

# A Study on the Language Arts of English and American Literary Translation from a Cross-cultural Perspective

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**Abstract:** British and American literature is one of the mainstreams of world literature and occupies a pivotal position in the world literary arena. However, due to the differences between Chinese and Western cultures, Chinese people inevitably have to face the constraints of various factors when they appreciate, study and analyze British and American literature. In order to solve this problem, this paper attempts to make a deep analysis of the translated works of British and American literature from a cross-cultural perspective, so that readers can better understand the ideological implications and values contained in British and American literature, so that they can better appreciate art.

**Keywords:** Cross-cultural Perspective; Translation of English and American Literature; Language Arts Studies

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**Published:** July 30, 2024

## Introduction

British and American literature originated in ancient Greece and Rome. With the trend of colonial expansion becoming more and more obvious, British and American literature showed European and American characteristics in the development of these two places. At the same time, Greek legends had a great impact on British and American civilization. During the development of British and American literature, Greek legends were the main body of its works, and Greek aesthetics and temperament determined British and American culture<sup>[1]</sup>. In addition to Greek legends, Christian culture has also

become a major source of British and American civilization. When writing, many British and American writers will absorb various elements of Christianity, especially the Bible, which is not only the essence of Christianity, but also the soul pillar of Christian believers, and has a great impact on British and American literature [2].

### **1. Ancient Greek and Roman Mythology**

British and American literary creation is carried out in the form of their times and cultures. From the perspective of Britain and the United States, Greek myths and legends are the cornerstone of literary studies by writers. In Europe and America, it was deeply impressed by the civilizations of ancient Greece and Rome, and Greek legends were the center of these civilizations [4]. In the era of rapid development of information technology, the legends of ancient Rome and Greece are still the main writing sources of European and American literati, and they also have a far-reaching impact on European and American writers. Many classical writers regard the legends of ancient Greece and Rome as a very good creative material in their literary works, and many classical writers integrate Greek and Roman cultures. As a major poet in European and American literature, Dante clearly saw the internal structure of Greece and Rome in a large number of works. Take its work *Divine Comedy* for example, the author takes the protagonist as the starting point and highlights its important position with its special character. In ancient Greek and Roman legends, there are many heroes who are not perfect themselves, but in European and American novels, they often use different methods to shape them into a better image. The pursuit of self and optimism in British and American literature is also in line with the feelings of ancient Greek and Roman myths and legends. The legends of ancient Greece and Rome have created powerful materials and means for British and American literature. In Greek and Roman myths and legends, although there are all kinds of imperfect myths, they are deeply loved by readers and writers. Writers expressed their reverence for "heroes" in the form of literary works.

### **2. Christian Culture**

Christianity is a major source for the development of British and American literature. Many British and American writers absorb various elements of Christianity, especially the Bible, when they write. The Bible is not only the essence of Christianity, but also the soul of Christian believers. First, many British and American writers will combine

the words of the Bible with their own works. There are references to gods and other monsters in "Belwulf", and Christian civilization in "The Vision of Peirce the Farmer" [5]. To enable readers to better understand European and American literature, we need to deeply understand the fundamental content of the Bible. Second, many European and American writers will integrate the essence and ideas of the Bible into their novels. Take John Bunyan as an example, his *Pilgrim's Progress* takes Christian dogma as the main line, which is even more difficult to understand for a person who has never had any understanding and contact with Christianity.

### **3. Aesthetic Features in the Translation of English and American Literature**

#### **3.1 Precise Expression of Emotion**

In literary works, emotional expression can not only express the overall emotions, but also stimulate the emotions of the audience. If there are errors in the translation, it will affect the translator's overall understanding and feelings of the text. In the aesthetics of British and American literature, there is often the implication of emotional color, which is a difficulty [6]. The first thing a translator needs to do is to read a work enough, then refine it accurately, determine the emotions it expresses, and then express them through the author's language. To master the specific details of the above work, we must master the rhetoric and structure of language skillfully, otherwise it is easy to make mistakes in language.

#### **3.2 Tight Rrganizational Hierarchy**

In many classical masterpieces in China, the author's elaborate writing and ingenious writing will make people have spiritual resonance, and British and American literature is no exception, its composition and language performance, like the connection between bone and flesh and blood, constitute a vivid and vivid body. British and American novels usually arrange the narrative structure according to a specific theme, usually using narrative methods such as forward narration, inserted narration and flashback, but the grammatical characteristics of English make it necessary to pay special attention to the arrangement between sentences when translating long and difficult sentences, which not only shows the writer's ingenious conception of details, but also reflects different cultural differences.

