

An Integrated Approach to Probing the Manifestation of Translators' Subjectivity in Group Translation

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How a group of translators with diverse subjectivities collaborate to produce translation is an issue that requires exploration. Therefore, this paper aims to incorporate the concepts of agency, habitus, and three-dimensional transformation from eco-translatology to create an integrated approach to conducting such epistemic research, attempting to understand if subjectivities of translators in a team cause inconsistent translation style in the target text. Regarding the procedures of the integrated approach, a translator's agency and habitus are clarified by analyzing his/her translation purpose, philosophy, and experiences. Subsequently, the manifestation of the translator's subjectivity in translation is examined through linguistic, cultural, and communicative dimensions. As a further step, this paper investigates how Xi Ni Er's Chinese stories are translated by two groups of English translators: (a) Goldblatt and Lin, and (b) student translators from National University of Singapore. The outcome is twofold: (a) although multiple translators participated in the translation activity, both of the groups were able to produce translation in a consistent style, and (b) dissimilar translation styles were identified between the two groups due to their background differences—Goldblatt and Lin paid more attention to translation clarity and fluency, while the students were inclined to adhere to the original meaning and syntax.

Keywords: subjectivities, agency, habitus, eco-translatology, translation style

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以整合分析法探索譯者主體性於 群體翻譯之表現形式

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在團體翻譯中，每位譯者擁有不同的主體性，他們如何共同進行翻譯是一個值得探討的主題，因此，本研究整合能動、習性及生態翻譯學的三大面向轉換，從而建立一個分析譯者主體性如何呈現在翻譯中的方法。同時，也試圖透過這方法來瞭解不同主體性的譯者共同合作時，是否會造成翻譯風格不一致。在分析法方面，本研究認為，可以透過檢視譯者的翻譯目的、理念與過往經驗來勾勒出其能動與習性。接著，可透過生態翻譯學所提到的字詞、文化與溝通面向轉換來分析譯文，以此找出譯者主體性的痕跡。建立出這個整合分析法後，本研究將之應用於分析希尼爾的中文故事譯本，市面上現存兩種譯本：葛浩文與林麗君的譯本及新加坡國立大學學生譯者的譯本。分析結果如下：（1）儘管兩個譯本皆為共同譯作，單純將這兩個譯本獨立檢視時，翻譯風格並未有不一致之狀況；（2）將兩個譯本互相比較時，可以發現他們的翻譯風格不一樣，葛浩文與林麗君的譯本較重視譯文的清楚流暢，新加坡國立大學學生譯者較忠實原文字義與句構，而本研究發現此差異可能來自於這兩個譯者群體的背景差異。

關鍵詞：主體性、能動、習性、生態翻譯學、翻譯風格

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Introduction

This paper aims to propose an integrated approach to investigating the translator's subjectivity in terms of their translation outputs. The definition of subjectivity, together with the components of the integrated approach—i.e., the concepts of agency, habitus, and eco-translatology—will be delineated in section two. Subsequently, this paper will introduce the research materials and how they are going to be examined in section three; the findings will be presented in section four; and the concluding remarks will be given in section five.

Literature Review

Explaining Subjectivity and Its Application in Translation Studies

Subjectivity, simply put, centers on a person's particular perspective, feelings, beliefs, and desires (Solomon, 2005), and its epistemic exploration originates in philosophical writings by René Descartes and Immanuel Kant. Descartes (1911) embarked on a train of thought to discover the self and finally deduced that the human is a thing that thinks and has the ability to doubt, understand, conceive, affirm, deny, will, refuse, imagine, and feel (p. 10). Nevertheless, researcher pointed out that humans' conscious states, thoughts, and experiences, in Descartes' (1911) subjectivism view, can be acquired and/or represented without the influences, connections, and/or manifestations of external objects, whereas Kant (2008), decades later, contended on the basis of transcendental idealism that the reality of humans' thoughts and experiences invariably requires the existence of external, non-psychological objects that necessarily possess pertinence (Schwyzer, 1997, pp. 342-347).

Subsequent philosophers, such as Georg Hegel, Søren Kierkegaard, Edmund Husserl, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Udo Thiel, endeavored to conceptualize or examine subjectivity from various perspectives. Based on existing discussions, Francescotti (2017) provided a generalized definition: Subjectivity relates to how humans consider, feel, and view objects in the world according to personal thoughts and experiences, and intentionality is the power that links humans' mental states with the objects that are concerned (which Francescotti terms "aboutness"). Furthermore, Sturgeon (1994) argued that only when a person has had a certain kind of experience can she/he gain a subjective understanding of the general nature of this experience (p. 221). In other words, our life encounters shape our thoughts and experiences; thus, people with different life encounters will have dissimilar subjectivities. As Solomon (2005) puts it, "everyone sees the world from his or her (or its) individual vantage-point, defined in part by nature, by culture, and by individual experience" (p. 900).

Subjectivity entails the examination of the human self, perceptions, and sensations, with the analysis of subjectivity moving even further to cover the issues of identity, individuation, and individuality (Strazzoni, 2015, p. 5). Because the preceding subjectivity-related "qualia" play important roles in the translator's decision-making mechanism, there is a trend in translation studies to probe the translator's subjectivity and its manifestation in the production of translation (Rossi, 2018, p. 383).

Among existing studies, some translation scholars have attempted to incorporate subjectivity in the discussion of existing translation theories. For example, Stolze (2010) discussed how the concept of subjectivity is applied in Steiner's hermeneutic motion, and Assis Rosa (2010) highlighted the intersubjective nature (a concept that is derived from subjectivity) of Toury's translational norms. Instead of examining translation theories, Sakai (1997) brought

readers' attention to individual and collective subjectivity (pp. 13-16). While individual subjectivity refers to the translator's behaviors based on his/her personal thoughts and experiences, collective subjectivity is shared by an ethnic community or a nation that undergoes the same custom or event together.

Meanwhile, it is also not uncommon in the related literature to see subjectivity-based investigations into the translator's decision-making mechanism and consequent behaviors. Levý (2000), as one of the earliest translation scholars probing the translator's mind, described translating as a decision process since the translator deals with grammatical forms and philosophical matters and has to choose the most appropriate interpretation and translation among multiple alternatives. Munday (2012) argued that the translator, as the decision-maker, manifests his/her visibility (perhaps also manipulation) through the decision process because she/he "brings his/her own sociocultural and educational background, ideological, phraseological and idiosyncratic stylistic preferences to the task of rendering a source text in the target language" (p. 2); the qualities that Munday listed share a connection to the preceding subjectivity-related "qualia." Working on the topic of the translator's mind and behaviors, Robinson (2001) conceptualized the translator's subjectivity and discussed how it renders manifestations in various texts of the old times, such as *King Lear* and *The Book of Mormon*. Xie (1999) maintained that the translator's subjectivity can be identified everywhere in literary translation, because the text type features a high level of creativity.

In addition, some scholars invested effort in analyzing translated texts to understand the benefits and/or harms brought about by the translator's subjectivity. This paper notes that some translation scholars (Katan, 2018; Vakhovska, 2021; Z. Yang, 2015) pointed out that subjectivity is the cause of a biased interpretation of the source text (ST) and an inappropriate production of the target text (TT), while

others' investigations (Chen, 2011; Rossi, 2018; L. Yang, 2013) understood subjectivity as the reason why a translation product is creative and communicative.

