
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

A Study of Gary Snyder's Translation and Introduction of Hanshan's Poetry from the Perspective of Gatekeeping Theory

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| ABSTRACT

In the 1950s and 1960s, the growth of "Hanshan fever" in the United States may be considered a successful case of Chinese culture "going globally." The translation and introduction of Hanshan's poetry from China to the United States have grown in popularity, with Gary Snyder playing a key role. Communication and translation studies are closely related, and the essence of translation can also be considered the dissemination of information in a foreign language setting. The following four dimensions of Snyder's considerable influence on the translation and introduction of Hanshan's poetry were explored in this study, based on gatekeeping theory in the communication field, i.e., gathering, filtering, processing, and disseminating of information. It was discovered that Snyder has had a critical part in the translation and introduction of Hanshan's poetry as a gatekeeper, as well as making significant contributions to their renewal in a foreign setting.

| KEYWORDS

Hanshan's poetry; Gary Snyder; translational communication studies; gatekeeping theory

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1. Introduction

Communication studies gradually showed strong potential for future development after its emergence around 1920 and rapid development between 1940 and 1950 in response to the economic and social development of the United States, and it gained excellent opportunities in many developed countries and regions, such as Japan, from 1970 onwards. Communication is now a comprehensive discipline with a wealth of theoretical achievements, and many researchers have contributed their insights to the research process.

In the 1950s, Arthur Waley, a well-known British scholar, grew interested in Hanshan's poetry and selected 27 poems for translation. After that, Gary Snyder, a famous American scholar, began to recognize the great literary worth of Hanshan's poetry and initiated further research. For example, Snyder translated 24 poems of Hanshan's poetry, and his translation sparked public fervor in American society. In 1962, Burton Watson, a distinguished American sinologist, also translated a selection of *Cold Mountain: One Hundred Poems by the Tang Poet Han-shan*. It should be pointed out in this paper that Snyder produced a high level of attainment in translating Buddhist poetry because he had attached great importance to the study of Zen ideology, and thereby the relevant works he eventually translated were more representative and widely disseminated (Liu, 2017). Snyder made a significant contribution to the effective translation and introduction of Hanshan's poetry in the United States as a prominent translator. Several other researchers have also examined the connection between Snyder and the widespread reception of Hanshan's poetry in the United States. Hu Anjiang (2011), a well-known Chinese scholar who has spent his academic career focusing on the translation of Hanshan's poetry, analyzed the process of dissemination and canonization of Hanshan's poetry in the United States from the perspective of textual travel. Moreover, Hu generalized the developmental trajectory of the Chinese culture by taking the dissemination of Chinese culture in the English-speaking world as the research subject. Additionally, Geng (2012) described how Hanshan's poetry first came to the attention of Chinese readers before spreading over the world in current times. It can be argued

that previous research on Hanshan's poetry was mostly conducted from the text itself rather than from communication studies or on the influence of a particular translator in the translation process of Hanshan's poetry.

2. Theories of Communication Studies and Translational Communication Studies

The gatekeeping theory is among the advanced theories that can effectively guide translation activities in translation studies. According to Kurt Lewin, a famous sociologist who has made numerous theoretical accomplishments that are highly valuable, gatekeepers are constantly present in all aspects of group communication; for information to enter the communication channel smoothly, it must correspond to the group norms (Guo, 2011). The gatekeeping theory was also used in journalism by White (1950). The role of the gatekeeper is critical at various levels, including information gathering and filtering. Additionally, the translation process normally involves many communication subjects, and any one of them can act as a "gatekeeper." The characteristics and roles of various "gatekeepers", as well as their impact on the effect of translation and communication, can be demonstrated using gatekeeping theory.

Although the field of translational communication has yet to be properly founded, the study and understanding of translation activities from the perspective of communication has a history of more than half a century. The study of translation from the standpoint of communication may be traced back to Eugene Nida's theories on translation, which have evolved through three stages: descriptive linguistics, communicative theory, and social semiotics (Tan, 1999). Nida brought modern communication theory and information theory to translation studies during the communication theory stage. Professor Lv Jun, a pioneer in theories of translational communication in China, was the first to identify the intertwined relationship between translation studies and communication studies, arguing that translation was a type of cross-cultural information exchange activity whose essence was communication with the task of information communication, whether in the sphere of interpretation, translation, or machine translation or for texts from literary or scientific works. Although contemporary translation achievements from a communication perspective were still limited, it was shown that communication studies served as a valuable resource for translation studies. Therefore, it is necessary to study translation through the lens of communication studies.

3. Gary Snyder: "Gatekeeper" of the Translation and Introduction of Hanshan's Poetry

As previously stated, the "gatekeeper" plays four roles during information dissemination: information collection, information filtering, information processing, and information disseminating, all of which have a substantial impact on the success of information dissemination. The four stages of information dissemination were investigated in this study to discuss Hanshan's poetry, which Snyder translated and introduced as a "gatekeeper."

