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**Abstract**

Use of strategies should be the freedom for translators to deal with various difficulties in transfer operations. As one of the strategies, annotation, remains an issue in literary translation. Specifically, whether a translator is allowed to use notes or not, and how many notes can be used, so far, have not been fully discussed in Translation Studies. Therefore, based on the Chinese translation of a few classics, mainly *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen and *The Personal History of David Copperfield* by Charles Dickens, this article has first sought the reasons for use of notes. Secondly, it divides notes into several categories and discusses the proper number for each of them.

**Keywords:** note; literary translation; reason; limit

**INTRODUCTION**

It has been idealistically argued that a good translation can help target readers deeply understand the ideological content and artistic features of the source text without use of any note (Wu 1985: 33). Literary translation practices, however, have witnessed that notes are extensively and frequently employed in works of various forms of literature, as in Nabokov's English translation of Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*. As far as their place in the target text is concerned, notes may be arranged in the text proper, at the foot of the page, or at the end of the text proper. They are labeled intratextual note, footnote and endnote respectively. This article is mainly aimed at two questions: Are notes necessary in literary translation? And how many notes are deemed proper? They will be discussed with reference to the Chinese versions of a few world classics.

Research on notes in literary translation is seldom seen in Translation Studies. Only a few writers have transformed their interest in notes into published works or articles. Yuan (1984: 91-97), a veteran Chinese translator, raises three issues on annotation, namely necessity, accuracy and style of notes. He claims that notes should focus on the author's intention and the reader's needs; the language should be flowing and clear and the number of words should be controlled; the annotation marker should be eye-catching and the place of notes should be arranged properly. Luo (1985) summarizes the preconditions for using notes: (1) socio-cultural background, customs and habits, oral literature, geography, important people; (2) metaphor, allusion and religious problems in the source text; (3) foreign

languages in the source text.

Pym (1992: 89) argues that “[n]otes are expansion by another name”. He strongly opposes use of notes that is a sign of insulting target readers' intelligence. The translator can resort to a large number of other methods to handle the content of notes. Henry (2000) links difficulties in translating with annotation. He discusses the characteristics and types of notes, raising the issue of the translator's position between the author and the reader in explicating the implicit in the original. Varney (2005) examines the functions, especially ideological functions of notes with regard to taboos in the Italian translations of Anglo-American fiction during the period 1945–2005. She sees notes as “mapping the boundaries of intercultural exchange, often highlighting instances in which meaning has not been reproduced within the translation proper”. Her findings indicate that a gradual loss of cultural specificity in the source text gradually gets lost in the target culture and a tendency appears towards increased target-culture receptivity and intercultural homogeneity.

Miao and Salem (2008) make a textometrical and quantitative analysis of the footnotes in Fu Lei's translation of *Jean-Christophe* by Romain Rolland, focusing on the style of the translator. They see addition of notes as Fu's intervention in his translation process. Their study shows that Fu does not use the notes as a predominant medium to overcome problems of untranslatability, but as a tool to introduce Western culture and his own view on history to the target readers. Xu (2009) raises two principles for using notes to deal with

allusions on the basis of the three Chinese versions of *Ulysses* by James Joyce: (1) appropriateness of annotation including the total number of notes and the number of words in each note; (2) introduction of the source of allusions as well as their meanings.

The relevant literatures available fall into two categories: theoretical reflections and empirical studies. There is a controversy on whether notes should be used in translating. The reasons, conditions and functions of notes have been analyzed and explored from different angles. Based on them, this article will make a further discussion of the questions formulated above.