The preceding paragraphs provided a concise picture of subjectivity and how it has been explored in translation studies. This paper argues that subjectivity, as defined earlier, is an essential factor that impacts the translator's decision-making. This may be the reason why Robinson (2001), when likening translation to spirit-channeling, points out that the translator faces "the possession of channels by discarnate spirits, the possession of the translator by the source author, and the possession of ideological subjects by collective forces" (p. 12). This paper considers that Robinson endows the author and ST with the trait of sacredness, which resemble God and the sacred text that the translator attempts to channel. In this context, Robinson regards the translator's subjectivity to be the force of "reason" as well as the translator's inner god that intervenes in the process of translation decision-making (Robinson, 2001, pp. 34-35). Subjectivity is a force that may be at some times in conflict with the ST and author, resulting in individualistic translation choice. In a similar vein, Venuti (1995) deems subjectivity to be a determinate factor that leads to translator's use of the foreignization strategy (p. 24), and subjectivity plays a significant role in the process of translating, to the extent that "the translator's every choice should be governed by it—even to the point of violating the 'laws' for good translation" (p. 69). Venuti's remarks classify foreignization into the subjectivity-driven strategy, whereas domestication into humanism. Nevertheless, this paper argues that subjectivity may not always be foreignization-oriented if we are to hold that everyone has different life encounters. Therefore, the present study serves as an attempt to seek a new way to look into the relationship between the translator's subjectivity and his/her translation output. In addition, existing studies on the benefits and/or harms brought about by the translator's subjectivity have only

focused on the benefits and/or harms without investigating how the translator's past experiences and translation philosophy form his/her subjectivity to produce a certain style of translation. Accordingly, this paper aims to illuminate this aspect.

To enable the investigation, this paper proposes an integrated approach that comprises two components: (a) the sociological concepts of agency and habitus to understand the translator's background, and (b) the concept of three-dimensional transformation from eco-translatology to examine the translator's output so as to identify his/her subjectivity that is manifest in the translation style.

The reason why agency, habitus, and eco-translatology are incorporated in this study is threefold. First, this paper, based on the preceding discussion over subjectivity, holds that people's life encounters (e.g., education, work, social circle, customs of the society/culture that we grew up in, etc.) form our perspectives, feelings, beliefs, and attitudes towards various targets, hence we have different subjectivities. Habitus refers to the dispositions that people develop through the events we experience in our life, and the concept is akin to the above-discussed formation of subjectivity. Therefore, this paper considers habitus to be a plausible aspect to delve into translators' subjectivities. Second, this paper follows the functional school and deems translation to be a purposeful activity. Here, agency plays a significant role because this concept represents the motivation to fulfill purposes. In the context of the present study, agency indicates translators' decisions driven by their subjectivities, covering why they wish to translate the stories and how they conduct the task. Third, in order to undertake an in-depth examination of the ST and TT to identify possible subjectivity-driven translation decisions, eco-translatology is adopted. This theory divides all texts into three dimensions (linguistic, cultural, and communicative), and this paper contemplates that such a three-dimensional analysis may constitute a relatively comprehensive textual investigation, enabling us to probe how different translators show dissimilar translation styles linguistically, culturally, and communicatively.

Being an attempt that has not been made before, the present study aims to integrate the preceding three concepts for examining the manifestation of translator's subjectivity in translation, and Xi Ni Er's (希尼爾) short stories are selected as research materials. This paper is expected to provide a feasible approach for future research on the manifestation of translator's subjectivity in TT, and it aims to make an initial contribution to the exploration of this topic.

Agency and Habitus for Probing the Translator's Subjectivity

The concept of agency refers to the agent's willingness and ability to act to fulfill a purpose, and the debate it covers is twofold: (a) the strength of external social influences on the agent's action, and (b) the agent's strength to act on free will and impose influences back on those social factors (Koskinen, 2010, pp. 165-166; Somekh & Lewin, 2005, p. 344). Agency concerns the interaction between social factors (control or constraints from social groups) and individual factors (the agent's free will and decisions that feature individuality), which form the translator's power to choose texts to translate, select an appropriate translation strategy and style, and negotiate with the editor or publisher over issues outside of translation *per se*.

Regarding the concept of habitus, it was discussed by Bourdieu (1991/1991) to refer to "a set of dispositions to incline agents to act and react in certain ways" (pp. 12-14), with agents' dispositions formed through a gradual process of inculcation since early childhood. That is to say, agents develop a set of beliefs, roles, and relations in the process of socialization, and they internalize the inculcated beliefs and knowledge to play assumed roles in respective domains according to what they absorb. According to Bourdieu (2013), the difference between dispositions and habitus lies in that the latter is "a system of lasting, transposable dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every

moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions and makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks” (pp. 82-83). In addition, Bourdieu (1979/1984) also foregrounded the existence of class habitus, stating that “agents who are placed in homogeneous conditions of existence imposing homogeneous conditionings and producing homogeneous systems of dispositions capable of generating similar practices” (p. 101).

Furthermore, perhaps taking root in Bourdieu’s concept of class habitus, Simeoni (1998) proposed the notion of subservience to highlight that translators are inclined to translate texts according to translational norms they acquire in their class (i.e., the social group that they belong to, and it is the profession of translation in the current discussion). Based on the argument that people in the same class make similar decisions, the outputs produced by different translators of the same society are likely to be similar, and individual creativity can only be seen in the parts where competing norms exist (Simeoni, 1998, p. 6). Nevertheless, the status of norms in translatorial subservience, as argued by Sela-Sheffy (2005), comes with a tyrannic insinuation (pp. 6-7), and conformity to norms is not perpetual due to the emergence of translatorial autonomy when different translation models coexist (Inghilleri, 2003, pp. 261-262; Sela-Sheffy, 2005, p. 20).

Regarding the dissident views that are mentioned above, this paper agrees with Inghilleri and Sela-Sheffy due to the concept of subjectivity. As mentioned in the previous section, people with different life encounters will have dissimilar subjective perceptions, feelings, and views on the same things. Likewise, it is likely for translators in the same society to undergo different life encounters, hence having different subjectivities, which cause their translation styles to be dissimilar. For example, some people become translators after going through standard translation training, whereas others have never received such education. In addition, a translator who receives commendation from target readers for a certain

translation style in a translation case may then develop a personal preference to employ that style again in future cases. This paper holds that the translator's personal experiences is a factor that impacts his/her habitus.

It can be noted from the preceding descriptions that agency and habitus share correlation. Explained in terms of translation studies, agency denotes the motivation, capacity, and action to realize a skopos, and habitus refers to the individual or collective strategy employed by the translator to fulfill the skopos; so, the two concepts overlap in the aspect of choice-making in the process of translating. This paper argues that the identification of the translator's agency and habitus is a way to portray his/her subjectivity. To corroborate the argument, this paper attempts to take Xi Ni Er's Chinese short stories and the English translations done by two groups of translators as research materials. Through examining the past experiences and translation philosophies of the two groups, this paper aims to make twofold contribution: (a) understanding if there are differences in translation style between the two groups due to their dissimilar subjectivities, and (b) determining whether a consistent translation style can be maintained within the two groups, respectively.

Furthermore, the concept of three-dimensional transformation in eco-translatology is introduced to enable a comprehensive examination.