3.1 Information Collection

Snyder's cultural identity must be understood before examining how he collected Hanshan's poetry. Snyder was born in San Francisco, the United States. Snyder was enamored with Chinese landscape painting when he was young. He chose to live alone in the forest in his twenties. After marrying, he built a large wooden house among the mountains and lived a reclusive life from then on. Snyder's life experiences revealed that he shared many similarities with the Chinese poet, Hanshan and that his unique cultural background influenced his translation and dissemination of Hanshan's poetry.

Snyder was greatly fascinated by Hanshan's unrestrained look during a 1950s exhibition of Hanshan's paintings in the United States, which foreshadowed his subsequent translation of Hanshan's poetry. Snyder went on to read Waley's translation of Hanshan's poetry, which aroused his interest in translating Hanshan's poetry even more. Snyder was appealed by Waley's translation during his research on Hanshan's poetry. However, due to certain flaws in Waley's translation, Snyder was also dissatisfied with the version (Leed, 1984). Snyder began studying Oriental languages and literature under Professor Chen Shih-Hsiang in 1995, and it was during this time that he began formally translating Hanshan's poetry. *Gary Snyder: A Bibliography*, written by Katherine Mcneil (1983) after extensive research, also adequately described Snyder's career in translation: He aspired to become a Buddhist poet, so his supervisor, Professor Chen Shih-Hsiang, actively guided him to Hanshan, and with Professor Chen's guidance and Snyder's efforts, he was able to translate Hanshan's poetry.

Snyder collected Hanshan's poetry mainly out of personal interest, which was strongly tied to his cultural and intellectual background, as well as his passion for Chinese culture and longing for Hanshan's way of life, as demonstrated during the information collection stage. It also inspired us that as a disseminator of information, one should have a certain connection with the cultural information he or she aims to transmit to better understand the text's meaning, thereby facilitating its dissemination.

3.2 Information Filtering

The filtering of information by the communicator will determine the type of information that the receivers will eventually receive. Due to the different communicators, the information after filtering will be radically different for the same collection of information. In terms of translation, information filtering can be regarded as the translator's process of selecting the text, and the translator will

decide whatever information is supplied by the author to translate, taking into account aspects such as the translator's purpose. Howard Goldblatt, a literary translator of numerous modern and contemporary Chinese literature, also stressed the importance of paying attention to the selection process to ensure that the translation is completed in an orderly manner (Qin, 2008).

Hanshan wrote over 300 poems, which have been passed down to the present day. The 300 poems cover a wide range of topics, from exhortation poems to moral poems that encourage people to practice filial piety, from proverbial poems about daily life to Zen poems that reflect Buddhist philosophy and transcendence. In terms of the content of translation, Snyder sifted the poems in the original collection that had nothing to do with Zen and thereby selected 24 poems for translation that were closely related to the social environment in the United States at the time. After World War II, the United States' economy had a lot more room for expansion. Nevertheless, the majority of people never fully recovered from the trauma of the war. Young Americans were unsatisfied with the war and rebelled against the materialistic status quo of the capitalist society, yearning for spiritual freedom and natural life during this period. Snyder was a member of the Beat Generation. Therefore, the selection of the 24 poems might be viewed as a spiritual reflection of America's youthful generation, symbolizing the choices of young people's values and judgment.

It can also be observed that it was Snyder, the "gatekeeper" of information dissemination, that decided which information could be received by English readers. Snyder's filtering of information contributed significantly to Hanshan's image as a Buddhist poet, demonstrating that when translating Chinese works, groups such as foreign scholars and sinologists primarily started from their perspectives in combination with their demands. Therefore, their translation purposes and selection criteria differed significantly from those of the government or the state press.

3.3 Information Processing

How information is processed will influence the effective flow and reception of information. The "processing" of the text can be considered as the specific procedure of translation in the case of translation. To guarantee that the translation is well-received, it is vital to focus not only on carefully selecting the cultural information contained in the original text but also on readability so that the reader can completely comprehend the translated text's content. Poetics, philosophy, and patronage all have an impact on the way translators process information. Snyder's uniqueness as a translator stems from his deep interest in Chinese culture, as well as his desire for a more natural life and his belief that translating Hanshan's poetry could help alleviate America's spiritual crisis, so he was influenced more by poetics than ideology or patronage during the translation of Hanshan's poetry. To thoroughly defend this issue, the following translation and original texts will be shown and studied.

Original Text	Target Text
杳杳寒山道，落落冷涧滨。 啾啾常有鸟，寂寂更无人。 淅淅风吹面，纷纷雪积身。 朝朝不见日，岁岁不知春。	Rough and dark—the Cold Mountain trail, Sharp cobbles—the icy creek bank. Yammering, chirping—always birds Bleak, alone, not even a lone hiker. Whip, whip—the wind slaps my face Whirled and tumbled—snow piles on my back. Morning after morning, I don't see the sun Year after year, not a sign of spring.

