

Original Paper

A Study on the Translation of Literary Book Titles from the Perspective of Translator's Subjectivity—A Semi-structured Interview with Li Yao

Wu Xiaoran¹, Li Yao² & Duan Manfu^{*}

¹ Inner Mongolia University, Hohhot, 010000, China

² Beijing Foreign Studies University, Beijing, 100089, China

^{*} Corresponding author, Duan Manfu, Inner Mongolia University, Hohhot, 010000, China

Received: June 13, 2022

Accepted: June 21, 2022

Online Published: June 27, 2022

doi:10.22158/selt.v10n3p14

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22158/selt.v10n3p14>

Abstract

Titles are the first stimuli that make the readers have the desire to read. However, the translation of book titles has been neglected by many scholars. Translator's subjectivity is a new subject of translation theory research which is applied to study the embodiment of translator's subjective initiative, passivity and egoism in the process of translation. However, the translator's personal style, thinking activities and psychological state are rarely mentioned in the translator's subjectivity theory. Few scholars have studied the translation of literary book titles from translator's subjectivity. Through conducting a semi-structured interview with Li Yao, this paper aims to explore the embodiment of translator's subjectivity in the translation of literary book titles. This paper finds that translators can exert subjective initiative in selecting translation materials and methods, but this initiative is limited by original authors, readers and publishers. This paper enriches the translator's subjectivity theory, provides a new perspective for studying the translation of literary book titles and is beneficial to improve the status of translators.

Keywords

literary book titles, Li Yao, translator's subjectivity, semi-structured interview

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction to Li Yao

Li Yao is a senior translator who has made great achievements in literary translation, especially in Australian literary translation. He has been engaged in literary translation since 1979, and has

translated and published more than 20 Australia novels, including Nobel Prize winner Patrick White's *The Tree of Man*, *A Fringe of Leaves* etc. In 2008, Li Yao was awarded the Outstanding Contribution Medal by the Australia-China Council for his achievements in Sino-Australian cultural exchanges, especially in the field of translation. Li Yao's pioneering work has paved the way for a growing number of Australian scholars in Chinese universities.

Li Yao mainly translates Australian Aboriginal literature which contains the unique customs of Australia and a large number of dialects. When translating *Carpentaria*, Li Yao put forwards that the real difficulty was the local customs, ancient legends, and their tribal relationships. However, Li Yao also gave full play to his subjective initiative in translation, overcame various difficulties and translated good works. Li Yao emphasizes the importance of translator's subjective emotional input when translating. He says "because literary translation belongs to the category of literature and art, and one of the characteristics of literature and art is that it embodies the translator's own wisdom, emotion and creativity" (Li Yao, 2017, p. 62). Therefore, it is very necessary to conduct a semi-structured interview with Li Yao to explore the subjectivity of the translator.

1.2 Introduction to Translator's Subjectivity

The traditional view of translation holds that translation is the conversion of symbols in different languages, pays attention to the transmission of the original information, and believes that the author and the original work are sacred and inviolable. For example, the invisibility theory holds the view "translation as the attempt to produce a text so transparent that it does not seem to be translated" (Venuti, 2008, p. 1). This view requires translators to fully respect the original work and no changes are allowed. With the "pragmatic turn" of western philosophy in the 1970s and the "cultural turn" of translation studies in the 1990s, the subjectivity of translation was deeply concerned by the western translation scholars. Polysystem theory, manipulation school theory, feminist translation theory and postcolonialism translation theory all emphasize the important role of translator. Basil Hatim and Ian Mason put forward that "translator is the center of dynamic process of translation and is the mediator between a producer of source text and the target language receivers" (1990, p. 223). Since then, translator's roles and translator's subjectivity have been studied by many scholars.

Zha Mingjian and Tian Yu (2003, p. 22) said that "translator's subjectivity refers to the subjective initiative shown by the translators to achieve the purpose of translation under the premise of respecting the translation object. Its basic characteristics are the conscious cultural awareness, humanistic character and cultural aesthetic creativity." Translator's subjectivity includes three characteristics: subjective initiative, passivity and egoism. Subjective initiative means that translators have the freedom to choose the translation materials and translation strategies. Translator's passivity limits translator's freedom because translators have to consider the original author, the reader, and the sponsor etc. Translator's egoism means that to achieve translator's purpose, they will take some special measures to break limits. In previous studies, scholars only analyzed the embodiment of the translator's subjectivity through the translated works, but did not explore the influence of the translator's thinking activities and

psychological state on the translation. Therefore, it is necessary to use qualitative research to study translators and translator's subjectivity. The author conducted a semi-structured interview with Li Yao. The topic of this interview is the embodiment of Li Yao's subjectivity on the selection of translation materials and methods when he translates literary book titles. The following is the transcript of this interview.