Eco-Translatology for Examining the Translator's Output

Hu (2013, 2020) proposed the theory of eco-translatology to provide an approach to examining the ST and TT as two correlated ecosystems. The theory is characterized by the Chinese philosophy of harmony and Darwin's concepts of natural selection and survival of the fittest. In addition, when establishing the theory, Hu (2004) mentioned that the translator's role ought to receive great attention, because it is the translator who accesses and interprets the source

ecosystem, selects the fittest translation strategy, constructs the target ecosystem, and ensures a harmonious relationship between all ecosystems. Furthermore, to evaluate the ecosystems appropriately, researchers have to consider two stages: (a) the pre-translation stage—the selection of a suitable translator and the translator's adaptation to the translational eco-environment, and (b) the translation stage—the translator's decision-making in selecting suitable translation strategies (Hu, 2013, p. 245, 2020, pp. 55-56; Hu & Tao, 2016, pp. 127-128; Jiang, 2015, p. 141).

Hu (2013, 2020) theorize eco-translatology, in which he not only divides the translation practice into pre-translation stage and translation stage but also calls for attention to micro-, meso-, and macroscopic analyses of the ST and TT. In order to provide a simplified explanation of Hu's intricate concepts, this paper proposes a model (see Figure 1), upon the basis of which it attempts to clarify eco-translatology.

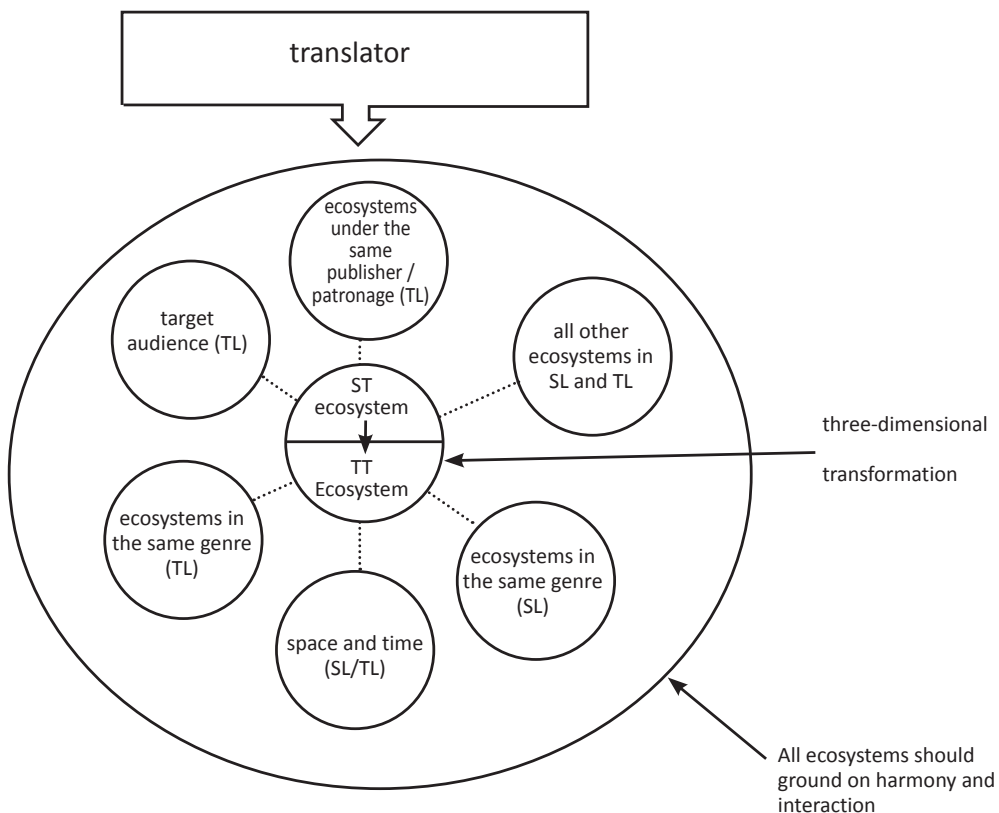
Eco-Translatologists hold that every text constitutes an ecosystem that encompasses both the text per se and its surrounding components, including the community, the culture, its receiver, its translator (for translated texts), and all other physical and ideational aggregations (Hu, 2011, p. 7; Song & Hu, 2016, p. 107; Wang, 2011, p. 11). Based on this definition, every circle (i.e., ecosystem) in this model comprises not just written texts, but also ideational components, such as syntax, register, culture, ideology, and power relations. In addition, because this is a model for translation settings, the ST and the TT are placed in the center.

When translating, the translator is constructing a TT ecosystem, and she/he should try his/her utmost to attain a harmonious relationship among all circles (both big and small). The realization of harmony counts on a smooth and dynamic interaction among the ecosystems, with the translator working as a converter to translate the text and, simultaneously, a mediator to ensure that the conversion brings harmony to all aspects. The reason why the translator is shown outside the

circles in Figure 1 is not because she/he is peripheral; instead, it is because the translator is the force as well as the central role that deals with all circles and makes harmonious connection possible.

Figure 1

An Eco-Translatological Model



Meanwhile, this paper also highlights that proximity is a crucial factor in eco-translatology, and the proximity level between circles is indicated by the length of the dashed lines in Figure 1 (the shorter, the closer). In actual biological ecology, every creature has a close or remote relationship with other creatures, and this leads

to a stronger or weaker connection. Likewise, the closer two ecosystems are, the more influential they will be with each other. In other words, the harmony between closer ecosystems gives them higher priority in terms of the translator's effort in attaining their harmonious relationship.

Finally, the ST and TT ecosystems are positioned together because they are the most affinitive of all ecosystems in the translation activity. Moreover, Hu (2020) proposed a three-dimensional transformation between the ST and TT ecosystems, indicating that the three-dimensional transformation is the closest among all, hence the most essential (pp. 161-164). The three dimensions encompass linguistic, cultural, and communicative transformation, and Hu pointed out that translation analysis can only be comprehensive in this manner. The linguistic dimension focuses on the translation of lexical contents, but culture-loaded words and expressions are singled out and analyzed in the cultural dimension because they are more difficult to translate. Finally, the communicative dimension concerns whether the intended effect is realized among the target readership in a manner similar to that of the ST with the source audience. It can be noted from the definitions that the first two dimensions concern textual conversion, but cultural rendition receives special attention due to the translation difficulty it entails. Communicative transformation accentuates the ideological and/or emotional delivery to the audience, so it requires us to examine not only lexical contents, but also paratextual components that the translator may employ to fulfill such delivery. Because three-dimensional transformation allows for a comprehensive investigation into a translator's translation style, this paper decides to apply it to the examination of the translator's subjectivity.

Methodology

Research Materials

The research materials encompass five Chinese short stories—comprising 13 pages in total—composed by Singaporean writer Xi Ni Er “Reunion” (回), “We Have Decided to Rebuild Eu Court” (我們決定重建余閣), “Grand Uncle Ach!” (舅公呀呸!), “A Rusty Sword” (寶劍生鏽), and “A Preliminary Study of the Development of Relationships by Marriage: A Research and Analysis Report on New Kinship Systems” (姻親關係演變初探 — 一份新的倫理關係調查與分析報告). Xi Ni Er, whose real name is Chia Hwee Pheng (謝惠平), is a reputed writer who pioneered the promotion of flash fiction in Singapore. As a Chinese Singaporean, he primarily writes in Chinese, focusing on Singaporeans’ shared habits, beliefs, ideologies, and collective memories (Zhu, 2018, p. 61). Xi Ni Er is not only prolific but also highly esteemed by the local community, hence he has been recognized with several major awards, such as the Golden Lion Literary Award and The Cultural Medallion (Singapore’s highest cultural award). As one of Singapore’s representative literary authors, this paper decides to select his stories to be the research materials.