Snyder chose basic and unambiguous terms without much free translation, as can be seen in the above translation, which was tied to his comprehension of the poem and the readers' expectations at the time. During the translation, Snyder purposefully kept the original poem's linguistic structure and highlighted images from the original poem. According to the table, it can also be seen that during Snyder's translation of the second line, he did not make a linguistic switch but rather purposefully excluded the verb from the translation, resulting in a picture of seclusion. The Imagists had a strong influence on Snyder's later works, which may be noticed in his compositions. Snyder's way of translating poetry may have been illuminated by Ezra Pound's translation of classical Chinese poetry, and if Snyder's manner of translating poetry was enlightened by Pound's translation of classical Chinese poetry has to be examined further. Snyder's translation was widely popular in America following its debut, especially among the younger groups, because of the originality displayed in it, which not only matched the value of American culture at the time but also satisfied the desire of readers. Snyder's translation activities were investigated using the processing perspective of disseminating information as the starting point. Snyder focused on preserving the distinctiveness of the poems during the translation process and used less domesticating strategies to process the text, ensuring that the translated poems retained the novelty of the original poems and that the strangeness intentionally created would aid in the dissemination of Hanshan's poetry.

Snyder may not be a "standard" translator, as his translations differed significantly from those of other translators such as Arthur Wiley. Snyder's translation of Hanshan's 24 poems, however, had gotten the most positive response in terms of communicative effect. It may be generalized that when disseminating translations, it is not required to conform to the usual method of translation but rather to be creative, as this will allow the original material to be regenerated in a new linguistic environment.

3.4 Information Dissemination

The dissemination of information indicates the process of the communicator transmitting information to the audience through media, as well as the audience's reception. The audience, from the perspective of communication studies, consists of the connection that must be highly valued for the communication effect; in other words, the audience is the ultimate recipient of the information. Communication studies scholars have also gone through a number of stages in their research. Some scholars considered that the audience had various characteristics of passive acceptance in the early period, and as a result, they did not truly place the audience in the lead during information distribution. Scholars of communication studies in modern times, on the other hand, progressively acknowledged the importance of the audience, and their study was substantially directed by the audience's actual demands in many elements of information content selection (Fan, 1997). The development of literary translation has improved with the advancement of communication audience theory in the new era, which has a significant guiding significance for the successful communication of translated information and the ideal realization of the communication effect, providing a reference for translators in the selection of specific translation strategies and methods.

Snyder's translations of Hanshan's poetry were published in the mid-1950s and were highly received by American culture at the time, when American young people were very excited about cultural activities, creating a conducive setting for Hanshan's poetry to spread further. After Snyder's translation and introduction, it can be argued that Hanshan's image as a poet was widely sought after by young Americans. Additionally, in the setting of the Beat Generation, novelist Jack Kerouac played a major role, as he introduced Hanshan as well as Snyder's translations of Hanshan's poetry in his novel *The Dharma Bums*, and the novel's popularity quickly pushed Hanshan's poetry into the American youth group. Therefore, Snyder's English translation of Hanshan's poetry had a huge impact on American youth's development (Zhu, 2001). Snyder, a pioneer in Hanshan's poetry translation, also heralded the appearance of many translations of Hanshan's poetry, ushering in a period of rapid development for Hanshan's poetry in the United States. Watson (1970), for example, dug deeper into Hanshan's poetry and translated some poems from his *Cold Mountain: One Hundred Poems by the T'ang Poet Han-shan*. Scholars like Birch (1994) emphasized the importance of studying Hanshan's poetry. Hanshan's poetry began to spread from households to universities and colleges after that, and "Hanshan fever" swept the United States for more than two decades.

4. Conclusion

The translation and introduction of literary classics is a lengthy and demanding process, including numerous variables that must be carefully considered. Without the translator's crucial role as a "gatekeeper," successful translation and introduction of literary works are impossible. The effective translation of Hanshan's poetry by Gary Snyder has proven that the translator should choose a text that he or she is sincerely passionate about, allowing the translator to fully express his or her creativity during translation. Furthermore, successful translation and introduction of literary classics are closely linked to the needs of the audience and the historical context, and effective and excellent dissemination of a literary work necessitates thorough research and deliberate consideration of the audience, as well as the foreign language and culture. Meanwhile, in today's Internet-entrenched world, the medium of dissemination has undergone significant changes, and more research on the possible integration of communication studies and literary translation studies, with the goal of shedding light on new directions in translation studies, can be conducted. The theoretical perspective of this study was innovative, for it brought about some implications for the interdisciplinary study of translation. However, this study also had some limitations. For example, it only focused on some pieces of Hanshan's poetry translated by Gary Snyder, and therefore the examples were insufficient. It was hoped that further research could be conducted on more poems translated by Gary Snyder, and comparisons of translation styles between Gary Snyder and other Chinese poetry translators could be involved.

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