### Reasons for use of notes

As for the necessity of notes in translating, it is claimed that notes should not be used and in-text explanations can well replace them (Pym 1992). Pym believes that use of notes is “insulting the implied receiver’s intelligence” and “there are several hundred more cunning ways of directing the receiver’s attention” (ibid.: 90). According to him, a remarkable advantage of in-text explanations is to ensure a flowing, uninterrupted reading, which is the Achilles’ heel of notes. Use of in-text explanations to substitute for notes involves the conception of translation. Are we supposed to translate the source text as it is, neither more nor less, or could we use additions and omissions in translating to overcome linguistic and cultural difficulties? Additions and omissions are regarded as kinds of translation error (Delisle et al. 1999). The holder of this viewpoint obviously insists that translators should reproduce in the target text what exactly is in the original. In-text explanations, on the other hand, may be seen as a form of addition and thus may be labeled a kind of translation error in the eyes of some Translation Studies writers.

Although they may interrupt readers’ reading and partition the target text to make it structurally complex, notes that can be arranged as footnotes at the bottom of a page or endnotes at the end of a chapter or a book, can justify themselves with regard to linguistic-translational or cultural-translational factors. Linguistic and cultural difficulties in the process of translating force translators to seek translation strategies and techniques to surmount them. What target readers see is the translation outcome instead of the translating procedures and processes. Innocent and average readers will take it for granted that the target text remains the same as the source text. In this case, translators are responsible for clarifying what has happened in the translating process if shifts are produced in the target text. It is clearly impossible for them to do it in the target text proper. Translation practices indicate that only general descriptions or sporadic remarks on the translation process are sometimes offered in fore-words or after-words of a translation.

Notes endow translators with the freedom to introduce how they cope with the difficulties in the original in the

actual operation of the source text. Target texts with notes, in some sense, are more reader-friendly than those without them. Readers choose to decide whether they read the notes when they encounter a difficulty, although note-reading will interrupt the flow of their reading. As far as translation notes are concerned, we may describe translators’ obligation and readers’ freedom like this: translators propose; readers dispose. Therefore, clarification of gains or losses resulting from employment of various translation strategies seems a necessary reason for use of notes. Let’s look at an example in the three Chinese versions of *David Copperfield* by Dickens (2007)

### Example 1

He went to India with his capital, and there, according to a wild legend in our family, he was once seen riding on an elephant, in company with a Baboon; but I think it must have been a Baboo - or a Begum. (chapter 1, p.2)

Dong Qiusi’s version:

他带着他的资本去了印度。据我们家中一种荒诞的传说，一次有人见他在那里跟一个大狒狒骑在一头象上；但是我想，那应当是一个贵人，或是一个公主。

(My back translation: He went to India with his capital. According to an absurd rumor in our family, someone once saw him riding on an elephant with a big Baboon. But I think it should be a nobleman or a princess.)

Footnote (p.5) : 猩猩在英文为 Baboon, 印度人称有教养的体面人为 Baboo , 称回族公主为 Begum, 三字读音相近似。 (猩猩 corresponds to Baboon in English; a well-bred gentleman is called Baboo; an Islamic princess is called Begum. The three words have a similar pronunciation.)

Zhang Guruo’s version:

他带着姨婆给他的这笔钱，到印度去了。据我们家里一种荒乎其唐的传闻，说在印度，有一次有人看见他和一个马猴，一块儿骑在大象身上。不过据我想，和他一块儿骑在大象身上的，绝不会是马猴，而一定是公侯之类，再不就是母后什么的。 (My back translation: He went to India with the money my great-aunt gave him. According to a very absurd rumor in our family, it was said that in India some saw him riding on an elephant with a horse-monkey. But I think it must be something like a duke or marquis but absolutely not a horse-monkey, or it may be something like a mother queen.)

Footnote (p.6): “马猴”，原文 baboon，通常译作“狒狒”；“公侯”原文 baboo，为印度人的尊敬称呼；“母后”原文 begum，用以称呼印度的后或公主。原文这几个字以音近而误传，译文改用“马猴”、“公侯”、“母后”，以求双关。 (“马猴” corresponds to “baboon” in the source text.)