The present study includes two English versions of the five identical stories produced by two groups of translators: (a) *The Earnest Mask* (Xi, 2004/2012) by Howard Goldblatt and Sylvia Li-Chun Lin, and (b) *Droplets* (St. André, 2001) by eight student translators under the editorial supervision of professor James St. André at the Department of Chinese Studies at National University of Singapore; the eight students are Chong Hsueh Mei, Chua Chin Haw, Ho Jia Min, Lim Ni Eng, Tan Huay Koon, Tan Teng Lee, Toh Hwee Bin, and Yen Fong Cheng.

The reason for choosing the five stories is twofold: (a) Xi Ni Er is one of the

most prominent writers in Singapore and his writings comprise a variety of literary, cultural, and social characteristics, thus enabling us to examine how the two groups of translators deal with different types of expressions, and (b) the stories are translated by two groups of translators with disparate backgrounds, and, thus, they serve as adequate materials for investigating how subjectivity manifests in TT and whether diverse subjectivities in collaborative translation cause inconsistent translation style.

Analysis Method

Based on the discussion in section two, this paper argues that the translator's subjectivity can be delineated through examining his/her agency and habitus, and an integrated approach is proposed. In this approach, the translator's background, including education, past experiences, and translation philosophy, is analyzed because these factors, as discussed in section two, have impacts on the formation of the translator's agency, habitus, and subjectivity. Meanwhile, it is explained here that the present study focuses on the manifestation of the translator's subjectivity in the translation output, although subjectivity can also be evident in other aspects, such as the decision-making mechanism in the process of translating.

Regarding the investigation into the translation produced by two groups of translators, the present study begins with collecting and analyzing data pertaining to the translators for understanding their backgrounds and translation philosophies.

As a further step, the present study analyzes the above-mentioned STs and TTs from the linguistic, cultural, and communicative dimensions to identify the manifestations of the translators' subjectivities in the TT. The analysis outcome will allow us to determine if there are differences in the translation styles of the two groups due to dissimilar subjectivities and understand if a consistent translation style can be maintained within the two groups, respectively.

In addition, regarding the cultural dimension, the present study collects cultural terms according to Newmark's (1988) categorization that covers ecology, material culture, social culture, organizations, customs, activities, procedures, concepts, gestures, and habits (p. 95).

Results and Discussion

Translators' Backgrounds

This paper collected texts from the internet and libraries within Singapore, including research papers, translators' prefaces, notes, and interviews, to understand the two translator groups' backgrounds. Nevertheless, most of the materials were related to Goldblatt and Lin because they were prestigious and well-known in the translation circle. Comparatively, perhaps because they were not as famous, this paper could not identify any texts discussing the student translators' translation principles or styles. Eventually, the "Acknowledgments" and "Introduction" sections written by the editor, St. André, in *Droplets* (St. André, 2001), were used as references for understanding the translation purpose and principle of the student translators.

Group One: Goldblatt and Lin

Goldblatt and Lin are prolific literary translators who have translated—either individually or together—many novels and prose works composed by big names in the Chinese-speaking sphere, such as Mo Yan (莫言), Xiao Hong (蕭紅), Huang Chun-Ming (黃春明), Chu Tien-Wen (朱天文), Xi Ni Er, and so on. Both their individual and cooperative translations have received great acclaim in English-speaking societies, exemplified by Goldblatt's translation contributions being considered an important reason why Mo Yan won the Nobel Prize in Literature

(Sparks, 2013) and Liang and Xu's (2015) analysis revealing that Goldblatt and Lin's co-translation of *Notes of a Desolate Man* (published in 2000) has garnered helpful customer reviews on Amazon (p. 64).

Goldblatt's purpose of translation is to introduce Chinese masterpieces to English readers (Goldblatt, 2015, p. 212; Sparks, 2013, para. 4), with his philosophy of translation being that "the author wrote for his readers, and I translate for mine" (Stalling, 2022, p. 59). In other words, Goldblatt holds that translators should respect the ST but, at the same time, bear in mind that target readers are foreign readers, and it is their reception that should be considered the most important (Goldblatt & Efthimiadou, 2012; Goldblatt & Lin, 2019; Lu, 2015; Sparks, 2013). Similarly, Lin (2000) also explores the sanctity of the ST and stresses that the translator should translate for target readers and, if necessary, can explain in the preface why she/he decided to make certain changes in the TT.

After reading references that cover Goldblatt and Lin's talks and scholars' analyses of the two persons' translation styles, it is noted that neither Goldblatt nor Lin consider "fidelity to the ST" a top priority, as they have stressed in many discussions and articles (Goldblatt, 1993, pp. 207-208, 2015, pp. 219-222; Goldblatt & Lin, 2019, para. 2; Levitt, 2013, para. 16) that being able to deliver the author's ideas to English readers and impose the same effects on them is more important than faithfully rendering the original meaning. In addition, Goldblatt describes his strategy as follows:

[A]bsorbing a phrase or a sentence or more to determine its intent and then recreating it in our own language, staying close to the original wherever possible, striving to capture images, mirroring language register and the like, but usually in a new structure, often with different words. (Sparks, 2013, para. 13)

In every collaborative translation activity, Lin plays a crucial role in

interpreting the Chinese ST for Goldblatt, and the latter absorbs the meaning and renders it into English. Moreover, they contact the authors of the STs for clarification on certain terms and expressions if necessary. As explained by the two translators, the production of a translation involves not only their own efforts but also the author's clarification on ambiguous terms and expressions, the editor's comments from the perspective of the publisher, and even the internet helps by providing relevant information; accordingly, there can be six draft versions before the translation can be finalized (Goldblatt & Lin, 2019; Lu, 2015).

Finally, Goldblatt describes the power he possesses to select the fictions he wishes to translate and even has a say over issues that are typically managed by the editor or publisher, such as the book cover design (Goldblatt & Lin, 2019; Lu, 2015). It can be noted from the references that Goldblatt and Lin have much freedom at every stage of the translation activity, and this paper conjectures that this freedom comes from their "symbolic capital," a Bourdieusian concept denoting the resources and/or privilege a person has due to his/her prestige, recognition, or status.

Group Two: St. André and the Eight Student Translators

In the "Introduction" (St. André, 2001, pp. 12-21) chapter of *Droplets*, St. André clarifies that the translation purpose is threefold: (a) increasing the Chinese community's status in Singapore, (b) bringing Singaporean Chinese literature into a wider readership that involves not only local Singaporeans whose mother tongue is not Chinese but also younger Chinese Singaporeans who are learning Chinese, and (c) enabling these readers to familiarize themselves with Chinese Singaporean culture and reflect on some pressing social and cultural issues. Moreover, because the target readers are local Singaporeans, St. André (2001) states that "more colloquial Singaporean Chinese has been translated into a more 'Singlish' style of

English, something that might not have been practical if we were targeting at international audience” (p. 17). It can be understood from this quote that the strategy employed by the student translators differs from that of Goldblatt and Lin: While Goldblatt and Lin highlight the importance of English readers' reception and refrain from literally translating Chinese cultural expressions into English, St. André and the student translators consider this strategy to be acceptable because their target readers are only local Singaporeans.

