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# A Comparative Analysis of the Translation Styles in Chinese Versions of *The Wealth of Nations* based on the Adaptation Theory: A Corpus-based Statistical Examination

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## Abstract

With the rapid iteration of information technology, information is digitized, translations continue to emerge, and the heat of translation research has reached its peak. Based on corpus statistics and analysis, this study selects two Chinese translations of *The Wealth of Nations* (Guo Da Li's translation and Xie Zong Lin's translation) as the research object from the perspective of adaptation theory and analyzes the translation styles of their translations from the levels of vocabulary, translation method, and discourse. Through a comparative study of the two translations, Xie Zonglin's translation is more inclined toward the Italian translation method, with rich vocabulary, strong readability, and flexible use of sentence expression, while Guo Dali's translation is more inclined toward the direct translation method, with a complete sentence structure and a strong sense of hierarchy. At the same time, it was found that all translations were labeled with their respective times. The translations of Guo Dali and Xie Zonglin are no exception; specifically, they conform to the context, language structure, and translation strategies. This study aimed to provide lessons for corpus translation research.

**Keywords:** Adaptation Theory, Translations of *the Wealth of Nations*, Translation Style, Corpus

## 1. Introduction

*The Wealth of Nations*, written by the British writer Adam Smith (1723-1790) and published in 1776, is known as the "Bible" of economics, which not only lays the theoretical foundation of the free economy of capitalism, but also marks the formation of the classical political economy system. Since Yan Fu's Chinese translation of *The Wealth of Nations* came out in 1902, more than twenty Chinese translations have been published worldwide, most of which are versions of Guo Dali and Wang Yanan's proofreading (Liu, 1992). It is worthwhile to pay attention to the fact that none of the translations have been designated as the final version, because people at different times have different ideas and dissolutions. At present, academic research on the Chinese translation of *The Wealth of Nations* can be roughly summarized into three aspects. The first is research on the theoretical basis of the translation of *The Wealth of Nations*, including the theory of associated translation, text type theory, functional

translation theory, and translation behavior theory; the second is) research on the translation strategies and methods of *The Wealth of Nations*, including the direct translation method, Italian translation method, semantic translation method, dissimilarity translation method, naturalization translation method, and no-text back-translation method (Li, 2020); and the third is research on *The Wealth of Nations* on the framework of modern economic theories.

Numerous scholars have achieved certain results in the above aspects; however, few scholars have carried out research on the translation styles of different Chinese translations of *The Wealth of Nations* based on corpus. Advances in corpus research and tools have facilitated the long-term collection and storage of translated texts, providing technical support for measuring and comparing the linguistic complexity of different periods. Based on a self-constructed corpus, this dissertation investigates the influence of different eras on the linguistic style of translators from the perspective of adaptation theory through a comparative study of two Chinese translations of Guo Dali and Xie Zonglin.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Definition of adaptation theory and its research methodology

To understand pragmatics, Verschueren defines the theory of conformity as the use of language that must include the constant making of linguistic choices, consciously or unconsciously, for reasons both internal and external to the language. These choices can be located at any level of linguistic form: phonetic, phonological, morphological, syntactic, lexical, or semantic. Making choices is a two-way process that requires choices to be made in the production and interpretation of discourse (Verschueren, 2000), which means that people make linguistic choices to adapt to either the internal or external aspects of language.

Belgian linguist Jef Verschueren first proposed the theory of conformity as a pragmatic phenomenon that refers to speakers' adjustment of their speech behavior to achieve a certain purpose when communicating with the listener. Such adjustments can be changes in linguistic form, tone of voice, speed of speech, etc., aimed at adapting to the listener's needs, expectations, emotional state, and so on. In other words, conformity is an adjustment behavior for better communication, and is a discourse phenomenon closely related to the hearer. This kind of adjustment behavior can occur in many situations, such as in formal speeches, business negotiations, and daily conversations. By adapting, speakers can better connect with hearers, convey information, and realize their communication purposes. According to the book *Understanding Pragmatics*, the theory of conformity can be broadly understood as six main points. First, linguistic choices can be made in any possible utterance structure, and linguistic choices coexist with utterance structures; second, language users can make linguistic choices according to different forms or strategies; third, linguistic choices are behaviors made in response to matter, either consciously or unconsciously; fourth, linguistic choices appear in the process of production and linguistic interpretation, and the choices play a role; fifth, language users should make appropriate linguistic choices and linguistic adjustments regardless of meeting readers' needs (Xu & Xiao, 2018); sixth, linguistic choices have some alternatives, and when language users make choices, they can use acceptance or rejection to respond (Wang, 2022). According to the book, language use can be categorized into three attributes: variability, negotiability, and conformity. Among these three attributes, the basic core is conformity, which is also the goal of language use and, to a certain extent, satisfies the communicative needs of language users (Yang & Liu, 2017).