“Baboon” is usually rendered into Chinese as “狒狒”. “公侯” corresponds to “baboo” in the ST. “Baboo” is a term of address to show respect among Indians. “母后” corresponds to “begum” in the source text. “Begum” is used to address an Indian queen or princess. The words in the source text were wrongly spread due to their similar pronunciations. The target text uses “马猴”, “公侯” and “母后” in order to achieve punning.)

Li Peng'en's version:

他带着这笔钱去了印度。据我们家里的一种荒诞无稽的传闻，曾有人在那里看见他和一只大公猴共骑一头大象。不过，依我愚见，因为“猴子”之“猴”与“公侯”之“侯”同音，传闻系以讹传讹。和他同骑一头大象的，绝不会是一只公猴，而是一位公侯，或许是一位公主呢。（My back translation: He went to India with the sum of money. According to a wild legend in our family, he was once seen there riding on an elephant, in company with a male monkey. But I think the erroneous rumor was produced due to the identical sound of “猴” in “猴子” [hou zi] and “侯” in “公侯” [gong hou]. What was riding on the elephant with him must not have been a male monkey but a duke-marquis or a princess.）

Footnote: No note is provided by the translator.

“Baboon”, “Baboo” and “Begum” in the example above are a pun on homonymy, namely words with different meanings but similar sounds. Dong Qiusi focuses on their meanings “狒狒”, “贵人” and “公主”, with no consideration of reproducing their sound features. Zhang Guruo uses “马猴” (*ma hou*, horse monkey), “公侯” (*gong hou*, duke and marquis) and “母后” (*mu hou*, mother queen) to render them. The Chinese versions are similar to their originals not only in sense but also in sound because they have the same sound /hou/. Li Peng'en also pays attention to the phonetic association between the words and explains the association between “Baboon” and “Baboo”. Anyhow, both Zhang Guruo and Li Peng'en have distorted the semantic content of the homonymic pun in order to retain the figure of speech in the target text. Both translators change “baboon” into “female monkey” and “baboo” (gentleman in Indian) into “duke and marquis”. As for “begum” (princess or woman of high rank), Zhang renders it into “mother queen” and Li into “princess”. Zhang uses a footnote to explain the kind of figurative language in the source and the specific translation method, but Li does not. In such cases a responsible translator is supposed and entitled to offer a note to make clear the difficulty or uniqueness in the original and their considerations and actual operations in dealing with it.

Besides translators' major operations of translating, use of notes is also related to cultural recontextualization. Translation, as an intercultural

communication, cannot avoid de-contextualization, namely loss of the original cultural context in the target culture in varying degrees. It is generally a universal that target readers do not share the same cultural background as original readers, as in the case of translation between Chinese and English. People in a culture are familiar with the shared cultural presuppositions that are usually not made clear in daily oral or written communication. Just as George Steiner points out,

“Meaning” resides “inside” the words of the source text, but to the native reader it is evidently ‘far more than’ the sum of dictionary definitions. The translator must actualize the implicit ‘sense’, the denotative, connotative, illative, intentional, associative range of significations which are implicit in the original, but which it leaves undeclared or only partly declared simply because the native auditor or reader has an immediate understanding of them. The native speakers at-homeness, largely subconscious because inherited and cultural-specific, in his native tongue, his long-conditioned immersion in the appropriate context of the spoken or written utterance, make possible the economy, the essential implicitness of customary speech and writing. In the transference’ process of translation, the inherence of meanings, the compression through context of plural, even contradictory significations ‘into’ the original words, get lost in a greater or lesser degree.

(*After Babel*, 2001: 291)

What is implicit in the source text, in many cases, is cultural message and remains unknown to target readers, which is the very case when source and target cultures are of no kinship. It can be explicated in notes. The target reader's intelligence, or in Pym's terminology, the implied receiver's intelligence, is of varying degree. We cannot equate the intelligence with that of the most knowledgeable receiver. Even an average receiver's intelligence is difficult to fathom. Therefore, we could just suppose that the implied receiver knows little about the source culture. Use of notes to introduce cultural presuppositions shared by common readers from the source culture is thus a necessary task for translators to undertake. For example, a dialogue between David Copperfield and Mr. Peggotty in *David Copperfield* is concerned with the Anglican Catechism, which goes as follows:

“Mr. Peggotty!” says I.