2. Transcript of Semi-structured Interview with Li Yao

Interviewee: Li Yao

Interviewer: Wu Xiaoran

Transcript: Wu Xiaoran

Location: On WeChat

Time: April 18, 2022, 4:04—4:54 p.m.

Wu: Today is April 18, 2022. Professor Li will talk about the embodiment of the translator's subjectivity in the translation of literary book titles. Hello Professor Li, you have made great achievements in literary translation. Your translation experience must be inseparable from your life and work experience. You majored in English in college and later worked as a journalist and editor of newspapers and magazines. How did you get on the road of literary translation step by step?

Li: I majored in English as an undergraduate. After graduating from university in 1966, just in time for the Cultural Revolution, there was no opportunity to engage in English-related work. During the Cultural Revolution, I did not give up learning English for a day. I read a lot of books, such as *Jean Christophe* and other novels. During my sophomore year of college, I started translating some short stories, including Russian writer Keluolianke's works. By 1980, it had been two years since the reform and opening up. I saw that re-translated books were being sold everywhere, which were particularly hot at the time, with long queues of people standing in line to buy them. I thought I could translate some works and publish them. So in 1980, I translated my first book *The Path of Thunder* in the wake of the reform wave. During the Cultural Revolution, I wrote novels, short stories, and reportage. The ten years of experiences have greatly improved my Chinese and laid a foundation for my future literary translation. What's more, my life experience and work experience also had a great influence on my later translation. For example, I used to go to pastoral areas to interview Mongolians and I also wrote a lot of reports and novels about the lives of herders. Later, after coming into contact with Australian literature, I felt that Australian literature was in a sense similar to the living background and way of life in Inner Mongolia. Of course, the difference was still very large. An example of this is the Australian "mateship". Because Australia is so vast and sparsely populated, their mateship is that they must unite and help each other. In Inner Mongolia, Mongolians also have such a friendship. On the vast grasslands, there are just a few yurts, and as a result we must help each other. The mode of production created these ways of life, and the similarity in this pattern also played an important role in my later translation of Australian literature.

Wu: Professor Li, how do you choose the translation materials? Do you have your own preference or criteria when selecting translation materials? Or is it affected by other factors?

Li: I mainly studied Australian literary translation, which was a helpless movement in the 1980s. At that time, I was working in Inner Mongolia, which was far from the whole literary translation field. Back then, I also had inextricable connections with teachers from Inner Mongolia University. My first and second books were published in collaboration with teachers from Inner Mongolia University. But myself, I was far away from the education field or the translation field. Then I gradually started translating because I liked to do literary translations. I translated whatever books I could find. It was very difficult to find materials because they were very scarce in those days. My first book, *The Path of Thunder*, was a book I borrowed from the library of Inner Mongolia Normal University. My second book, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, was a collaboration with Wen Xiaoyu, a professor of Chinese at Inner Mongolia University, and we found the book in the library of Inner Mongolia University. Some of the materials I found later were also in disarray and I could not find them even when I searched everywhere. Anyway, wherever I came across any material that had not been published and that I still liked, I started translating it.

It was not until 1980 that I met teacher Alison at Inner Mongolia University, who came from the University of Western Australia. Alison was very enthusiastic about me because she knew that I was a translator, so she introduced a lot of Australian books to me, including *The Tree of Man*, *The Collector*, and *The Elephant Man*. With Alison's help, I really went into Australian literary translation. In those days we were not like you are now, where you could buy and read any book you want. In those days it was incredibly difficult, especially in such a remote, isolated and backward area like mine, to get a good book. I read a lot of Australian books, attended some international conferences on Australian literature, met many related scholars, accumulated some experience in this field, and gradually made some achievements on the road of Australian literature translation. This is a very important factor in my choice of Australian literary studies. It was not because of my particular hobby at first, because at the time we did not know much about Australian literature. Not only did I not understand it, but the Chinese did not understand Australian literature, and Australian literature had not been introduced to China at all. Professor Hu Wenzhong was the vice president of Beijing Foreign Studies University. He was one of the first to go to Australia and was also an expert on Australian literature. He encouraged me to do Australian literature translation, saying that this field is still uncultivated "virgin land", and you can definitely do a lot in this virgin land. My very important work, *The Tree of Man*, was a collaboration with Mr. Hu, and later I collaborated with him on *Australian Contemporary Short Stories*. Another very important factor is that I got to know Nicholas Jose. He was a cultural counsellor at the Australian Embassy, and he was also a writer, and later he was a university professor. He introduced me to plenty of books, and I should say that Mr. Jose sent me one half of all the books I translated. He was very insightful, and as soon as a good book came out in Australia, or a book that won a prize, he bought it himself and sent it to me, and then I started to translate it. Of course, I also translated his books. I

