

Translating Virginia Woolf's Feminist Perspectives in the 20th and 21st
Century

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Shaona Li

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Abstract

This thesis examines how Virginia Woolf's feminist discourse has been translated, reframed, and ideologically negotiated within the Chinese context across different historical periods. Woolf's narrative technique, especially the use of free indirect discourse, challenges established gender norms, making these four works—*Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), *To the Lighthouse* (1927), *Orlando: A Biography* (1928), and *A Room of One's Own* (1929)—exemplary texts for analysing gender representation in literature and society. Focusing on gender representation, linguistic transformation, and cultural adaptation, this study explores how Chinese translators have addressed Woolf's complex feminist discourses and evolving constructions of gender, identity, and power. Based on Catford's theory of "translation shifts" (1965) and Toury's idea of "optional shifts" (1995), the research assesses how feminist roles and expectations are conveyed to Chinese audiences through these translations. A mixed-method approach is utilised, combining a self-constructed diachronic corpus with detailed textual analysis and content coding using NVivo and WordSmith 6 to examine the linguistic, cultural, and historical variations in Chinese translations. This study uncovers two main findings. First, it challenges the common belief that early Chinese translations of Virginia Woolf's works were uniformly conservative. Instead, it shows that some early translators actively engaged with Woolf's feminist ideas, sometimes even emphasising them despite prevailing historical and ideological limitations. Second, the analysis reveals a pattern where co-translated works tend to prioritise fidelity, and sometimes even amplify feminist ideas, whereas individual female translators are more inclined to employ interpretive strategies that emphasise gender critique. Conversely, male translators frequently downplay or domesticate feminist elements. These findings suggest that translator identity and the structure of collaboration significantly influence ideological positioning, regardless of the historical period. This research contributes to feminist translation theory and Woolf scholarship by highlighting the significance of translator agency and collaboration in shaping feminist discourse through translation.

Keywords: Virginia Woolf; Corpus-based method; Translation shift theory.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Virginia Woolf (1882–1941) is a pivotal figure in feminist literary history and modernist thought. As an esteemed writer, essayist and critic, she is lauded for her innovative literary techniques, particularly her stream-of-consciousness style and her bold engagement with themes of gender, identity, class and power. Her works not only reflected but also shaped evolving discussions around gender and the role of women in society, literature and intellectual discourse. Woolf's perspective—characterised by a keen awareness of the intersections of patriarchy, class, education and artistic freedom—has significantly influenced feminist movements across generations. Her writings have profoundly moulded literary traditions and feminist theory, resonating through various waves of feminist thought and providing a robust foundation for cross-cultural dialogue and reinterpretation.

Virginia Woolf lived during the height of the first-wave feminist movement. This movement emerged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, concentrating primarily on securing legal and civic rights for women, including suffrage, property ownership and access to education. It was shaped mainly by liberal feminist ideals that advocated for equality within existing societal frameworks. Although Virginia Woolf did not directly engage in first-wave political activism, her writings from this period—most notably *A Room of One's Own* (1929)—resonated with the foundational concerns of this movement by championing women's access to intellectual freedom, education, and financial autonomy. Woolf (1929, p.6) asserts that "a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction", encapsulating the essential material conditions necessary for women to engage in cultural and literary life. This statement emphasises her conviction regarding the importance of economic independence and private intellectual space as prerequisites for female creativity.

Additionally, although Woolf did not live to witness the emergence of second-wave feminism in the 1960s and 70s, her works were rediscovered and reinterpreted by feminist scholars during this period. Second-wave feminism emerged in the 1960s and continued through to the 1980s. Throughout this time, feminist scholars exhibited renewed interest in Woolf's writings. Critics began analysing her work through the lenses of gender awareness, sexual identity and the politics of literary form. Moving beyond mere legal equality, second-wave feminism amplified Woolf's insights into gender identity, sexual ambiguity, and institutional critique, while also addressing issues such as sexuality, reproductive rights, workplace inequality, domestic labour, and women's representation in media and culture (Goldman, 2007).