The translators for this translation anthology are eight students in St. André's course at National University of Singapore entitled “Translation and Cultural Change,” and it is understood from St. André's statement that those who dealt with the task of translation are not professional translators. Nevertheless, St. André's introduction of the eight students does not reveal whether they have received special training or possessed previous translation experience. Perhaps because the students are not professionals, St. André plays a crucial role in examining the translation quality and ensuring that everyone submits their translations on time for the publication of this translation anthology. Regarding St. André's professional background, he is a translation scholar and sinologist. In addition to academic research publications on translation, he also has experience in translating Chinese literature for English readers. As the teacher of the course and a scholar with extensive knowledge, this paper asserts that his role is influential in this translation task.

Finally, it can be noted in the section of “Introduction” that St. André is also responsible for copyright discussions with the authors, the search for a suitable publisher and printing shop, raising publication funding, tackling the digitization of the texts, the book cover design, and cooperating with the publisher to promote sales. In other words, St. André and the students, like Goldblatt and Lin, possess a high degree of power over the production of this anthology.

Comparison of the Two Groups of Translators

Despite a large discrepancy in terms of amount between the data collected for the two groups of translators, this paper has identified some similarities and dissimilarities between the two translator groups, with the corresponding analysis shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Comparison of the Two Groups of Translators From Different Aspects

	Goldblatt and Lin	St. André and the student translators
Purpose	Introducing Chinese literary masterpieces to English readers in the West.	Enhancing Chinese community status and introducing Singaporean Chinese literature to local Singaporeans who are either not of Chinese ethnicity or still learning Chinese.
Translators' origin	Goldblatt is from the USA, and Lin is from Taiwan.	The students are of Chinese ethnicity and mainly Chinese Singaporeans.
Translation experience	Been translating Chinese literary texts for four decades.	Although it is not indicated in the paratexts, it is more likely that the student translators do not have practical translation experiences.
Translation strategy	Respect the ST, while the top priority is to deliver the author's ideas to and realize the same effects on the target audience. Refrain from literally translating Chinese cultural expressions because such translation may be confusing to English readers.	Because the target audience is local Singaporeans, it is acceptable to embed Singlish elements in the TT.
Constraint from external factors	The two translators have the power to select the ST that they wish to translate, to choose the translation strategy that they find appropriate, and also can negotiate with the editor and publisher over issues within and outside of translation per se. Therefore, this paper considers that they receive a low degree of external constraint.	St. André states in the section of Introduction in <i>Droplets</i> that he is in charge of translation quality check, deciding the target audience, raising fund for publishing the anthology, seeking interested donor and publisher, digitizing the TT, designing the book cover, and cooperating with the publisher to promote sales. Therefore, this paper considers that they also face a low degree of external constraint.

It can be noted in Table 1 that the two groups share a similar purpose (both wish to expand the readership of the Chinese literature) while possessing different backgrounds and experiences. Goldblatt and Lin are experienced translators from outside Singaporean culture, while the student translators are inexperienced and mainly local Singaporeans, with even St. André being a professor based at a Singaporean university. Therefore, it is assumed that group two translators would be more familiar with the cultural terms and expressions in Xi Ni Er's stories, which is likely to be their strength. In addition, group one translators target at English readers in the West, while group two translators target at English readers inside Singapore; the difference may result in differing translation strategies. In the subsequent section, this paper will discuss how the disparity between the two groups renders to dissimilar translation styles of Xi Ni Er's stories.

Translators' Subjectivities in Translated Texts

Linguistic Transformation

As explained in section two, three, linguistic transformation focuses on the translation of lexical content, while cultural terms and expressions are singled out and classified in the cultural dimension. Accordingly, this paper delves into this transformation by probing how the two groups deal with non-cultural content, eventually identifying that Goldblatt and Lin (i.e., group one) are inclined to reword the ST to produce a TT that reads more fluently for English readers, while the student translators' (i.e., group two) version is relatively faithful to the ST lexically and syntactically. Two examples of this analysis are provided below as Table 2 and Table 3 for clarification.

Table 2*Example for Discussion Over Linguistic Transformation (1)*

Types of translation	Translations
ST	這根東西用途可大囉！炒咖啡籽時未必粒粒炒得均勻，它就是用來攪拌的。(Xi, 2007, p. 70)
Gloss translation	This thing usage very big! Roasting coffee beans not always stirred evenly, it is used to stir.
TT by group one	“This little thing here is incredibly useful. You use it to stir the beans to ensure they’re evenly roasted.” (Xi, 2004/2012, Grand Uncle Ach! section, para. 7)
TT by group two	“This thing is really useful! When you roast coffee beans, you might not be able to mix them evenly. This thing is to stir them.” (St. André, 2001, p. 57)

Table 2 is extracted from the story entitled “Grand Uncle Ach!” where it can be noted that Goldblatt and Lin (Xi, 2004/2012) have altered the two sentences. First, the adjective “little” is added to modify the noun “thing.” Second, *kafei zi* “咖啡籽” (meaning “coffee beans”) is translated as simply “beans,” which may be because it is assumed readers can disambiguate what beans the author refers to based on context clues. Third, the clause “炒咖啡籽時未必粒粒炒得均勻” (meaning “roasting coffee beans may not be always roasted evenly”) is paraphrased to become “to ensure they’re evenly roasted.” Compared to the students’ version, which is closer to the ST lexically and syntactically, Goldblatt and Lin’s version not only is more succinct but also more directly mirrors English speakers’ conversations.

Table 3*Example for Discussion Over Linguistic Transformation (2)*

Types of translation	Translations
ST	你們這些木刀木劍演起來不夠逼真。(Xi, 2007, p. 25)
Gloss translation	Your these wooden knife wooden sword perform up not enough real.
TT by group one	"This wooden sword and the knife don't look real enough." (Xi, 2004/2012, A Rusty Sword section, para. 11)
TT by group two	"This wooden knife and sword are not realistic enough for the performance." (St. André, 2001, p. 38)

Table 3 is extracted from the story entitled "A Rusty Sword," and it can be noted that Goldblatt and Lin (Xi, 2004/2012) alter the phrase "演起來不夠逼真" (meaning "do not look real enough in performance") by omitting the words "in performance." This paper reasons that this decision is also based on the purpose of producing a text that reads fluent in English.

The two examples illuminate that fluency and conciseness are the characteristics for Goldblatt and Lin's translation (Xi, 2004/2012), while the students' rendition feature a higher degree of faithfulness to the ST. Such a style difference can also be identified in other parts of the stories. Two more instances are provided below for discussion.