have translated a total of four books by Jose. Many books, such as *Carpentaria* and *Benang: From the Heart* and other award-winning works were introduced to me by him. I was gradually connecting with Australia. Now Australia's most famous writers have close ties with me, and they will give me new books when they publish them, so that I can choose translations according to my preference. My criteria for selecting materials for translation: Nicholas Jose's criteria are mine because he is very insightful.

I have translated works by Nobel Prize winner Patrick White and the Man Booker Prize winner Peter Carey. The most prestigious award in Australia is called the Miles Franklin Award, and several of the books I have translated are also some of the works that have won this award. In addition, I gradually felt that Australian Aboriginal literature which is a very important aspect of Australian literature was still a blank in our country. Consequently, I have been working a lot on Australian Aboriginal literature in recent years. I have been translating and publishing some very famous Aboriginal literature, such as Kim Scott's *Benang: From the Heart*, Amanda James' *Who Am I* and Tara June Winch's *The Yield*. All of these writers are Australian Aboriginal literary writers and all of these works are representative of the award-winning works.

The other is Australian children's literature which is also very characteristic, but has hardly been introduced in China. I was the first one to systematically introduce Australian children's literature in China. In 2009, I organized the translation of five Australian literary works, all of which are the best children's literature in Australia. I called this book *Australia Centennial Children's Literature Classic*, and People's Literature Publishing House called it *The Koala Series*. Last year, Beijing United Publishing Company published several books I translated, all of which are Australian children's literature. Later, because I was busy with work, I asked the Australian Studies Center of Inner Mongolia Normal University to continue to translate. They did a great job translating eight works of Australian children's literature. As I was born and raised in Inner Mongolia, I feel that we have a lot of weaknesses in the field of English and American literature translation. Whether it is Beijing University, Beijing Foreign Studies University or East China Normal University, they have already done very good research in the translation of English and American literature. But for translating Australian literature, we are all starting from the same line. Therefore, I especially encourage the teachers of Inner Mongolia Normal University to translate Australian literature and I believe that they will definitely produce great results. What I expected was right. Now Inner Mongolia Normal University is at the forefront of the country in the translation of Australian Aboriginal children's literature and no school can surpass it.

That is my criteria for choosing materials for translation. The first thing is that I translate works as much as possible according to the domestic needs. I translate works that have not been introduced so that I encounter less competition and it is easier to produce results. It is also important to see if the original work is an award-winning work, because publishers have to consider it for publication.

Wu: Thank you. Now, I would like to ask your opinion on the literary book title translation. In what ways do you think the title of a literary book is important to the whole literary work, or what does it

mean?

Li: The title of the book is just a few words, but it reflects the principle of translation. The writer must have spent a lot of time trying to come up with a few words that represent the main idea of the whole work, and gave the book its title. Actually it is very difficult to translate the title of the book and I have to spend the whole lesson teaching the translation of book titles. Literary translation includes literal translation and free translation. For most book titles, if literal translation is possible, it is best to use it. For example, *War and Peace* and *Pride and Prejudice* should be literally translated into Chinese. Some books named after people are also translated literally, such as *Oliver Twist* and *Anna Karenina* etc. These works all belong to literal translation methods. However, sometimes the literal translation alone do not make sense, and translators have to rely on the free translation which is to extract a few words that can best express the content of the translation after the book has been read thoroughly.

Nicholas Jose has a book called *The Rose Crossing*, and I took a lot of trouble translating the title of the book. “Rose” is the plant rose, and “Crossing” means hybridization. If this book is translated literally, it is *Za Jiao Mei Gui* that means hybrid rose in Chinese, which is also in line with the content of this book. However, as the title of a novel, *Za Jiao Mei Gui* is not loved by many readers. Readers may wonder whether the book is about horticulture or about plant cultivation. Because the roses to be hybridized in the book are black-coloured roses, I translated the title of this book as *Hei Mei Gui* which means the black-colored hybrid rose in Chinese according to the whole book.