Moreover, Woolf's legacy continues to shape third- and fourth-wave feminists, particularly those emerging in the 1990s and extending into the 2010s and beyond. These feminists focus on individual identity, intersectionality and diversity, particularly in discussions surrounding identity politics and the representation of gender fluidity. Influenced by poststructuralism and queer theory, third-wave feminists challenged essentialist definitions of woman and welcomed concepts of gender fluidity and hybridity (Goldman, 2007). For instance, Woolf's novel *Orlando: A Biography* (1928)—where the protagonist changes sex and lives through various centuries—has experienced renewed interest for its critique of binary-gender classifications. This work has been frequently referenced by second wave and later feminist theorists as a proto-queer and poststructuralist text due to its challenge to fixed concepts of gender and identity. Woolf's literary innovations, such as the use of stream of consciousness, fragmented narratives and interior monologue, also resonate with feminist efforts to disrupt male-centric literary traditions and articulate women's subjective experiences. Scholars like Judith Butler (2002) have acknowledged Woolf's foresight in contesting fixed gender roles, linking *Orlando* to the foundational concepts of gender performativity.

Woolf's viewpoint was profoundly shaped by her privileged yet confining role in Edwardian society. Although born into an upper-middle-class intellectual family, with access to private tutors and a rich literary background, she was denied a formal higher education—a privilege granted to her brothers but not to her, due to her gender. This disparity between her intellectual capabilities and the societal constraints imposed upon her significantly influenced her critique of gender inequality. Furthermore, her body of work demonstrates a unique awareness of the overlapping systems of oppression, particularly regarding class, patriarchy and empire. These interconnected forces are pivotal to Woolf's literary achievements and enrich the depth of her feminist legacy, which continues to resonate across various cultures and historical periods. For instance, in *Mrs Dalloway*, Woolf critiques the societal roles assigned to women through the character of Clarissa Dalloway, who, although admired and socially esteemed, feels a profound sense of alienation and loss of self. At one point, Clarissa reflects: "She had the oddest sense of being herself invisible, unseen; unknown... this being *Mrs Dalloway*; not even Clarissa anymore." (1925, p.13) This moment powerfully conveys the psychological fragmentation stemming from a society which primarily values women for their social and marital roles rather than their individuality or intellect. It parallels Woolf's own experience of being perceived in society yet invisible within academic and intellectual circles, where women were frequently marginalised. Similarly, in *To the Lighthouse* (1927), Mrs Ramsay represents the traditional female ideal—elegant, devoted, and selfless—yet her position is portrayed as emotionally and intellectually limiting. During a moment of reflection, she muses: "an unmarried woman has missed the best of life" (1927, p.40), a statement which

superficially supports societal norms but is laced with irony and uncertainty. Woolf employs this internal monologue to examine how women assimilate societal pressures, often hindering their growth and independence (Prakash, 2014). Mrs Ramsay's reliance on meeting the needs of others reflects the reality faced by many Edwardian women, including Woolf herself, who were expected to prioritise family and domestic roles over personal aspirations or intellectual pursuits. These examples illuminate the intellectual privilege present in systemic exclusion, evident in her depiction of Mrs Ramsay and other female characters, who possess significant intellectual abilities and yet are constrained by institutional obstacles.

Virginia Woolf's influence extends far beyond the English-speaking world, significantly shaping literary and feminist discourses globally, with considerable engagement within Chinese literary and feminist scholarship. This international impact has been primarily facilitated by successive waves of translations. These translations inevitably filter Woolf's original texts through distinct cultural, ideological and linguistic lenses, thereby reshaping and reframing the interpretation and representation of her feminist ideas in new contexts. Her works—especially *Mrs Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse*, *Orlando: A Biography* and *A Room of One's Own*—have undergone numerous translations into Chinese, spanning different historical and political climates, from early post-reform China to the 21st century. Each translation of Woolf's work not only adapts her words into another language but also reflects ideological shifts shaped by the translators' historical moment, cultural upbringing and political beliefs. In another words, translation is a culturally and ideologically situated practice, mediated by institutional constraints and market dynamics. As Leonardi and Taronna (2011) argue, translators' decisions are frequently negotiated within the normative frameworks established by publishing institutions. Grant, Gode and Armstrong (2017) argue that translators domesticate texts by minimising their foreign aspects to align with the expectations of the target culture, thus inevitably embedding their own cultural values into the translated text. They believe that each translation acts as a form of rewriting, in which translators adapt the source text to fit their own ideological perspectives.