The research methods of *adaptation theory* can be divided into four levels: contextual, structural, dynamic, and consciousness salience. Combining the above four levels, the specific research methods can be further specified as the following four points: the first is corpus analysis, in which researchers can collect a large amount of linguistic data, such as books, news reports, social media posts, etc., and analyze the linguistic expressions in them in order to understand the effects of different contexts and social factors on linguistic expressions; the second is experimental research, in which researchers can design experiments to test the effects of different contexts and social factors on linguistic expressions, for example, asking participants to use different linguistic styles and tones in a specific context; thirdly, questionnaires, researchers can design questionnaires to find out how people choose different linguistic expressions in a specific context, as well as the degree of their preference for and acceptance

of different linguistic expressions; fourthly, cognitive neuroscience research, researchers can use neural science techniques, such as functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), to study the changes in brain activity and related cognitive mechanisms when people use different language expressions. Generally, cutting from different angles can help scholars conduct better academic research and explain linguistic phenomena. In this dissertation, the corpus is used as an auxiliary tool to study the two levels of linguistic conformity and structural conformity and to analyze the linguistic choices and conformity of different ages by comparing the two Chinese translations of Guo Da Li and Xie Zong Lin.

## 2.2 Translation Style Study

Translation style refers to a translator's unique personality traits in terms of text selection, translation strategies, and methods (Jiang, 2023). The study of translation style can help scholars consider the translator's linguistic habits and the social and cultural environment in which they live in a more comprehensive way to gain a deeper understanding of the reasons behind the translator's behavior. Through an in-depth study of translation style, the essence of translation can be better understood, and more accurate and effective translation services can be provided for cross-cultural communication and dissemination. At present, domestic scholars have made full use of corpus tools to make more successful research results in different countries and different types of literary works. First, in the research of foreign literature, for example, in the linguistic and literary analysis of Shakespeare's plays, the linguistic and literary features of Shakespeare's plays, such as the extensive use of vocabulary (Chen, 2023), the vocabulary and linguistic variations (Li, 2021), and the image portrayal of the characters, have been revealed through corpus research, and its literary and artistic characteristics are deeply explored. Second, in the study of Chinese literature, some scholars have conducted in-depth research on Lu Xun's literary works, analyzed the semantics of verbs in his novels, and found that there are some unique linguistic phenomena, such as synthesis, abstraction, and borrowing of meanings of verbs, which have revealed the linguistic and literary features of his novels in depth. Third, in a cross-cultural comparative study, scholars have analyzed the linguistic and literary features of Chinese and Western novels through the use of corpus technology. Utilizing corpus technology to conduct comparative studies of literary works between Chinese and Western cultures. For example, in a comparative study of the semantics and usage of time words in Chinese and Western literary works, it was found that in Chinese and Western cultures, there are different characteristics of the expression of time, a finding that profoundly reflects the differences in people's perceptions and expressions of time in different cultural contexts. These research results not only deepen our understanding of literature, language, and culture, but also provide practical guidance and theoretical support for cross-cultural communication, cultural dissemination, and translation style research, and provide a better reference for the study of the translation styles of different literary works.

It can be seen through the literature combing that the existing literature mainly focuses on the study of adaptation theory and translation, but the past research mainly focuses on the use of purely qualitative methods to study the translator's translation strategy and to observe the overall characteristics of the translated text from the outside (Wang, 2011). However, this kind of research cannot provide an objective, real, and detailed description of the translation style directly from a linguistic point of view. Few studies have specifically aimed to compare the linguistic styles of different translations using the theory of conformity on the basis of corpus analysis. In view of this, this paper tries to take advantage of the corpus, combined with the guidance of compliance theory, based on the differentiation route method and corpus technology tools to explore the translation style of different translations, so that the research conclusions to a certain extent overcome the subjective one-sidedness of traditional research, and are more scientific and objective through the extraction of data statistics.