#### **3.3 The Rich Intention of Language**

The use of language in literature and art is one of the most important reasons that can arouse people's aesthetic feelings. Vivid and appropriate language can make people realize beauty more deeply. Therefore, in the process of translating English and American literary versions, we must make full use of the diversity of Chinese language in order to reflect its style. English works of different regions, different countries and different nationalities have great stylistic differences, so when translating and introducing them, we must fully understand their cultural environment, combine with their actual situation, and re-create them in order to achieve the purpose of high quality.

#### **4. Linguistic Features of British and American Literature**

Generally speaking, British and American literature can show obvious linguistic features on the whole. Therefore, if you want to have a deep understanding of British and American literary works, you must start from the following linguistic features of British and American literature and feel the deep-seated literary value.

##### **4.1 Dramatic Characteristics**

Through the comparative study of British and American literature and some traditional Chinese literary works, it is found that there is a certain dramatic color in some aspects of British and American language. Firstly, it conveys the thoughts and emotions of the characters in the form of monologue, which is quite different from the thoughts and inner feelings in Chinese novels. For example, in *Hamlet*, the protagonist Hamlet often uses his own language to convey his thoughts and confusion to the audience, so that they can better understand Hamlet's thoughts and emotions. Secondly, through the form of monologue, the reader can create enough imagination in the process of feeling the characteristics of the role, so as to improve the reader's interest in reading. *The Ballad of the Knights and Roundheads* is one of the most obvious works, which separates the protagonist from the writer in the form of a monologue, and improves the reader's perception of the character in the form of an evaluation, and trains the reader to form a good imagination.

##### **4.2 Quoting Classic Stories**

In British and American literature, the integration of classic stories and literary works is a common way, its role is not to meet the needs of the novel, but to help people better understand the cultural implications it contains. For example, Shelley's work

Prometheus Unbound is a fusion of the Greek legend of Prometheus and the related stories of Prometheus, using the legend to express his will and will<sup>[7]</sup>. Because of the cultural differences between different countries, British and American literary works also have their own differences. From the perspective of Britain and the United States, we can see that the literature of each period in Britain and the United States has its own characteristics, and if we combine these characteristics with the time, we can better reflect the national characteristics and regional characteristics of this period. At the same time, the combination of classical novels and literary works can better reflect the folk customs under the cultural background of different regions, so that readers can deeply understand the profound meaning of these cultures, thus improving people's understanding of the customs of various nationalities.

### **4.3 Originating from Reality and Being Higher Than Reality**

"Art originates from life and is higher than life." The same is true of British and American literary works. Therefore, in order to improve the understanding of British and American literature, we need to start from the reality of British and American literature and then reflect on it. What British and American literature conveys is a kind of thinking about life, an evaluation of life, and an understanding and reflection of the fate of life. Therefore, British and American literature, with its own unique literary features, uses a variety of expressions in British and American literature in order to improve its own connection with history and culture. First, English and American languages are very concise. When creating, they will use concise language to express their ideas and increase their artistic sense and interest. Behind its sense of art and interest, it reflects its own cultural implications. For example, a passage in Hamlet, "To be or not to be, this is a question." Second, all kinds of materials, plots and contents in Britain and the United States are closely related to the content in reality. For example, in British and American literature such as "Suet Fat Ball" and "Necklace", Maupassant shows the dark side of the society at that time in the form of novels from the specific background of the times and community characteristics. As a reader, if he is not good at using the social environment to appreciate literary works, it is difficult to feel its inherent cultural value from the language.

## **5. Characteristics of Translation of English and American Literary Works**

From a cross-cultural perspective, when analyzing the linguistic features of British and

American literary texts, we should not only connect British and American literary works with their own linguistic features, but also connect their linguistic features with their artistic features, and then use translation to intuitively show the artistic features of the works. At the same time, we should integrate the language and artistic features of British and American literary works and translate them in an easy-to-understand and poetic language so as to achieve better understanding. Generally speaking, the translation of British and American works of art has the following characteristics.

### **5.1 Aesthetic Feeling**

The translation of foreign literary works often combines the aesthetic system of the original text and the translation, integrates them in an all-round way, and transfers the aesthetic feeling of the original text to the translation in an appropriate way. For example, ancient Chinese literature pays great attention to rhyme, and British and American literature also pays attention to the rhythm of language. British and American poetry, in particular, often uses rhythm to arrange its structure. In poetry translation, in order to improve the rhythmic effect of poetry, translators often deliberately add some words to break through the habit of conventional vocabulary. During the appreciation of English and American literary translations, the aesthetic appreciation of professional readers also needs to integrate the characteristics of the two different languages and experience the similarities and differences between the author and the reader.