Table 4*Example for Discussion Over Linguistic Transformation (3)*

Types of translation	Translations
ST	只是劍鋒，已鏽蝕多時。(Xi, 2007, p. 25)
Gloss translation	Only that the blade has rusted for a long time.
TT by group one	"Except that the blade had rusted." (Xi, 2004/2012, A Rusty Sword section, para. 26)
TT by group two	"The only difference was in the blade. It had long ago become rusty." (St. André, 2001, p. 39)

Table 5*Example for Discussion Over Linguistic Transformation (4)*

Types of translation	Translations
ST	他舉杯——那杯杯香、代代香的濃咖啡，輕呷一口潤潤喉。 (Xi, 2007, p. 71)
Gloss translation	He raised cup—fragrance in every cup and every generation in thick coffee, taking a sip to soothe throat
TT by group one	“He raised his cup of coffee that was rich and fragrant in very cup and took a sip to soothe his throat.” (Xi, 2004/2012, Grand Uncle Ach! section, para. 29)
TT by group two	“He raised his cup—that fragrant cup after cup, fragrant generation after generation coffee. He took a sip to clear his throat” (St. André, 2001, p. 59)

Table 6*Example for Discussion Over Linguistic Transformation (5)*

Types of translation	Translations
ST	包含離、不離與即將離婚者，以及養父、養母、近親監護人等。(Xi, 2007, p. 141)
Gloss translation	including divorced, non-divorced, and gonna-divorce couples, as well as step fathers, step mothers, and guardians who are close family members.
TT by group one	“including parents who are divorced or about to divorce, as well stepparents and guardians who are close members of the family.” (Xi, 2004/2012, A Preliminary Study of the Development of Relationships by Marriage section, para. 5)
TT by group two	“including divorced, non-divorced and going-to-be divorced families; also applies to foster fathers, foster mothers, closely related guardians, etc.” (St. André, 2001, p. 49)

The preceding three examples corroborate that Goldblatt and Lin (Xi, 2004/2012) maintain a fluent and succinct translation style, while the student translators' rendition manifests a higher degree of faithfulness to the ST. In addition to the difference between the two versions at the sentence level, this paper also

identifies that Goldblatt and Lin (Xi, 2004/2012) are inclined to add words or rephrase to clarify some parts in the ST that they find confusing. For instance, *jietai yipai* 借胎一派 (meaning “womb-borrowing group”) refers to the trend of people asking female friends or strangers to deliver babies for them. The phrase is rendered to “surrogate group” by Goldblatt and Lin and to “school of borrowed womb” by the students. This paper considers that Goldblatt and Lin’s (Xi, 2004/2012) version communicates the author’s idea to English readers more clearly, while the students’ version is confusing.

To summarize, the previous examples have revealed that the students are more inclined to be faithful to the ST lexically and syntactically, while Goldblatt and Lin (Xi, 2004/2012) place greater emphasis on clarity and fluency of the TT. Delving into the difference according to Table 1, we may infer that Goldblatt and Lin’s (Xi, 2004/2012) rendition emphasizes fluency more because the two translators pay much attention to the TT readability in the target readers’ eyes and endeavor to prevent confusion brought by literal translation. Although linguistic transformation concerns the rendition of non-cultural terms, which are supposed to be less difficult in terms of meaning conversion, it can be noted from the given examples that there are still some situations in which faithful translation may cause confusion.

Cultural Transformation

This paper collects cultural terms in the ST according to Newmark’s (1988) definition, and the categories include ecology, material culture, social culture, organizations, customs, activities, procedures, concepts, gestures, and habits (p. 95). Through the analysis, this paper identifies two parts where the two groups manifest different translation styles.

First, Goldblatt and Lin translate with a “standard Mandarin voice,” while the students translate with “Singaporean Chinese voice.” This finding is based on the identification that Goldblatt and Lin translate the names of all characters using

hanyu pinyin 漢語拼音 (i.e., the romanization system for standard Mandarin), and all names are phonetically transcribed according to their Mandarin pronunciation. Comparatively, the students transcribe the character names with Chinese dialectal pronunciation if necessary, resulting in a rendition that is closer to real-life Singaporean society. For instance, in the story “Reunion,” the author gives a long list of alumni who are going to make speeches on stage for a school’s 50 anniversary. Five of these names have been presented below for discussion: 許文強, graduating in the 1950s, 汪祖宗 (Charles), graduating in the 1960s, Susie Wong, graduating in the 1970s, 吳耐和, graduating in the 1980s, and 何振華, graduating in the 1990s.

Table 7*Example for Discussion Over Cultural Transformation (1)*

Types of translation	Translations
ST	許文強，汪祖宗 (Charles)，Susie Wong，吳耐和，何振華。(Xi, 2007, pp. 138-139)
Gloss translation	Xu Wen Qiang, Wang Zu Zhong (Charles), Susie Wong, Wu Nai He, He Zhen Hua.
TT by group one	Xu Wen Qiang, Wang Zu Zhong (Charles), Susie Wong, Wu Nai He, He Zhen Hua. (Xi, 2004/2012, Reunion section, para. 3)
TT by group two	Hsu Man Keong, Ong Zuo Tiong (Charles), Susie Wong, Wu Nai He, He Zhen Hua. Notes provided by group two: “Hus Man Keong was a well-known figure in China during the 50s. Ong Zuo Tiong (Charles) is a homonym for ‘forgetting one’s ancestors,’ satirizing Chinese who cannot speak the Chinese language and have forgotten their roots. Susie Wong is a real-life person who married an American. People often use the name ‘Susie Wong’ to mock Chinese women who choose to marry foreigners over Chinese men. Wu Nai He is a homonym for ‘What is to be done?’ It is used to imply the sense of helplessness some Chinese felt when the Chinese Language was demoted to the status of Second Language. He Zhen Hua is an abbreviation for ‘Why revive the Chinese Language?’” (St. André, 2001, pp. 23-24)

The time between the 1950s and 1990s represents when Singapore declared independence due to regional and ethnic conflicts, decided to make Mandarin the standard language for communication among Chinese Singaporeans who spoke only Chinese dialects, and decided to adopt English as its “lingua franca” to facilitate harmony among all ethnicities in Singapore and become a competitive country in the world. The author gives a list of figures from the 1950s to 1990s to imply the Westernization of Chinese Singaporeans, criticizing the idea that they do not care about their cultural roots. Chinese readers can easily detect homophonic wordplay, including 汪祖宗 (forget ancestors), 吳耐和 (have no solution), and 何振華 (why revive Chinese). Nevertheless, it is a major challenge to produce the same effect on the English audience. Ultimately, while Goldblatt and Lin provide English readers with a version that is fluent and easy to understand, the connotative cultural messages, which are the essence of the story, are not delivered. Comparatively, the students translate the names in the 1950s and 1960s according to Chinese dialectal pronunciation and those in the 1980s and 1990s according to Mandarin pronunciation; this strategy signals the change in the language landscape in the Chinese Singaporean community for target readers. Furthermore, the students also provide detailed notes explaining the hidden information in these names that cannot be rendered. Considering the use of Chinese dialectal *pinyin* 拼音 and the provision of annotations, this paper argues that the students' version more effectively produced the intended effect on the target audience.

Furthermore, if we probe Table 7 according to Table 1, we may be able to infer that the students choose the dialectal translation style because they regard local Singaporeans to be the target audience, while Goldblatt and Lin (Xi, 2004/2012) attempt to promote the fiction to readers in the West. Here, localization comes into play. For local Singaporeans, a story filled with characters of Mandarin names does not reflect the ethnic composition of the Chinese Singaporean society, hence they may find it harder to identify with the story. The same phenomenon can

also be noted in the story “A Rusty Sword,” in which the story characters were fond of *gezaixi* 歌仔戲 (referring to an opera-like performance originating in Taiwan). Due to its origin, Goldblatt and Lin translate “Back then we were both fans of Taiwanese opera” (Xi, 2004/2012, A Rusty Sword section, para. 2), whereas the students render it to “Back then, we were all obsessed with street opera” (St. André, 2001, p. 37). Although it is correct to put “Taiwanese opera,” this paper assumes that the translation may create a sense of displacement among readers of Singapore, thus “street opera” is a more suitable option to maintain a localized tone.