Colleen McCullough’s book title *The Touch* is also difficult to translate. “Touch” means to caress. However, *Caress* in Chinese is not like a title of a literary book. *Hu Huan* that means calling for something in Chinese translated by me is derived from a short poem by Salinger. There is a line in the poem that says “I think love is a touch and yet not a touch.” Western readers may think of this poem when they see the title of *The Touch*, but Chinese readers do not associate it with that poem at all when they see *Caress*. I had no choice but to translate *The Touch* as *Hu Huan* until after the whole book was finally translated because the book is about the call to love, and that was the name given to it. Of course, some readers are not satisfied with this title. However, faced with such a situation, translators often have no better choice.

My friend David Walker has a book whose title called *Not Dark Yet*, which is originally a quote from a song by the American singer Bob Dylan. The line goes like this: It’s not dark yet, but it’s getting there. David used it as the title to mean “I am not completely blind, but blindness is not far away.” Before he went blind, he reminded himself to take the time to do meaningful things. Then I think what he wants to convey is to move forward with the light. At first, the title was translated as *Guang Ming Shang Cun*. The title means that eyesight still remains in Chinese, but it is not like the title of a literary book. The book title is now translated as *Guang Ming Xing* which means the bright journey. David and I were working at Peking University at the time. The two of us were walking on the road when we suddenly heard Liu Tianhua’s famous erhu piece *Guang Ming Xing*. I suddenly felt that the melody of *Guang Ming Xing* was very bright and firm, with a bouncy rhythm, and that it was a perfect match for the book.

Readers now think it is quite a good title.

Another example is the title *The Tree of Man*. Most people translate *The Tree of Man* into the genitive *Ren Zhi Shu* or *Ren Lei Zhi Shu* that mean this tree belongs to this man or human in Chinese. Actually, after I finished translating this book and discussed it with Mr. Hu later, we thought they were wrong translations. The trees in this book symbolize human life. A small tree gradually grows into a towering tree, but in the end, it suddenly falls down. It is the same with the life of a human being: a teenager, a young man, a strong man and finally an old man. The protagonist of this book also wrote about his life, and in the end he fell down suddenly and died. But life goes on and on, and trees will always grow from generation to generation. At the very moment when this old grandfather died, it was as if an old tree had fallen down. His little grandson is in a small forest, running around, singing and dancing, and holding a red glass in his hand, which his grandfather used to play with when he was a child. It was a sudden inspiration to us, and we thought it would be a good idea to translate it as *Ren Shu*, because man is tree and tree is man. This title has been well received by the academic community as a whole, and I think it is a good translation.

Therefore, when translating the title of a book, translators should uniformly consider its connotation and the deepest meaning. My principle is to use the literal translation method as much as possible when translating the title of the book, and use other translation methods in other situations. For example, *Waterloo Bridge* can be literally translated into *Hua Tie Lu Qiao* which refers to the name of the bridge in Chinese. But this translation is not as good as *Hun Duan Lan Qiao* that means someone's death on the bridge because the entire storyline is related to the suicide or death of this person. *Madison County's Bridge* is literally translated as *Mai Di Xun de Qiao* referring to the place of the bridge in Chinese which lacks a bit of literary color. While the title *Lang Qiao Yi Meng* is better because this title means that nothing is gonna change my love for you in Chinese. Readers know this novel is a romance novel as soon as they see the title. Therefore, translators will encounter many difficulties when translating book titles, which requires translators to think over and over again.

Wu: Professor Li, when do you think is the best time to translate the title of a book? Do you revise the title repeatedly afterwards?

Li: Except for those titles translated by literal method, I translate the book title in the end. I do not translate the title until my book is submitted in manuscript, such as *The Yield*. However, some titles are very simple to translate. For example, the book I am currently translating is *Dickens' Boy*. The book is about the son of the English writer Dickens who goes to Australia to work as a shepherd and live through many legends. So far I have translated the book under the title *Di Gengsi de Nan Hai* that means the son of Dickens in Chinese, but it is hard to say whether I will end up with that name. As I get more into the book, I may stop using that name and go with something more artistic. Nowadays a contract drawn up by publishers allows the tentative title of the book. After all, the translation of a book title is quite a complicated matter.

Wu: Do you have a ranking of the factors that influence the translation of a book title? Which do you consider more important, the wishes of the original author, the interest of the reader or the market demand?

