including afterword, flip or interviews, can be scrutinised for the translators' views on the main text, the translation norms, and the translating process. Considering Venuti's (*Translator's Invisibility*) advocacy for translator's visibility, an interesting avenue would be the exploration of changes that may be observed from TPs in the future.

While future TPs can refer to this model for the themes, functions and moves for their organisation and content, the methodology can also be applied with other language combinations, text genres and regions, as no obvious cultural influence is observed. In addition, the findings can be compared with those of other genres, language combinations, and regions for a greater picture of the TPs' contribution to the study of translation history and translation theory.

## **Bibliography**

Ah Cheng. *Three Kings: Three Stories from Today's China*. Translated by B. S. McDougall, Collins Harvill, 1998.

Anthony, Laurence. "AntConc: A Learner and Classroom Friendly, Multi-Platform Corpus Analysis Toolkit." *IWLeL 2004: An Interactive Workshop on Language e-Learning*, 2004, pp. 7-13.

Batchelor, Kathryn. *Translation and Paratexts*. Taylor and Francis, 2018.

Bhatia, Vijay K. "The Power and Politics of Genre." *World Englishes*, vol. 16, no. 3, 1997, pp. 359-371.

Bikmaniené, Milda. "Translator's Preface as a Genre: A Comparative Analysis of Lithuanian and English Prefaces." *Sustainable Multilingualism*, vol. 12, no. 1, 2018, pp. 184-201.

Bo, Yang. *Secrets: A Collection of Short Stories by Bo Yang*. Translated by D. Deterding, Joint Publishing Company, 1985.

Chesterman, Andrew, *Memes of Translation: The Spread of Ideas in Translation Theory*. John Benjamins, 1997.

Deane-Cox, S. *Retranslations: Translation, Literature and Reinterpretation*. Bloomsbury, 2014.

Dessler, G. *Organization Theory: Integrating Structure and Behavior*. Translated by C. Yu, T. Wu, et al., Linking Publishing, 1983.

Dimitriu, Rodica. "Translators' Prefaces as Documentary Sources for Translation Studies." *Perspectives: Studies in Translatology*, vol. 17, no. 3, 2009, pp. 193-206.

Freidson, E. *Professional Powers: A Study of the Institutionalization of Formal Knowledge*. University of Chicago Press, 1986.

Genette, Gérard. *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*. Translated by J. E. Lewin, Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Gu, Hua. *A Small Town Called Hibiscus*. Translated by Gladys Yang, Chinese Literature, 1983.

———. *Harmony of the World: Chinese Poems*. Translated by D. Lattimore, Copper Beech Press, 1980.

Haroon, Haslina. "The Translator's Preface as a Paratextual Device in Malay-English Literary Translations." *The International Journal of Translation and Interpreting Research*, vol. 9, no. 2, 2017, pp. 100-113.

Hermans, Theo. "The Translator's Voice in Translated Narrative." *Critical Readings in Translation Studies*, edited by Mona Baker, Routledge, 2010, pp. 193-212.

Hsu, Kai-yu, editor. *Twentieth Century Chinese Poetry: An Anthology*. Translated by Kai-yu Hsu, Anchor Books, 1964.

Hwang, Chang-wei, editor. *Ten Excellent Works of the Chinese Classical Literature*. Translated by Chang-wei Hwang, San Jose, CA, 1996.

Hyland, Ken. "Authority and Invisibility: Authorial Identity in Academic Writing." *Journal of Pragmatics*, vol. 34, 2002, pp. 1091-1112.

Jia, Hui. *On Translation Norms of Literary Translation*. Master's diss., Northwest Normal University, Lanzhou, 2009.

Kopple, William. J. V. "Metadiscourse, Discourse, and Issues in Composition and Rhetoric." *Discourse Studies in Composition*, edited by E. Barton & G. Stygall, Hampton Press, 2002, pp. 91-113.

Law, Wai-on. "A Discourse Analysis of Editors' Prefaces of (Chinese & English) Bilingual Dictionaries." *The 12<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the Asian Association for Lexicography: ASIALEX 2018 proceedings*. King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang, 2018, pp. 301-312.

Law, Wai-on, and Raymond Ng. "Finding the Translator's Voice: A Study of Translators' Prefaces to Chinese Translations of Christian texts in Hong Kong and Taiwan." *The Translator*, vol. 26, no. 2, 2020, pp. 163-175.