## 3. Corpus Selection and Research Methodology

### 3.1 Corpus selection

The Wealth of Nations, published many years ago during the Scottish Enlightenment and Scottish Agricultural Revolution, is one of the two masterpieces of world economic history. Since its publication, it has been translated

into many languages and has enjoyed a good reputation in the world, for which Yan Fu has studied its translations, as shown in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1: Years of publication of The Wealth of Nations in different countries

particular year	nations	particular year	multilingualism
1776	German	1880	Sweden
1778	French	1902	sino
1779	Denmark	1927	Polish
1790	Italy	1928	Czech Republic (from 1993)
1792	Spanish	1933	Suomi
1796	the Netherlands	1934	Romania
1802	Georgia	1948	Istanbul
1811	Portugal	1957	South Korea (Republic of Korea)
1870	Bangladesh (formerly East Pakistan)	1959	Arabian

Table 2: Number of translations of The Wealth of Nations in different countries

quantities	nations	quantities	nations
14	Japanese	2	Denmark
10	German	2	Polish
7	Spanish	2	Portugal
6	Italy	2	Romania
6	Georgia	1	Czech Republic (from 1993)
6	French	1	Egypt
5	Sweden	1	Suomi
5	South Korea (Republic of Korea)	1	the Netherlands
4	sino	1	Istanbul

When it comes to domestic translations of The Wealth of Nations, it is worth noting that until the end of the 20th century, there were only two translations. One of them was by Yan Fu, who is considered to be one of the most famous reformers and translators. However, translations of The Wealth of Nations have sprung up in China as we enter the 21st century. Currently, 20 translations have been published, as shown in Table 3, which demonstrates the importance of Chinese attachment to Adam Smith's economic theories.

Table 3: Details of Chinese translation of The Wealth of Nations

serial number	translator (of writing)	particular year	publisher
1	Yan Fu (1853-1921), influential Chinese writer and translator of Western books, esp. on social sciences	1901	The Commercial Press, Shanghai (from 1897)
2	Guo Dali, Wang Yanan	1931	Shanghai Ethnic Publishing House
3	Yang Jingnian (1935-), PRC politician	2001	Shaanxi People's Publishing House
4	Xie Zujun	2003	Central South University Press
5	Tang Risong	2005	Huaxia Publishing House
6	Yang Jingnian (1935-), PRC politician	2006	Shaanxi People's Publishing House
7	Fang Wenhua, He Aijun and He Kuanjun	2006	Shaanxi People's Publishing House
8	Jiao Mei, Chinese caramel tree	2006	Guangming Daily Publishing House
9	Chen Xing (1956-), Chinese movie director	2006	Shaanxi Normal University Press
10	Zhang Xing, Tian Yaowu and Gong Shuanghong	2007	Beijing Publishing House
11	Sun Shanchun, Li Chunchang	2008	Volume Publishing Company
12	Hu Changming	2009	People's Daily Publishing House

13	Chen Jianping (1933-), PRC figure skater, 1995-1998	2009	China Business Press
14	Xu Teng (1962-), Chinese short story writer	2009	New World Publishing
15	Sun Shanchun, Li Chunchang	2010	Volume Publishing Company
16	Julie (name)	2010	China Business Press
17	Wang Xun, Ji Fei	2010	Tsinghua University Press
18	Dai Guangnian (1889-1969), Chinese American poet	2010	Wuhan University Press
19	Zhang Li	2011	Nanjing Yilin Press
20	Xie Zonglin, Li Huaxia	2011	Central Compilation and Translation Publishing House
21	Hao Jing	2012	The Overseas Chinese Publishing House
22	Xie Zujun	2014	Henan Literature and Art Publishing House

Many scholars have conducted academic research on these translation studies. According to Zhi.com and Wanfang data, Huang Yan (2020) systematically organized and mined for the illustrated version of *The Wealth of Nations* and analyzed the trend of the development of illustrations in *The Wealth of Nations*, its characteristics, and the reasons for choosing the various high translations of *The Wealth of Nations*. Combined with Martinec and Salway's model of graphic-text relationship adaptation, an analysis of *The Wealth of Nations* is carried out to summarize the basic laws and ways of illustrations in the process of translation. Finally, it was found that illustrations can not only assist readers to understand the related economic theoretical ideas, but also show the relationship between powers, reproduce different socio-cultural factors, and stimulate readers' empathy and participation. Martinec & Salway's graphic-textual relationship synthesis model is pertinent to the study of illustrations in translations, and there are three kinds of translations: detail, enhancement, and extension, of which detail takes up the highest percentage. highest (Huang, 2020).