“Sir,” says he.

“Did you give your son the name of Ham, because you lived in a sort of ark?”

Mr. Peggotty seemed to think it a deep idea, but answered:

“No, sir. I never give him no name.”

“Who gave him that name, then?” said I, putting question number two of the catechism to Mr. Peggotty. (chapter 3, p.28)

Chinese readers may be puzzled about “question

number two of the catechism", but English and American readers are familiar with the catechism that typically contains questions and answers and whose first two questions and answers are like this:

Catechist: What is your Name?  
Answer: N. or M.

Catechist: Who gave you this Name?

Answer: My Godfathers and Godmothers in my Baptism; wherein I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.<sup>1</sup>

In order to re-contextualize the shared implicit cultural knowledge of Christian Westerners in the original, it seems an imperative to offer a note to introduce the above questions and answers. Dong's version provides a footnote to introduce the first two questions (chapter 3, p.39) while the footnote of Zhang's version introduces both questions and answers (chapter 3, p.40). But no note is seen in Li's version.

In a word, high-register language (i.e. one-to-many language), implicit common cultural information and use of translation strategies and techniques that cause remarkable shifts in translating, make it a necessity to use notes in literary translation.

### Limits in use of notes

Translators' freedom in use of notes does not mean that they can use them in an uncontrollable way. An examination of the four Chinese versions of *Pride and Prejudice* by Wang Keyi, Sun Zhili, Zhang Ling and Zhang Yang, and Lei Limei, indicates that the number of their notes is 63, 56, 68 and 24 respectively. The distribution of the numbers seems rational if we consider Austen's novel is a masterpiece only with 288 pages and a limited number of linguistic and cultural difficulties. The above three translations of *David Copperfield* present extremities in use of notes: Zhang uses as many as 624 notes; Dong provides 245 notes; Li offers no notes. Li's rejection of notes seems the product of the publisher's "translation brief" (Nord 2001: 30) that translators are expected to use no notes or as few notes as possible in order to control the publishing cost because their target readers are lower-class consumers.

Nabokov (1955: 512) objects to the constraint on use of notes by calling for "translations with copious footnotes, reaching up like skyscrapers to the top of this or that page" (see Pym 1992: 90). As a matter of fact, we can see some translations with a great number of notes, as in Chinese versions of James Joyce's *Ulysses* and T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*. For example, the Chinese version of *Ulysses*, co-translated by the couple Xiao Qian and Wen Jieruo, contains totally 1,252 pages with

5,988 notes arranged after each chapter and constituting 335 pages.<sup>2</sup> In other words, more than one-fourth of the translation is devoted to endnotes. Xiao Qian, the husband translator as well as a famous writer in modern China, strongly opposes use of notes in both literary creation and translation because it will disturb readers' reading (Li 2010). Therefore, his use of so many notes in his translation seems a kind of necessity. This makes us think of two relations: the relation between the number of pages of the source text and that of notes in the target text and the relation between the number of linguistic and cultural difficulties in the source text and that of notes in the target text. In my view, it is not the book length but the difficulties in the book that determine the number of notes in translating it. A big book with few difficulties may contain fewer notes than a small book with many difficulties. Translation shifts often involve linguistic and cultural difficulties in the source text that force the translator to employ various translation strategies to surmount them. The right for translators to use notes, however, cannot be abused. The above example shows that Zhang's annotation seems redundant while Dong's is concise. Let us look at another example of this kind, which deals with "caul" in chapter 1 of *David Copperfield*.