Grounded in macro-historical and contextual analysis, this study proposes a three-phase periodisation of Virginia Woolf's reception in China. The first phase, covering the Republican era (1920s–1949) and the early post-reform decades (late 1970s to early 1990s), is characterised by ideological conservatism. The year 1995 marks a significant turning point between the first and second phases, aligning with the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing—an important event that contributed to broader transformations in the cultural and intellectual environment in which feminist ideas were articulated, circulated, and interpreted. The 1995 Beijing Conference enhanced the institutional visibility of gender

equality discourse and made feminist concepts enter academic and intellectual discussions to facilitate the development of women's studies in China (Wang, 2016). Within this changing intellectual context, Woolf's writings were increasingly read through feminist literary frameworks, which influenced the selection, interpretation, and reception of her works in translation. Therefore, the second phase, occurring in the late 1990s and 2000s, experienced significant growth in feminist scholarship and literary translations that concentrated more on issues of gender, identity, and female agency. The third phase, starting in the 2010s, coincides with the rise of digital feminism in China. Since the expansion of social media platforms such as Weibo after 2012, Chinese feminist activists have increasingly used digital spaces to circulate feminist ideas, mobilise collective responses, and challenge gender inequality. This digital activism became particularly visible during the Chinese MeToo movement in 2018, when online campaigns against sexual harassment generated significant public debate despite platform restrictions (Fincher, 2018). This digital activism has not only expanded the public circulation of feminist discourse through digital platforms, reshaping readers' engagement with feminist texts but also contributed to a translation environment increasingly receptive to gender-conscious interpretation and ideological intervention.

Despite ongoing scholarly attention to Virginia Woolf's writings on a global scale, feminist translation studies related to her works remain noticeably limited within Chinese academia. A thorough search through key academic databases, such as Web of Science and CNKI (China National Knowledge Infrastructure), reveals significant engagement with Woolf, yielding approximately 3,331 and 2,270 research entries, respectively. However, most of these studies focus primarily on Woolf's literary achievements, feminist discourse, contributions to women's literature and her innovative modernist techniques, particularly the stream-of-consciousness narrative style. The intersection of feminist theory and literary translation, especially in the context of Chinese translations of Woolf's texts, is still underrepresented and warrants deeper scholarly exploration. Existing translation studies predominantly focus on stylistic features, narrative methodologies, and translation strategies pertaining to Woolf's modernist elements. However, these analyses seldom critically engage with feminist translation practices, nor do they adequately explore how Woolf's gender politics and feminist ideology are mediated and transformed in translation.

Currently, scholarship addressing feminist translation of Woolf's works in Chinese academia generally follows two primary directions. First, several scholars apply feminist translation theory by employing feminist-specific strategies such as hijacking, footnoting and prefacing, aiming to foreground feminist perspectives in translation and to explore how the translator's gender shapes the choices and outcomes of the translation process. For example,

Wang and Chen's article (2022) entitled *A Feminist Translation Study of To the Lighthouse* examines Chinese translators' approaches to translating Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, influenced by feminist translation theories. The translators have utilised various strategies such as "supplement" and "hijacking", as discussed by Luise von Flotow (1991), a prominent scholar in feminist translation theory. The former involves providing additional context or elaboration on gender-related themes, while the latter entails deliberately altering the source text to challenge and subvert its original gender norms and biases. This effectively conveys Woolf's original feminist concepts, while also reflecting the translators' female consciousness. However, although these translations articulate a feminist viewpoint, their methodologies tend to be more traditional, subtle and restrained than the often more radical approaches observed in Western feminist translation practices. Secondly, many studies utilise corpus-based methodologies to examine and compare different Chinese translations of Woolf's works, primarily focusing on lexical and terminological choices. However, these corpus-based analyses remain limited, typically examining isolated feminist terminologies rather than providing a thorough and systematic feminist critique at the sentence or textual level. As an example, Huang and Shi's (2018) article titled *A Corpus-Based Comparison of Translation Style in Two Chinese Versions of To the Lighthouse* performs a corpus-based analysis of Qu Shijing's (1988) and Wang Jiaxiang's (2001) translations of *To the Lighthouse*. It shows that, while macro-linguistic statistics fail to represent translation styles fully, variations in the handling of point-of-view markers, such as transitivity, modals, demonstratives and pronouns, significantly influence the narrative perspective and indicate differing stylistic methods. This emphasises the importance of integrating quantitative data with thorough textual examination in translation studies.