In addition, Cao Zhi (2014) discusses the theory of purpose, arguing that the purpose of the act of translation is the determining factor of the whole translation process, and that translators should choose appropriate translation methods according to the purpose of translation to realize the intended purpose and function of the translated text in the incoming language. By taking three Chinese translations of Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* as examples, he compares the differences in translation purpose, translation strategy, faithfulness, conciseness, and authenticity of the translations and summarizes their respective features (Cao, 2014).

To summarize, comparative studies on different versions of *The Wealth of Nations* have been conducted from different perspectives. However, few scholars have studied the Chinese translations of Guo Dali and Xie Zonglin based on the corpus under the theory of conformity; therefore, this study selects the full text of *The Wealth of Nations* and its two Chinese translations published by the publisher Penguin Classics in 2018, as shown in Table 4. *adaptation theory* explains that linguistic choices are made consciously or unconsciously for reasons both internal and external to the language. Guo Dali's translation and Xie Zonglin's translation are no exceptions. Both of these duos made different linguistic choices and adjustments in the translation process.

Table 4: Information on the Chinese translation of The Wealth of Nations

	publishers	Year of publication	Original word count	Number of words/translation
Li Kuo (1906-1976), Chinese communist leader, played a leading role in the development of China's economy	Shanghai Ethnic Publishing House	1931	163798	14359
Xie Zonglin (1890-1968), revolutionary and martyr	Central Compilation and Translation Publishing House	2011	205000	15556

Based on two Chinese translations of Guo Dali and Xie Zonglin's *The Wealth of Nations*, this study created the English-Chinese Parallel Corpus (ECPC).

### 3.2 Research methodology

To further obtain the correct research analysis, this study first informatizes the corpus, followed by corpus cleaning, and finally performs manual checking and corpus alignment to construct the parallel corpus of the original text of *The Wealth of Nations* and the English-Chinese bilingual corpus. Among them, Guo Dali's translation totaled 163,798 words, Xie Zonglin's translation totaled 205,000 words, and *The Wealth of Nations* totaled 88,796 words. Based on WordSmith 8.0 and AntConc 3.5.9 technical analysis, this study further explores the differences between the two translations and their translation styles under the theory of conformity at the levels of words, sentences, paragraphs, and chapters.

## 4. A comparative study and analysis of two Chinese translations from the perspective of adaptation theory

### 4.1 Lexical analysis

In the field of corpus translation studies, Token, which is the total number of words in the corpus, can be counted repeatedly, and each occurrence can be counted as a token, while Type is the number of non-repeated occurrences of a token. In translation, the Type/Token Ratio reflects the richness of the vocabulary in the examined text and the magnitude of their variations (Baker, 2000). This ratio reflects the breadth of the vocabulary; that is, the lower the repetition rate of the vocabulary, the greater the ratio between formants and classants. In short, the higher the TTR, the higher the lexical richness of the text and vice versa. However, when dealing with longer texts, the number of dummy words increases, leading to a decrease in the confidence of the class character/form character ratio, and simple TTR data cannot be compared. Therefore, to eliminate this effect, this study adopts the class/formant ratio of every 1,000 words as the unit of calculation for calculation and statistics, that is, Standardized Type/Token Ratio (STTR) (Hu, Zhu, & Li, 2018), which can exclude the effect of the total number of words in the article on the results and make the statistical results more scientific and objective.