The second part is that Goldblatt and Lin are inclined to employ the strategy of compensation to deal with wordplay that is intended to amuse readers, while the students seem to simply adhere to faithful translation. Four examples of this distinction are provided below for clarification.

Table 8

Example for Discussion Over Cultural Transformation (2)

Types of translation	Translations
ST	福廈嘛，令人想起「福祿」、「福澤」、「福音」等稱心如意的吉祥話；至於余閣，叫人聯想到「多餘」、「剩餘」、「餘燼」等十分沮喪的意象。(Xi, 2007, p. 101)
Gloss translation	Fu Sha, make people think of “auspiciousness blessings,” “auspiciousness grace,” “auspiciousness sound” and so on satisfying happy auspicious words. Regarding Yu Ge, makes people think of “redundancy,” “excessiveness,” “dying ashes” and so on extremely despairing images.
TT by group one	“Its Chinese name, <i>Fu Sha</i> , or ‘Lucky Building,’ reminds one of auspicious terms such as <i>fulu</i> (good fortune and longevity), <i>fuze</i> (happiness and grace), <i>fuyin</i> (gospel), etc. In contrast, <i>yu</i> in <i>Yu Ge</i> , which is the Chinese name for Eu Court, calls to mind depressing images like <i>douyu</i> (unwanted excess), <i>shengyu</i> (remainder) and <i>yujin</i> (dying ashes).” (Xi, 2004/2012, We Have Decided to Rebuild Eu Court section, para. 8)
TT by group two	“ <i>Fu</i> Mansion would make people think of auspicious words such as ‘blessings and emolument,’ ‘good fortune’ and ‘good news.’ As for <i>Yu</i> Court, it would remind people of depressing meanings such as ‘unnecessary,’ ‘remainder’ and ‘ember.’ (St. André, 2001, p. 33)

Note. Xi Ni Er wrote the stories in simplified Chinese, and the simplified character of “餘” is “余”.

Table 8 is extracted from the story “We Have Decided to Rebuild Eu Court,” the comedic effect of which lies in the association between the two building names (“Stamford House” and “Eu Court” with Chinese pronunciation) and positive/negative Chinese terms; the latter shares the same pronunciation with the key words of the two buildings, i.e., *fu* 福 and *yu* 余. If we compare the two versions, we can note that Goldblatt and Lin are relatively successful in communicating the comedic effect by giving additional information to help English readers grasp the wordplay. In addition, this paper notes that Goldblatt and Lin would translate the same item with different names to offer a clearer definition for the readers. Take “余閣” for example.

Table 9

Example for Discussion Over Cultural Transformation (3)

Types of translation	Translations
ST	當年拆毀余閣的塵埃飛撲飛撲，覆蓋在他的陋居。(Xi, 2007, p. 102)
Gloss translation	That year the dust from tearing down Eu Court flew around and covered his humble hut
TT by group one	“The dust from tearing down the pavilion years ago had covered his humble abode” (Xi, 2004/2012, We Have Decided to Rebuild Eu Court section, para. 13)
TT by group two	“The dust that was produced when <i>Yu</i> Court was demolished that year flew around and covered his humble house” (St. André, 2001, p. 35)

While the students employ “*Yu* Court” as the translation all the time, Goldblatt and Lin would turn to “pavilion” to offer additional information for their audience to imagine the appearance of the building.

A similar phenomenon can also be observed in the translation of the story entitled “A Preliminary Study of the Development of Relationships by Marriage.”

Xi Ni Er creates a list of Chinese familial terms (e.g., father's sister's husband, mother's sister's husband, etc.) to illuminate the terms that are common, confusing, disappearing, or emerging in Singaporean society under the wave of modernization. Because the Chinese kinship system is far more complicated than the English one, Goldblatt and Lin choose to provide additional information to their audience for helping them grasp the original messages, as demonstrated in example nine.

Table 10*Example for Discussion Over Cultural Transformation (4)*

Types of translation	Translations
ST	曾祖父（母）、祖父（母）、公公、婆婆。(Xi, 2007, p. 140)
Gloss translation	Great-grandfather (great-grandmother), grandfather (grandmother), father-in-law, mother-in-law
TT by group one	"Zeng zufu/mu (great-grandfather/mother), Zufu/mu (grandfather/mother), Gonggong (maternal grandfather/father-in-law), Popo (maternal grandmother/mother-in-law)" (Xi, 2004/2012, A Preliminary Study of the Development of Relationships by Marriage section, para. 2)
TT by group two	"Great-grandfather (and great-grandmother), grandfather (and grandmother), grandpa, grandma" (St. André, 2001, p. 45)

Out of Xi Ni Er's long list of familial terms, example nine extracts four terms that refer to seniors in a family, and it can be noted that Goldblatt and Lin's version conveys a clearer idea in terms of differentiating familial titles that are so close and may cause confusion to English readers; *Gonggong* 公公 (maternal grandfather/father-in-law) and *Popo* 婆婆 (maternal grandmother/mother-in-law) are two examples. Comparatively, the students' version is likely to confuse English readers with the use of both "grandfather" and "grandpa," two words which in fact refer to the same person.

Table 11*Example for Discussion Over Cultural Transformation (5)*

Types of translation	Translations
ST	「你呵你就是會喝什麼——什麼三合一的咖啡袋，什麼『捏死咳肺』，看——這就是咖啡」。 (Xi, 2007, p. 69)
Gloss translation	“You you just will drink some—some three-in-one coffee sachet, something ‘pinching death coughing lungs,’ look—this is coffee”
TT by group one	“You’re always drinking that, ah, so-called three-in-one ‘Next-Coughing’ coffee,’ he said, referring to Nescafé. ‘See here, this is coffee.’” (Xi, 2004/2012, Grand Uncle Ach! section, para. 5)
TT by group two	“He said to me, ‘you only know how to drink that kind of three-in-one coffee, that ‘Nescafé.’ Look! This is coffee” (St. André, 2001, p. 55)

In Table 11, the author amuses the Chinese audience by referring to “Nescafé” using this not-so-positive homophone, *nie si ke fei* 捏死咳肺 (literally meaning “pinching to death coughing lungs out”). Meanwhile, this arrangement by the author is also to indicate that Grand Uncle, the character who says this sentence, is unfamiliar with Western goods. Facing this translation challenge, Goldblatt and Lin only render half of the original meaning: “Next-Coughing” is used to match the pronunciation of “Nescafé,” and they also add additional text to tell English readers that the homophone is “referring to Nescafé.” Regarding the students’ version, although the lexical meaning is delivered, English readers would be unable to note that Grand Uncle is unfamiliar with Western stuff and calls the coffee brand a funny name.

To summarize, the cultural terms resulting in dissimilar translation styles for the two groups of translators are (a) names that reflect the change of linguistic and cultural landscape in Singapore, and (b) wordplays that trigger a comedic effect.

This paper identifies that the students' version retains messages regarding the linguistic and cultural transition that took place in Singaporean society, and Goldblatt and Lin employ the strategy of compensation to reproduce the intended comedic effect among the English audience. Based on Table 1, the students, compared to Goldblatt and Lin, are closely connected to Singaporean society, and this may explain their cognizance of how local people pronounce their names in addition to the lingual and cultural issues that *Xi Ni Er* aims to accentuate. Meanwhile, the students' target readers are Singaporean, so this may be the reason why additional explanation is not given for local items, like *yu ge* 余閣. Comparatively, Goldblatt and Lin aim to introduce the stories to the Western audience, and this may be the reason for their more frequent use of the compensation strategy.