### Example 2

Dong's note for "caul" (p.4):

这是过去英国人的一种迷信。初生婴儿头上带有一层胎膜，算是一种吉兆。保存这胎膜的人，可以终生不致淹死。 (This was a superstition of English people in the past. There is a caul on the head of the newly-born baby. The one who keeps it will not be drowned all his life.)

Zhang's note for "caul" (p.4):

胎膜是缘子宫内生长的一层坚韧纤维薄膜，头膜是胎膜的一部分，为有的婴儿生时所带（北京叫戴“白帽子”，主不吉祥）。英国民俗认为，头膜是吉祥之物，能使人免灾难，尤其能使人免遭淹死。当时报上常刊登广告，出卖头膜，1779年在伦敦《晨邮报》上曾有卖头膜的广告，索价20几尼。所以这里说15几尼是廉价。 (Caul is a layer of tough and tensile fiber membrane that grows in the womb. The head-caul is part of caul that is carried by some babies when they were born [it is called "wearing the white cap" in Beijing; it is a sign of unluckiness]. According to the English custom, the head-caul is a sign of luckiness and it can help people to avoid disasters, especially drowning. Caul-selling advertisements were often seen in newspapers at that time. A caul-selling advertisement was published in *Morning Post* in London in 1779, offering the price of more than 20

<sup>1</sup> See the entry of "catechism" on <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catechism>.

<sup>2</sup> See Li Ling's MA thesis "Research on the notes in Xiao Qian and Wen Jieruo's translation of *Ulysses*" on <http://cdmd.cnki.com.cn/Article/CDMD-10532-2010238177.htm>.

guineas. Therefore, the price of 15 guineas is a low price here in the novel.)

Zhang's note doubles Dong's with regard to use of characters. It seems that Zhang is not "tightfisted" in use of words, but Dong pays much attention to the economy in this regard. Brevity is often seen in Dong's notes that use merely several characters to introduce or explain cultural items in the original. Zhang's lengthy note for "caul" raises the question regarding one function of notes: do notes re-contextualize the cultural background shared by contemporary readers of the original or that by the readers of Dickens's day? Reconstruction of the original cultural context in the target text is closely related to the times. The original readers of different times share different background knowledge. It can be argued that 20<sup>th</sup>-century English readers will inscribe their interpretations into the novel that may be quite different from those by Dickens's contemporaries. Then, if they are designed for contemporary readers, Zhang's note seems unnecessary with regard to the re-contextualization of the original because 20<sup>th</sup>-century or 21<sup>th</sup>-century readers of the source text generally do not know the background information introduced in the note. This kind of annotation is also seen in the Chinese versions of *Pride and Prejudice*. For example, Wang Keyi's association of the novel with *The Vicar of Wakefield* in translating "it was the only honorable provision for well-educated young women of small fortune" (chapter 22, p.93) and Zhang Ling and Zhang Yang's link of the novel with the Bible in rendering "a most unfortunate affair" (chapter 47, p.212) are nothing but the translators' making a show of erudition. These notes are fairly tenuous. It is unlikely for contemporary readers to produce such associations in the process of reading the original. It may be safe to assert that translators can offer the background information in their notes that naturally arises in the minds of their contemporaries in reading the original rather than that shared by the author's contemporaries.

Even if notes on intercultural differences are necessary, they should be brief and to-the-point. Translators are supposed to make every possible effort to avoid redundant notes. Detailed notes seem to be friendly because they provide enough information for target readers and require much time and energy from translators. In fact, they are not reader-friendly because they interrupt the linearity of the reading process. Short notes, in some sense, can shorten the time of such interruption and thus reduce the degree of the "unfriendliness". Limits in use of notes are related not only to the economy of language, but also to types of notes. In light of their functions, notes may be roughly categorized into informative notes, expository notes, critical notes and mixed notes.