Li: I pay more attention to what the original author is trying to say, but publishers are now focusing more on market demand. There is a ridiculous example. The book *The Collector* translated by me has several versions. At first, it was translated as *Shou Cang Jia* published by Lijiang Publishing House. Later, when Lijiang Publishing House republished it, it changed the title of the book to *Stone House Hidden a Girl* because this novel is about a bad guy who hides a girl in his basement made of stone. The title of this book is not good at all. Then, my book was published in Taiwan which was even more outrageous. The title of the book was changed to *Butterfly Spring Dream*. This was done without consulting me, and if I had been consulted, I would not have agreed. Later, this book was republished by Shanghai Translation Publishing House and also called *Shou Cang Jia*, which is the most appropriate title. This example is interesting. The same book has different translation names due to the needs of the market.

A Fringe of Leaves is an important work of Patrick White. It was originally published by the Chinese Literature Publishing House in the first edition under the title of *Shu Ye Qun* that means the dress of leaves in Chinese. In the second edition, the title was translated as *Ellen*, which is the name of the heroine. This name change based on market demand is not good at all. Therefore, publishers just translate the title of the book to attract readers' attention, and sometimes they do not pay attention to the relationship between the title and the content at all. Nowadays, market demand basically comes first. The publishers are certainly trying to attract readers by changing the title at will, and the translators sometimes have to make compromises in order to get the book published. As for me, I totally disagree with the publishers.

Wu: According to what you just said, translators are limited by some external factors such as publishers. From ancient times to the present, translators serve both the original author and the reader. What do you think is the status of the translator in the whole translation process? What is the role of the translator?

Li Yao: You said the translator serves the author and the reader, but now the translator is subordinate to the publishing house. The status of translation should be very high, because without translation, western culture can not be introduced into China, and similarly, Chinese culture can not go to the world. But now the status of translation is low in China. I have been working as a translator for over 40 years and I know the translation's low status very well. In terms of remuneration, the translator earns a very low remuneration. There is a big difference between the translation fee and the writing fee that is also relatively low in China, but it is much higher than the translation fee. Senior translators earn 100 yuan a day for translation, while the average young translators earn 60 yuan a day for translation. The phenomenon that the status of translators in China is very low in terms of financial gain needs to be changed urgently. The uneven quality of Chinese translated literary works has a lot to do with the low status of the translation industry. I teach MA students in translation at the university now. I tell them

that there is sometimes a reason why young people are now shoddy in their translations. The translator is in a hurry to deliver his manuscript, and as a result the translator uses machine translation and software to translate it. But for someone like me, who has made translation his life's work, I do not accept this practice. I would rather be paid less to do a better translation. Personally, I think the uneven quality of translation is closely related to the low compensation and the low status of translation.

In addition, translation is not a scientific research achievement. The translator works so hard to translate a book for a year, and the final evaluation of the professional title does not count as a scientific research achievement, which is unreasonable. This is indeed a real problem. Therefore, translators should not be blamed for being shoddy. If the translator is paid more, the translator must be meticulous. Now everyone says that people who really engage in translation are actually out of passion, out of hobby, and out of professionalism. I am in that category, and I typically do not expect translations to make money. I have a decent pension and then I can translate as much as I can. But it is definitely a dream for young people to rely on translation to support themselves.

Wu: We have just talked about the status of the translator, which is an issue that has always been of concern to the theory of translator's subjectivity. The translator can exert his or her subjective initiative, but the translator must be restricted by the original author, the reader or other factors in the process of translation. To what extent do you think translators can exert their initiative?

Li: I do not think that the translator's initiative can be used to any great extent. The translator just exerts his or her initiative subjectivity to translate the book well. If the translator can convey a good book to the reader in a very good way, then he or she has fulfilled the task. It is simply not possible for the translator to influence others, such as the original work, nor is it his or her responsibility to do so. The translator's task is to translate the book well, and when the translation is done well, it is enough to give a very good account to the author and to the reader. I have been working in translation for 40 years, and my own principle is: I just need to translate books honestly, and it is not my business to care about other things. Translators should not complain all day long because translators translate out of passion and no one is forcing them to do it. Now I teach classes on translation practice at Peking University, Beijing Foreign Studies University, Inner Mongolia Normal University and Mudanjiang Normal College. Some of the classes are online and some are offline. I am very responsible for my students. But I found that some students were not serious and used translation software to finish my homework. I reiterated to them that I would rather read a poorly translated homework full of errors than to see this seemingly translated homework that is inconsistent with the content of the original. But there are always students who do not listen to my advice, and there is no control over this current trend. However, none of the students of Peking University use translation software. Students are willing to use their own intelligence to translate, and the translated works are very good. That is why they can cultivate talents. Students at Inner Mongolia Normal University are relatively few and feel emotional to me. They listen to my words and they are embarrassed to refute my advice. I carry out translations every day, and I can tell at a glance who has translated themselves and who has taken the software. Translation is indeed out

of passion, and translators will not achieve anything if they are just coping with translation.