Communicative Transformation

Communicative transformation concerns whether the author's intended effect is fulfilled among the target audience, and this paper considers that this transformation should be examined through a macroscopic lens so that we can determine if the integration of all components in the TT lead to the realization of the intended effect.

Regarding the author's intended effect, this paper analyzes the five stories and infers that *Xi Ni Er* wishes to amuse his readers with amusing wordplay and to alert them of the loss of the mother tongue and culture, over westernization, and over pragmatism in the Singaporean society. Furthermore, the investigation into the translated texts reveals that Goldblatt and Lin manage to retain the original comedic effect through the strategy of compensation, whereas the student translators faithfully translate *Xi Ni Er*'s wordplay, leading to the disappearance of this entertainment effect. Regarding the warning-like message that the author

wishes to communicate with the readers, both groups of translators manage to convey most of it to English readers; the only issue is that Goldblatt and Lin translate all the character names in “Reunion” and “Grand Uncle Ach!” according to Mandarin pronunciation, a choice that bars English readers from understanding a historical change in Singapore’s linguistic and cultural landscape. Comparatively, the student translators convey this idea to the target readers by transcribing the names with corresponding dialectal or Mandarin pronunciation.

In addition, as both groups of translators consider themselves communicators, this paper also endeavors to probe the way in which they communicate. The analysis results indicate that their respective communication styles are largely influenced by their subjectivities, which are formed by their past experiences and philosophies of translation. These translators are never invisible like Venuti (1995) points out; instead, their dissimilar subjectivities impact their purpose of translation, definition of a good translation, and choice of strategy in tackling translation challenges. Due to these differences, the translators become visible, and they show their presences through (a) distinctive wording and/or syntactical style, (b) creative and/or adaptive translation strategies, and (c) the sharing of personal opinions in paratexts, such as annotations, prefaces, and lead-ins.

Consistency in Style for Collaborative Translation

This paper has discussed the differences between the two translation groups in the preceding sections, and it is also important to report on the analysis outcome regarding the translation style within the two groups, respectively. The examination results reveal that both groups managed to maintain a consistent translation style in their respective TT because the above-mentioned characteristics could be identified in all the five short stories whenever terms or phrases of similar features appeared.

This paper conjectures that such consistency is made possible by different

reasons. For Goldblatt and Lin, they have collaborated in translation for decades, and it is noted from Section 4.1.1 that they have similar translation philosophy; the consistency in their translation style might come from the shared experiences (making them know each other's preferred style) and translation philosophy (even if they encountered a new challenge, they might choose the same solution based on the same translation philosophy). Regarding the student translators, the consistency in translation style might be maintained by St. André because he was responsible for supervising the translation tasks and reviewing the translation outputs.

In my opinion, the collaboration format that Goldblatt and Lin manifested was two translators of equal status discussing and negotiating throughout the translation process, while the format of St. André and the students was like an experienced superintendent instructing students to produce consistent TT. Based on this opinion, this paper assumes that negotiation and supervision are two methods that can ensure consistent translation style in collaborative projects.

Consolidated Findings

By examining the paratextual materials that encompass the translators' backgrounds and translation philosophies, Table 1 is compiled to illustrate the translators' agency and habitus, which reflect the translators' subjectivities in translation. This paper posits that both concepts should be analyzed in conjunction to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the translator's subjectivity.

Furthermore, it is evident from the preceding examples that the traits listed in Table 1 have significant impacts on the TT. Goldblatt and Lin aim to convey the author's ideas and realize the intended effects among western readers, and literal translation is a strategy that they endeavor not to use. Consequently, their translation emphasizes fluency and conciseness. In contrast, the student translators attempt to introduce Xi Ni Er's stories to non-Chinese Singaporean readers, plus

that the students and the editor are familiar with the Singaporean culture, so they impart a higher level of localization in their translation.

Regarding the students' higher degree of faithfulness to the ST, while we did not find explicit support from their translation philosophy, their inclination towards faithfulness aligns with the findings by Popović et al. (2023), which highlight that novice translators tend to be more literal and adhere closely to the source text compared to professional translators (p. 373).

In terms of experience, Table 1 indicates a great disparity between the two groups with regard to their translation experience. This paper considers that they represent the two major types of translators in the industry: those who have recently entered the field and lack sufficient experience, and those with years of experience and established reputations within the translation community.

Furthermore, the disparity imposes a significant impact on the translators' agency. Agency refers to the strength of external social influences on the agent's action, as well as the agent's strength to act on free will and impose influences back on those social factors (Koskinen, 2010, pp. 165-166; Somekh & Lewin, 2005, p. 344). According to this concept, it is understandable that Goldblatt and Lin, possessing sufficient social, cultural, and symbolic capital, have more authority in selecting translation materials and strategies. In contrast, the students rely on St. André's guidance and supervision due to their lesser experience and standing in the field.

In addition, this paper mentioned earlier that Venuti (1995) regards subjectivity as an influential factor that motivates translators to employ the foreignization strategy (p. 24). This paper interprets Venuti's viewpoint as grounded in the idea that translators, being professionals from cultures different from the source culture, imbue the TT with linguistic and cultural elements that increase its level of foreignization.

Nevertheless, this paper investigated the issue of subjectivities from another perspective, suggesting that translators may have dissimilar inclinations due to their diverse life encounters. Supporting this assumption are the findings of the present study. Goldblatt and Lin prioritize fluency and succinctness, and they prefer the domestication strategy to prevent confusion among Western readers. On the other hand, the student translators' rendition, while appearing more foreign compared to Goldblatt and Lin's, also leans towards domestication because their target readers are local Singaporeans, to whom Goldblatt and Lin's rendition would seem more foreign. Here, this paper wishes to emphasize two points. First, subjectivities can influence translators' choices, but these choices do not always favor foreignization or domestication exclusively. Second, the decision to foreignize or domesticate the TT should consider the background of the target audience.

Conclusion

Since the time Venuti (1995) released the thought-provoking monograph entitled *The Translator's Invisibility*, many scholars have endeavored to identify the translator's visibility in the TT. It is under this trend that the translator's subjectivity comes to the foreground. This paper has proposed an integrated approach to probing the manifestation of the translator's subjectivity in the TT. Furthermore, this paper undertook an in-depth investigation into the English translation of Xi Ni Er's Chinese stories to show how to carry out this integrated approach. The investigation's findings constitute the second contribution of this paper, shedding light on how background differences could lead to dissimilarities in translation outputs and showing that a consistent translation style could still be maintained in collaborative translation. It is hoped that the proposed approach can be helpful to future researchers who aim to undertake research on this topic.

In addition, the research limitation of the present study concerns the availability of data on the research subjects. While extensive materials were accessible regarding Goldblatt and Lin's translation philosophy and strategies due to their seniority and reputation, garnering comparable data on student translators proved challenging due to their relative lack of experience and renown. This paper holds that such data limitations are common challenges that researchers encounter when investigating the backgrounds of novice or lesser-known translators. For future studies aiming to explore the subjectivities and translation styles of junior translators, conducting interviews, corpus analysis, and longitudinal research could be methods to enrich the analysis dataset. Interviews provide direct insights into translators' translation philosophy and decision-making mechanism, corpus analysis assists us in exploring translators' linguistic phenomena and translation strategies, and longitudinal research enables the collection of translators' long-term performance so that we may identify their translation-related inclinations.

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