Informative notes are those that focus on the introduction of the linguistic or cultural information observed in the source text. Linguistic information includes various kinds of figurative language, especially

those absent in the target language, dialects or special kinds of language, such as a drunkard's language, or something from another language. Cultural information covers a wide range of things, such as names of people and places, historical events, religious or literary allusions, intertextual relations and folk customs. These notes are somewhat necessary if translating is viewed as a kind of inter-lingual and intercultural communication activity. But they should be concise.

Expository notes are intended for expounding use of translation methods or strategies. Therefore, they are also called translation strategic notes. Gains, losses or alterations are common in translating. Faithful and conscientious translators may honestly tell their readers how and what they have done in the transfer operation. These notes help readers know the translational truth which they cannot see in the target text without the aid of notes. In my opinion, translation strategies concerning drastic shifts may be introduced, but conventional translating operations should not waste notes of this kind. Notes on translators' uncertainties in understanding the source text may be placed within expository notes. For example, there is such a sentence in *David Copperfield*:

### Example 3

"The very thing we say!" cried Traddles. "You see, my dear Copperfield," falling again into the low confidential tone, "after I had delivered my argument in DOE dem. JIPES versus WIGZIELL, which did me great service with the profession, I went down into Devonshire, and had some serious conversation in private with the Reverend Horace. I dwelt upon the fact that Sophy - who I do assure you, Copperfield, is the dearest girl! –" (chapter 59, p.719)

Zhang does not understand what "DOE dem. JIPES versus WIGZIELL" exactly means. Therefore, he uses a footnote to express his doubts and uncertainties on it. The note (p.898) goes as follows:

原文 Doe dem. Jipes versus Wigziell。Jipes versus Wigziell 为捷普斯控威格泽, 一个讼案; Doe 可能是 John Doe, 法庭假设人名。这儿的辩护, 可能是候补律师要进行的表演之一。未能确定, 留此待查。 (The source text is Doe dem. Jipes versus Wigziell. Jipes versus Wigziell means that Jipes accused Wigziell. It was a case in court. Doe might refer to John Doe, a person's name assumed by the court. The defense here might be one of the performances by the candidate lawyer. It cannot be determined and leaves to be investigated.)

Zhang suspects that "Jipes" and "Wigziell" are the fictitious names in the case and therefore the defense might be a simulation one. Anyhow, the translator cannot make sure of it and claims that "it leaves to be investigated later". Dong points out in his note (p.953) that they are assumed names and were often used in the

circles of law. In other words, he does not think that there is any problem in understanding the source text. Li's version does not offer any note about it. Notes of this kind are seldom seen in translations. Translators who choose to offer such notes do not make a spectacle of themselves at all. They are brave and respectable intercultural mediators. They deserve higher esteem than those translators who display their erudition by notes. In principle, any rendering based on translators' uncertainties should be annotated, which may be seen as an obligation of translators to readers. This obligation can be fulfilled by notes and these notes seem quite necessary.

Critical notes are those by virtue of which translators express their views on the author or something in the source text. Some translators cannot refrain from expressing their attitude or opinion toward a person, an event or an idea in the original. But they cannot do it in the translation proper. So, they resort to notes. As Jennifer Varney (2005: 47) points out, "[t]he translator's note is seen as mapping the boundaries of intercultural exchange, often highlighting instances in which meaning has not been reproduced within the translation proper". Ideological notes constitute both attack and defense (ibid.: 57). They directly address the target culture and indirectly the source culture, functioning as a distancing tool between source and target cultures. This goes against the basic tenet of translating as an intercultural communication medium. Thus, such notes should be avoided through translators' self-constraint in translating. Translators are not allowed to use notes as a platform to make comments. A good case in point is Zhang's lengthy paragraph that is a commentary on a minor information placed in parentheses in the original. Let us look at the example:

#### Example 4

We went to bed on our arrival (I observed a pair of dirty shoes and gaiters in connexion with my old friend the Dolphin as we passed that door), and breakfasted late in the morning. (21: 262)