### **5.2 Vagueness**

Vagueness exists in every language and is a special property of English, especially in British and American literature. It is a common expression of language art. Some writers like to express their emotions in a vague way, while in the process of translation, the translator needs to translate the original meaning implicitly. According to this factor, the translator usually makes it fuzzy, thus stimulating the reader's imagination in the process of reading and improving the reader's reading experience. The fuzziness of English and American literary translation works is mainly reflected in the fuzziness of language meaning, artistic conception and image. In order to study the language art of English and American literary translation, we need to firmly grasp the theory and skills of English and American literary translation, fully understand the fuzziness of the original work, and clearly understand the translator's processing and re-creation, so that the translation also has the characteristics of fuzziness. In this way, readers can have a

deeper understanding of the connotation of British and American literary works.

### **5.3 Restoration**

The translated work should respect the authority of the original work and strive to achieve restoration. In literary translation, the translator is the bridge between the reader and the author, responsible for conveying the content and spiritual connotation of the original author, and at the same time, enabling the reader to personally feel the writing intention of the original work, helping to achieve the resonance between the original author and the reader. Of course, there are a hundred Hamlets in the hearts of a hundred people. It is impossible for every translator to cover all aspects in restoring the author's thoughts. Of course, the translation can have some different interpretations, but it is also based on long-term and thorough research, and the translator can not play at will. This is also one of the reasons why some original works have multiple translations. In order to better appreciate British and American literature, readers need to read multiple translations of the same work and fully understand the original works through multiple channels.

## **6. To Explore the Principles of Language Art in British and American Literary Works from a Cross-cultural Perspective**

In the cross-cultural context of British and American literature, it is easy for people to misinterpret the author's understanding because of different cultural differences, which leads to in-depth analysis of it. Therefore, in order to better study cross-cultural inquiry, it is necessary to clearly adhere to the principles of inquiry.

### **6.1 Observe the Principle of Cultural Differences**

In view of the great differences between Chinese and Western cultures, readers need to have strong literary literacy and thinking ability in order to improve their reading level and language awareness of British and American literature. The cultural values of British and American literature are analyzed in depth, so as to achieve an effective cultivation of their own emotions. From the perspective of British and American texts, we can better understand the cultural differences contained in various literary works. According to the specific national conditions of Britain and the United States, we can interpret and appreciate the differences between the two cultures, so as to deepen our understanding of the cultural values contained in them.

## **6.2 The Principle of Paying Attention to the Characteristics of the Times**

British and American writers, when writing, are often influenced by the unique history and culture of the times. Therefore, in order to improve people's understanding of Britain and the United States, we need to start from the writer's point of view and make a thorough analysis of them. Only by effectively integrating the author's different times, different regions, different thoughts and feelings with his creation, and thus analyzing his own essential characteristics, can readers improve their level of understanding. Take *Wuthering Heights* and *The Old Man and the Sea* for example, without a keen insight into the unique social environment and cultural values of the times, or thinking from the perspective of modern associations, it is difficult to really understand their inner connotations.

## **6.3 Adhere to the Principle of Language and Literature Appreciation**

British and American literature is neither a simple novel nor a simple story, but the author's deep understanding of social life, and at the same time, it has special thoughts and ideological implications. In order to appreciate English literature and art better, we should follow the basic principles of language appreciation, strengthen the process of appreciation, optimize thinking and perception, and improve people's reading ability. While appreciating, we should also integrate language, character psychology, story plot and other factors to improve readers' reading ability.

## **6.4 Feel the Unique Charm of Language and Writing**

British and American literature is a huge literary system. Its classics are numerous and its authors are varied. Therefore, we should find out the correct, vivid and concise language from the British and American languages. Those authors who have the ability to write famous works often use simple and direct words to express themselves. For example, Hemingway used a picture of a fisherman in *The Old Man and the Sea* to create a strong, brave and calm man. Many British and American novels have similar stories. When reading, we should deeply feel the author's language charm and writing skills, and take this as a model for learning, earnestly study and learn, so that we can continue to advance and develop in the future writing.

## **7. Conclusion**

To apply aesthetic value to the translation of British and American literature, we should

pay attention to the translator's aesthetic consciousness and perception, take into account the cultural differences of different regions, have a common understanding of aesthetics, have our own way of translation, and re-create and re-process the translation on the premise of the basic logic of the translation, so as to achieve a more vivid effect. Through the collation of English and American literary translations, this paper holds that English and American translations need not only the translator's language foundation, but also the translator's artistic accomplishment and artistic accomplishment. Therefore, when translating the relevant works, the translator should not let his own culture bind him too much and add too much emotion, thus losing the fluency and authenticity of the literature of other countries. On the contrary, he should actively accept the charm of the culture of other countries and transform the conflict and integration of these cultures into words in his own internal way. For translators of British and American literature, they should not only insist on reading and writing the original English text for a long time, but also master the idea of the translation, so as to enrich the aesthetic connotation of the translation and make the literary text better reflect in their own culture, which can not only contribute to the literary history of our country, but also promote the deep-seated cultural exchanges between countries.

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