The number of class symbols, the number of form symbols, the ratio of class symbols to form symbols, and the ratio of standard class symbols to form symbols of Guo Dali's and Xie Zonglin's translations are analyzed using the software and are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Lexical analysis data

	number of class characters (computing) (Types)	Tokens	Type Token Ratio (TTR)	Standardlist Type Token Ratio (STTR)
Li Kuo (1906-1976), Chinese communist leader, played a leading role in the development of China's economy	13027	14359	90.72	92.35
Xie Zonglin (1890-1968), revolutionary and martyr	12501	15556	80.42	94.02

As shown in the above table, in terms of the four basic datasets, the two translations differ greatly. In the Chinese translation of *The Wealth of Nations*, Xie's translation uses 15,556 formulas, which is 1,197 more than Guo's translation. If we do not double count the number of formulas and only count the class characters, Xie's translation has 526 fewer than Guo's translation. The STTR of Guo Da Li's translation was 92.35, whereas that of Xie Zong Lin's translation was 94.02. Therefore, in the process of comparing the two corpora, it is concluded that the lexical richness of Xie Zong Lin's translation is slightly higher than that of Guo Da Li's. In the comparison of the two translations, the total number of morphemes in Xie's translation is slightly higher than that in Guo Dali's translation, indicating that Xie's translation is more explicit in conveying the message of *The Wealth of Nations*, pays more attention to the diversity of interpretations in the source language, and tends to adopt explicit translations to express the implicit meaning of the original author, further confirming that Xie's translation tends to be an Italian

translation. Guo's translation, on the other hand, is more inclined to direct translation and tends to be faithful to the sentence length of the original text on the basis of which it conveys the message of the original text. Both versions of the translation point out that, in order to emphasize Adam Smith's intention expressed in *The Wealth of Nations*, the translator adds, retains, or deletes the original text to varying degrees, demonstrating the translator's subjective initiative. Meanwhile, for the same source language translation, Guo's translation has a low degree of lexical variation and uses a narrower vocabulary range, whereas Xie's translation shows a greater degree of lexical variation. This further supports the phenomenon that Xie's translation consciously increased the number of morphological characters to better help readers understand the original text and suggests that Xie's translation was subject to fewer constraints from the original text during the translation process.

#### 4.2 Analysis of translation methods

A comparison of the two translations shows that Xie Zonglin is more oriented to contextual semantics and uses more paraphrase, while Guo Dali is more oriented to the original sentences and uses more direct translation. Direct translation can not only reproduce or even construct the metaphorical imagery of the source language but also promote cultural exchange between the two sides. The translator's intentional direct translation allows the reader to make cognitive transformations in the reorganization of meaning, which is a new refreshing and reconstruction of personal knowledge schema, and also promotes the reader's cognition and understanding of the world, so as to truly achieve the purpose of cultural exchange through translation.

Table 6: Statistics on translation methods of the two translations of *The Wealth of Nations*

	Percentage of direct translation/%	Percentage of Italian translation (or + Hanyu Pinyin) / %	Percentage of transliteration/%
Li Kuo (1906-1976), Chinese communist leader, played a leading role in the development of China's economy	87.9	12.1	0
Xie Zonglin (1890-1968), revolutionary and martyr	67.3	29.2	3.5

#### 4.3 Discourse-level analysis

This section examines the two translations from the perspective of discourse coherence. In discourse, coherence is an important element of study. Coherence is realized through articulation, which ensures the connection between sentences through lexical and grammatical means. In the translation process, the appropriate use of articulation can improve the coherence of the translated text and make it easier for readers to understand. Therefore, the means of articulation are also an important aspect of the study of translation styles (Cai & Yu, 2018).

The language of *The Wealth of Nations* is logically rigorous and simple. When Adam Smith discusses economic theories, he tends to start from principles, deduce step-by-step, and go deeper and deeper layer-by-layer, which makes the structure of economic theories clear and tight, and the process of argumentation is well-organized. At the same time, he avoids the use of incomprehensible terms or long and complicated sentences, and to further enable readers to better understand the concepts he put forward, he argues economic theories through concrete examples and facts. However, when translating, different translators have added conjunctions to better reflect the logical relationship between sentences in the original text, taking into account the contextual context and adding conjunctions accordingly. Table 7 presents the use of conjunctions in the two translations.