Footnote ((p.330): 英美习惯, 客人住在旅馆里, 夜间就寝前, 把靴、鞋等换下, 放在房间门外, 旅馆仆役, 擦净上油, 第二天早晨再穿。狄更斯对于放在房间的赃靴、鞋, 似乎非常感到好玩儿。他给友人一封信里, 说到他游美时, 住于旅馆, 夜间欢迎他的人, 在房间外给他唱夜曲, 他非常感动。但在感动时, “忽然一种念头起于心中, 使我大笑难禁, 因此只有以被毯蒙首。我对凯特(他太太)说, ‘天哪, 门外我那双靴子, 看着有多极情尽致地可笑, 有多极情尽致地庸俗啊! ’我一生之中, 从来没有象那一次那样, 让靴子引得起那样荒谬可笑的感觉。”同时, 他有时把他突然想到的事物, 插到与前后上下文都无关系的中间。他在《游美札记》里, 写到在蛎黄食堂里吃蛎黄, 突然插了一句说: “也并非为的你, 希腊文教授啊!”是他突然想起那位教授来而写入该文中, 和这儿正是一类

情况。(A custom in Britain and America. The guest will take off his shoes or boots and puts them outside the door before going to bed when he stays for the night in a hotel. The servant of the hotel will clean and polish them for the guest to have on the next morning. It seems that Dickens (1980/2007) felt the dirty shoes and boots in the guest-room were very funny. In a letter to his friend, he told a story about his travel in America. When he stayed in a hotel for the night, the receptionist sang some nocturne outside the room and he was quite moved. At the same time he “suddenly thought of an idea that made me unable to help laughing and I had to cover my head with the carpet. I said to Catherine (his wife): ‘Oh, my God, the boots outside the door were awfully funny and vulgar!’ Nothing made me feel so ridiculous like that all my life”. Meanwhile, he sometimes puts what he suddenly thinks of into his writing that seems to have nothing to do with the context. For example, in his *American Notes*, he suddenly put in a sentence when he was eating oysters in the Oyster Canteen: “It is not for you, my Greek professor!” It is because he suddenly thought of that professor and put it into the text. The same is true with the case here in the source text.)

The note is used to make a comment on “I observed a pair of dirty shoes and gaiters”. The translator first introduces the relevant convention in British and American hotels and then discussing Dickens's anecdote in this regard. This kind of note has no place in the target text because it has nothing to do with the original. Translators are supposed to leave everything in the source text to be judged by target readers themselves. Their intervention in this aspect is not desirable.

Mixed notes are a combination of the above two or three notes. They can be seen in the above translations. For example, in the note on “Baboon”, “Baboo” and “Begum”, Zhang first explains the meanings of the words. Then, he comments that they are rumored due to their similar pronunciations. Finally, he introduces his translation method. Therefore, this note is a heterogeneous one of informative, critical and expository notes.

Notes, in many cases, are intimately linked with linguistic, cultural or intertextual difficulties with regard to both understanding and expression. In some sense, they may be seen as “indicators of difficulty” (Dragsted 2012). Thus, notes can serve as an elaboration of the whole problem-solving process in translating. Translators need a place outside the translation proper where they can explain how they handle the problems encountered in translating. Such notes, to a varying extent, are necessary, especially for readers and researchers who are interested in the actual translation process that leads to the production of the target text

#### CONCLUSION

Cultural and linguistic differences determine that

decontextualization is inherent in translating which, in some cases, is a kind of essentializing activity reproducing only the essence or the basic story of the source text. This is quite true in rendering ancient texts, such as classical Chinese poetry or the Four Books and Five Classics. In order to ensure a functional equivalence that the target reader understands and appreciates the target text in essentially the same way as the original reader did (Nida 1993: 118), notes seem a compromising tool for translators to construct the source context in the process of recontextualization. Notes help retain the cultural truth to some extent, but they cannot reconstruct all the associations, direct or indirect, produced by the original author and readers in creating and reading the source text. Only those explicit difficulties in the original can resort to annotation.

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