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DISSERTATION

A CROSS- CULTURAL INTERPRETATION ON ENGLISH
TRANSLATION VERSIONS OF THE ANALECTS LUN YU:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON KU HUNG MING'S
VERSION AND ARTHUR WALEY'S VERSION FROM
ADAPTATION THEORY



By

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies, University of Kelaniya

In fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in Linguistics



January 2016

ABSTRACT

The dissertation topic is a cross-cultural interpretation on English translation versions of the Analects (Lun Yu): a comparative study on Ku Hung Ming's version and Arther Waley's version from Adaptation Theory.

Remaining a fundamental part of the nation's soul for 2500 years, Confucianism as a pragmatic philosophy of personal as well as corporate transformation, popular in self-perfection, home, society and in current political government has been the hot issue of the academia. Confucianism is a complex system of ideology that stems from the teachings of a remarkable man called Confucius (Kongzi), Though he left no writings of his own, the oral teachings recorded by the founder's disciples in "the Analects" (Lun Yu) left a profound mark on later Chinese politics and governance as well as exerted a far-reaching influence in the world. The Confucianism revealed in The Analects has been translated and interpreted by the West sinologists and missionaries for centuries, but often branded with religious interpretation in their views. This situation began to change until the later part of 19th century, some modern sinologists and philosophers expanded their research from different perspectives. Especially emphasis on practical ethics led many to think of Confucianism as a profoundly spiritual philosophy rather than a religion. Henceafter, there appeared a climax of translating the Chinese classics into English. The translation versions in multiple languages of The Analects (Lun Yu) brought a flowering time for Confucianism studies in the West world, among them, English translation is more prevailing than others. This thesis focuses on Ku Hungming and Arther Waley, whose English translation versions of Lun Yu have far-fetching influence in translation history and gained more and more attention.

This thesis employs philosophical method "extending the familiar" and "critical discourse analysis" to explain the philosophical ideas embodied in the Analects (Lun Yu), a descriptive and comparative analysis also used. It proves the feasibility of adaptation theory of Eco-translatology in translation, then analyses the different features of the two versions to draw a conclusion which one is preferable to readers in our times. The objective of the study is to enlarge the horizon of studies of Lun Yu, to provide the new angle for translation studies, to prove adaptation theory can manifest itself in translation activities, to explore the modern significance of two English versions, to get a positive perspective to read Chinese classics and get a better understanding of Chinese philosophy. By the interpretation of Confucianism profound thoughts in The Analects (Lun Yu) of the two translation versions, it demonstrates the image of Confucius and the cultural image of Confucianism recreated in the two versions are significantly different from that of the previous translations. The translation climax of the Chinese classics in academia brings fresh force and various manifestations to the study of Confucianism, Moreover, the study of Confucianism classics will promote the intercultural communication and mutual understanding in the post-modernism context.

The thesis consists of seven chapters. The first chapter is a brief introduction of the research, including background, research problems, objective of the study, significance of the study and limitations. The second chapter gives a detailed introduction of literature review. The third chapter largely deals with adaptation theory and research methodology. Chapter Four and Chapter Five relatively introduces the two translation versions by Ku Hungming and Arther waley, going into details on the historical study, the characteristics and influence in translation. Chapter Six focuses on comparing the two versions of Ku Hungming and Arther Waley from the perspective of adaptation theory. Above all, a conclusion can be drawn and recommendation for the further research is given in chapter seven.

Key Words: The Analects (Lun Yu), Confucius, Adaptation Theory, Ku Hungming, Arther Waley