Table 7: Statistical Comparison of the Use of Conjunctions in the Two Translations of *The Wealth of Nations*

	Li Kuo (1906-1976), Chinese communist leader, played a leading role in the development of China's economy	Xie Zonglin (1890-1968), revolutionary and martyr
stand side by side	5968	7399
timing	2782	3981



cause and effect prerequisite	1534	2854
plot shift in a book	1712	3756
add up the total frequency	13485	22552
	8.23%	11.0%

The data in Table 7 show that the two translated versions have some similarity and individuality in the use of conjunctions. The similarity is reflected in the fact that both versions are able to clearly express various semantic relations implied in the original text, such as juxtaposition, causality, time, transitivity, and conditionality, and clearly convey the semantic information of the original text to the readers by adding various kinds of conjunctions in the translated text. The individuality is shown in: the ratio of conjunctions in Xie's translation is higher than that in Guo's translation, and the translation is more explicit; the number of conjunctions in the two translations is 13,485 and 22,552, respectively, and the frequency is 8.23% and 11.0%, respectively, which is a significant difference. From this, it can be inferred that Xie Zonglin is more committed to digging out semantic relations between the original texts that are not explicit in the translation, strives to provide readers with more accurate information, and is more precise and scholarly in his expression. More precise and scholarly, with rigorous syntax, allows readers to fully experience the author's contemporaneous thoughts and ideas.

Through the statistical analysis of Guo Dali's and Xie Zonglin's translations, it was found that there are the following differences in the translation styles of the two translators: Guo Dali pays more attention to the source language as a guide, adopts the direct translation method more often, has a more complex sentence structure, and pays more attention to the consistency and accuracy of the language structure of the translation and the original language; Xie Zonglin is more inclined to be oriented by the target language, adopts the Italian translation method more often, has more diversified wording and a more flexible expression of sentences, and pays more attention to the readability and acceptability of the translated text. Xie Zonglin, on the other hand, tends to be more oriented toward the target language, adopts the Italian translation method more often, uses more diversified words, expresses more flexible sentence patterns, and pays attention to the readability and acceptability of the translation.

To summarize, the two countries adopted different degrees of linguistic conformity because they were in different eras. From the beginning of the 20th century to the founding of New China, China's economic system was dominated by a bureaucratic capitalist economy, and a variety of economic components coexisted. During this period, the introduction of foreign economic theories was the main way in which China's economic theories evolved, and Western economic work caused a boom in China. After the May Fourth Movement, the translation of Chinese economic works mainly included the translation of Western economic books and Marxist economic works. In the 1930s, the influence of political forces permeating all aspects of society was largely diluted, unintentionally or intentionally, the content of economic monographs on bourgeois economic views and ideas. For practical genre and readability considerations, most foreign translations of economics have chosen traditional Chinese terms (Zeng & Wei, 2022). Meanwhile, China was reduced to a semi-colonial and semi-feudal country after signing unfair treaties with the West at the end of the Qing Dynasty. Against this background, Chinese reformers hoped to change China's situation through reforms and modernization movements. Therefore, they paid attention to learning from the West, which, in the case of Britain, was undergoing a series of capitalist industrial revolutions, whereas China's national capitalism was just beginning, with slow economic development, a low standard of living for peasants, poor treatment of the working class, widespread poverty and unemployment among the civil population, and an increase in social instability. Thus, in view of the fact that after the October Socialist Revolution, there was no longer any capitalist future to speak of in China and that *The Wealth of Nations*, the founding work of Western economics, was the source of many modern Western economic ideas. He prepared for the translation of *Capital* when he systematically translated *The Wealth of Nations* as well as other bourgeois classical economic treatises for the purpose of propagating the Marxist political economy. Thus, the 1931 edition of *The Wealth of Nations* had the mission of ideological preparation and propaganda. However, due to the lack of

an independent economy and the distinctive characteristics of the times, Guo Dali had to make his own linguistic choices and adjustments to bring the translation into line with the context of the times. Therefore, Guo Da Li's version of *The Wealth of Nations*, as the first vernacular translation, tried to pay attention to the use of popularized language for interpretation, to satisfy the needs of society and readers at that time, and, to a certain extent, to contribute to the formation of the elements of the local discourse of economics.