Luo, Xinzhang, editor. *Essays on Translation*. Commercial Press, 1984.

MacDonald, Susan. P. "The Analysis of Academic Discourse(s)." *Discourse Studies in Composition*, edited by E. Barton & G. Stygall, Hampton Press, 2002, pp. 115-129.

McRae, Ellen. "The Role of Translators' Prefaces to Contemporary Literary Translations into English: An Empirical Study." *Translation Peripheries: Paratextual Elements in Translation*, edited by A. Gil-Bardaji, P. Orero & S. Rovira-Esteva, Peter Lang, 2012, pp. 63-82.

Nergaard, S. "The (In)visible Publisher in Translations. The Publisher's Multiple Translational Voices." *Authorial and Editorial Translation 2: Editorial and Publishing Practices*, edited by H. Jansen & A. Wegener, Éditions québécoises de l'oeuvre, 2013, pp. 177-208.

Newmark, Peter. "Introductory Survey." *The Translator's Handbook*, edited by C. Picken, Aslib, 1983, pp. 1-17.

Norberg, Ulf. "Literary Translators' Comments on Their Translations in Prefaces and Afterwords: The Case of Contemporary Sweden." *Translation Peripheries Paratextual Elements in Translation*, edited by A. Gil-Bardaji, Peter Lang, 2012, pp. 101-116.

Pai, Hsien-yung. *Taipei People* (Chinese-English bilingual edition). Translated by H.-Y. Pai & P. Yasin, The Chinese University Press, 2000.

Pallett, Valerie. "Packaging the Product: A Case Study of Verbal and Non-verbal Paratext in Chinese-English Translation." *The Journal of Specialised Translation*, vol. 20, 2013, pp. 86-106.

Pym, A., et al. *The Status of the Translation Profession in the European Union. Studies on Translation and Multilingualism 7*. Publication of Offices of the European Union, 2012.

Sela-Sheffy, Rakefet. "'Stars' or 'Professionals': The Imagined Vocation and Exclusive Knowledge of Translators in Israel." *MonTI 2*, 2010, pp. 131-152.

Sela-Sheffy, Rakefet. "Translators' Identity Work: Introducing Micro-sociological Theory of Identity to the Discussion of Translators' *Habitus*." *Remapping Habitus in Translation Studies*, edited by G. M. Vorderobermeier, Rodopi, 2014, pp. 43-55.

Sun, Tzū. *Sun Tzū on the Art of War*. Translated by Lionel Giles, Literature House, 1964.

Swales, J. M. *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings*. Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Tahir-Gürçağlar, S. "What Texts don't Tell: The Uses of Paratexts in Translation Research." *Crosscultural Transgressions. Research Models in Translation Studies 2: Historical and Ideological Issues*, edited by Theo Hermans, St Jerome Publishing, 2002, pp. 44-60.

Tong, Tik-Sang. *Waiting Heart: Chinese-English Bilingual Script Based on Manuscripts Used for the First Season for Staging*. Translated by Cheung Kwan-Hin, Utopia Cantonese Opera Workshop, 2016.

Translator's Charter. Retrieved from <http://www.fit-ift.org/translators-charter/>.

Tu, Guoyuan, and Zhu, Xianlong. "The Translator's Subjectivity: A Hermeneutic Exposition." *Chinese Translators' Journal*, vol. 24, no. 6, 2003, pp. 8-14.

Venuti, Lawrence. *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*. 2nd ed. Routledge, 1995.

Venuti, Lawrence. *The Scandals of Translation: Towards an Ethics of Difference*. Taylor & Francis Group, 1998.

Wolf, M. "Introduction: The Emergence of a Sociology of Translation." *Constructing a Sociology of Translation*, edited by M. Wolf and A. Fukari. John Benjamins, 2007, pp. 1-36.

Xia, Jingyi, and Zhixiang Sun. "Changing Content of Translator's Prefaces: With Special Reference to China Yilin Press's Translated Publications." *Journal of Literature and Art Studies*, vol. 5, no. 11, 2015, pp. 1081-1089.

Yang, Mu. *No Trace for the Gardener: Poems of Yang Mu*. Translated by L. R. Smith & M. Yeh, Yale University Press, 1998.

Zha, Mingjian, and Tian Yu. "On the Subjectivity of the Translator." *Chinese Translators' Journal*, vol. 24, no. 1, 2003, pp. 19-24.