Wu: What do you think is the significance of studying the translation of literary book titles from the perspective of the translator's subjectivity?

Li: The study of literary book title translation from the perspective of translator's subjectivity is conducive to the translation of better titles. The translator's subjective initiative can break through the meaning of the title itself and find out its true connotation, thus producing a better translation of the title. This kind of research is valuable. In fact, I am not satisfied with the translated titles of many books of mine, and these books may be republished when there is a chance. There is a book called *Si Ying* in Chinese published by Shanghai Translation Press. This title means a child has passed away in Chinese. The English title of *Si Ying* was *Dead Babies*, written by the British author Martin Amis. I thought the translation of *Dead Babies* was too awkward. Later I looked it up and found out that "dead babies" was actually a British buzzword in the 1970s, meaning someone or something is out of date. It is not good to translate it as *Obsolete Someone* or *Obsolete Something* and I can not accept the translation of it as *Si Ying* at all. I negotiated with the publishing house to change the title of the book, but the publishing house did not agree with my request. I had no choice but to make some additions in the translation postscript. To be honest, I think it is quite inauspicious for me to take a book and give it to someone when I say I am giving you a copy of *Si Ying*. Recently, Shanghai Translation Publishing House contacted me and said that they would republish the book. I said that the title of the book must be changed. In this case, the title of the book will be changed to *Dead Souls* or something else. Anyway, it needs to be changed. A translator is actually very responsible for whether the work can be passed down through the translation of the book title.

Wu: We have already talked about the choice of translation materials, the importance of translation titles, the method of translation of titles, and the status of translators. Do you have anything to add to this interview?

Li: Translators must pay attention to improving Chinese. Translators have a similar level of English comprehension and understanding. The difference between the level of translation lies in the Chinese language. Those who are good at Chinese will have better translations. Therefore, I think that in order to be successful in translation, one must be proficient in Chinese and master the classical literature. The translators of *The Bridges of Madison County* and *Waterloo Bridge* were very profound in classical literature, and otherwise they would not have come up with such a brilliant title for these books. Therefore, to be a good translator, one must not only improve the ability to understand English, but also improve the Chinese language skills.

Wu: I will organize your recording into a manuscript, and I will show it to you after finishing. Thank you for accepting my interview!

3. Conclusion

This paper shows how translator's subjectivity is embodied in the translation of literary book titles through conducting a semi-structured interview with Li Yao. In this interview, Li Yao expresses that the translation of literary book titles is very difficult. Translators are not only restricted by the original author and reader but also restricted by the publishing house. As for the selection of translation materials, Li Yao chooses the materials that have been little studied before and that meet the market needs. Li Yao also supports that when translating the book titles, translators are better to use literal translation as much as possible and translators should grasp the true meaning of the original work. In terms of the translator's status, Li Yao holds the view that the status of the translator in China is very low. The study of the translation of literary book titles from the perspective of translator's subjectivity is valuable and important because translators can produce better titles. At last, Li Yao gives his suggestion that translators should focus on the improvement of language ability. Through this interview, the paper finds that translators can exert their subjective initiative on the selection of translation materials and methods, but subjective initiative is restricted by many factors.

This paper, introducing qualitative research method, provides a new perspective for the study of literary book title translation. What's more, this paper calls on more scholars to pay more attention to the translators themselves which is conducive to the improvement of the status of translators.

References

- Hatim, B., & Mason, I. (1990). *Discourse and the Translator*. London and New York: Longman.
- Li Yao. (2017). The Re-creation of Literary Translation and the Importance of Personal Color. *China Campus*, 9, 62-64.
- Venuti, L. (2008). *The Translator's Invisibility: A history of Translation* (2nd ed.). London and New York: Routledge.
- Zha, M. J., & Tian, Y. (2003). On the Subjectivity of the Translator. *Chinese Translator Journal*, 1, 19-24.