Second, Xie Zonglin lived in a brand-new period in China. Since 1978, when China began to implement the policy of reform and opening-up, the economic system has gradually developed in the direction of public ownership as the mainstay and the coexistence of a variety of ownership systems. Since the 1990s, the development of the socialist market economy system has entered a stage of perfection, with the rapid release of market vitality, and economic development has achieved remarkable results. At the same time, China's economy, society, culture, and other aspects of further development and international exchanges have become increasingly frequent, and the demand for understanding Western economics has increased. Western mainstream economic theories have been widely disseminated in China through continuous translations and exchanges and have occupied an important position in China's diversified economic system. Used as the "bible" of the market economy, *The Wealth of Nations* provides a detailed and profound discussion of the construction of a free market economic system and the relationship between the government and the market, which has a certain guiding effect on the construction of China's socialist market economy. If you want to reach such an effect, you must let this grandiose content, numerous chapters, daunting professional tome on the bookshelf of the mass readers, but also make it easier for contemporary readers to understand its main theme and essence, Xie Zonglin made his own linguistic choices and made adjustments when translating the book. He removed some content that was not suitable for modern readers and tried to interpret it in popular language while retaining the original arrangement of the chapters. In the early days, the translator's understanding and translation of the text were not fixed and standardized; rather, with the passage of time, his understanding of the text and the system of economic principles continued to be further deepened. As a result, Xie Zonglin's translations are more expressive than those of the early days, and they are more accurate and scholarly in terms of expression with a more rigorous syntactic structure. At the same time, with the passage of time, new vocabularies emerged, and as a result, more corresponding economic vocabularies appeared in Chinese. Against this background, Xie Zonglin has an advantage over Guo Dali in translation. In addition, since the reform and opening up of *The Wealth of Nations*, it has received renewed attention. Scholars are eager to understand the original content of *The Wealth of Nations*, to draw nourishment from it, and to provide theoretical references for the construction of a socialist market economy and the development of productive forces.

To better convey ideas and achieve the translator's purpose, the translator conforms to the linguistic choice by deleting a few sentences or even a few paragraphs. Comparing Guo Da Li's translation with Xie Zong Lin's, it can be seen that Guo Da Li's translation is much shorter than Xie Zong Lin's. From this, it can be seen that Guo Da Li roughly translated most of the original text and only a small part of the original text has not been translated. Specifically, Guo Dali mainly deleted two parts in his translation of *The Wealth of Nations*: first, in translating the last two paragraphs of Chapter 4 of the original text about the history of the monetary system in England and France, Guo Dali deleted two paragraphs; second, when discussing the real and nominal prices of commodities, the price of labor, and the price of money, Adam Smith discusses and analyzes a great deal of economic ideas, but in Guo Dali's translation, a large part of the original text, A large portion of the passage, was also deleted. In Guo Dali's translation, he considers the reader's interests. He knew that readers might not be interested in this part of the text, so he conformed to the translation method by deleting this part of the text.

## 5. Conclusions

Based on the results of the corpus analysis, this dissertation conducted a preliminary study of the linguistic choices and translation conformity of *The Wealth of Nations* from the perspective of adaptation theory. The purpose of this thesis is to apply adaptation theory to two Chinese translations of different eras. After a comparative study of these two versions from the perspective of adaptation theory, the author concludes that different eras have a significant influence on different translators and their translations. In other words, translators from different eras made different linguistic choices and translation strategies in their respective translation processes. The main findings are as follows:

A comparison of the different Chinese translations of Guo Da Li's and Xie Zong Lin's *The Wealth of Nations* shows that Guo Da Li's and Xie Zong Lin's linguistic choices are based on context, including the selection and adaptation of the material and social worlds. Xie Zonglin's translation has a richer vocabulary than Guo Dali's, and Xie Zonglin prefers paraphrasing in his translation, while Guo Dali prefers direct translation. In translating the social world into the original text, Guo Da Li chose to translate it according to the culture of the time, while Xie Zonglin translated it into the culture accepted in his time. In short, both Guo Dali and Xie Zonglinjun attempted to make linguistic choices and adaptations to make their translations more responsive to their time. A comparative study of their translations revealed that Guo Dali used free translations. He conformingly abridged passages in the translation process to increase the readability of his translation.

This essay proves that translated works are the products of their time. Different translations reflect the political and cultural characteristics of their times to varying degrees. Therefore, translators tend to make linguistic choices and adjustments based on the characteristics of their time. Overall, the research results of this study still need to be supplemented, and we need to continue to study the materials of the works related to the two of them. At the same time, to further validate the theory of conformity, the author should compare more translations and analyze more translations of different epochal backgrounds to make a more perfect research.

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