Furthermore, most existing studies overlook the broader socio-cultural and historical contexts which shape translators' choices. They rarely integrate translation-shift theories which explicitly trace how feminist meanings and gendered nuances evolve or are altered through linguistic and cultural adaptations in translation. This oversight creates a significant research gap regarding how feminist concepts and gender-conscious narratives shift in cross-cultural contexts, particularly in the nuanced interaction between English feminist literature and Chinese socio-cultural perceptions. A limitation such as this highlights a clear methodological gap, emphasising the necessity for comprehensive and context-sensitive analyses of Woolf's feminist narratives through the lens of translation-shift theory.

Consequently, this thesis seeks to bridge these scholarly gaps by integrating translation-shift theory with a corpus-based approach. It systematically investigates the linguistic, cultural and historical variations evident in Chinese translations of four significant

works by Virginia Woolf. By analysing these texts at both the lexical and sentence levels, this research will clarify how feminist narratives and gendered discourses are reshaped through translation. Furthermore, it will critically examine how various Chinese translators strategically employ feminist translation techniques to convey, amplify or alter Woolf's feminist messages, thereby enriching and advancing feminist translation scholarship within Chinese academia and beyond. To achieve these objectives, the following research questions are proposed:

Q1: What kinds of translation shifts have the Chinese translators employed in translating Virginia Woolf's novels?

Q2: To what extent do the Chinese translators' historico-cultural backgrounds shape their interpretation and decision-making in translating Woolf's construction/representation of gender roles and gender binaries over time and space?

Q3: How do the Chinese translators navigate the balance of translation shifts between fidelity to the source text and the need for the translation to resonate with Chinese audiences?

This thesis is structured in seven chapters, each progressively building the analysis of how Virginia Woolf's feminist discourse is reinterpreted in Chinese translations across different historical periods. Chapter One introduces the research background, rationale and objectives, highlighting Woolf's significance in feminist literary history and identifying the scholarly gap concerning the Chinese reception of her gender politics. It also outlines the research questions, theoretical foundations and methodological framework. Chapter Two presents the theoretical underpinnings, primarily translation-shift theory, and describes the corpus-based methodology, including the construction of a diachronic corpus and the use of tools such as NVivo and WordSmith 6 for data analysis. Chapter Three focuses on *Mrs. Dalloway* and explores how various translators engage with themes related to social expectations of gender roles, such as women's familial responsibilities, marriage and gendered behaviour. Chapter Four turns to *To the Lighthouse*, analysing how gender binaries are represented and contested in translation, particularly concerning domestic roles, marriage ideology and intellectual recognition. Chapter Five examines *Orlando: A Biography*, Woolf's most direct engagement with gender fluidity and androgyny, assessing how different translators address shifts in identity, clothing and societal reception of women writers. Chapter Six focuses on *A Room of One's Own*, exploring how Woolf's arguments on women's economic and intellectual freedom are represented in Chinese translations. Chapter Seven synthesises the findings and discusses the theoretical and practical implications. Finally, Chapter Eight is the Conclusion, which addresses the study's contribution, limitations and offers recommendations for future research in feminist translation studies and cross-cultural literary discourse.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Research Methodology

2.1 Theoretical Framework: Translation Shift Theory

This study utilises J. C. Catford's Translation Shift Theory (1965) and Gideon Toury's (1995) concept of optional shifts as a foundational framework to investigate the linguistic and feminist-cultural adaptations which Chinese translators employ in interpreting Virginia Woolf's depiction of gender roles across various temporal and spatial contexts. J. C. Catford's "Translation Shift Theory," introduced in his influential work *A Linguistic Theory of Translation* (1965), represents one of the earliest systematic attempts to analyse translation from a linguistic perspective. Catford's model, rooted in structural linguistics, provides a systematic approach to investigating how translation encompasses the transfer of meaning and a reorganisation of linguistic forms and structures between a source language (SL) and a target language (TL).

Catford defines translation as a "linguistic operation" where "the replacement of textual material in one language (Source Language) by equivalent textual material in another language (Target Language)" takes place (Catford, 1965, p. 20). Catford's statement emphasises the fundamentally linguistic nature of translation. He defines translation as a process involving language, with the goal of substituting or replacing the "textual material" in the "source language (SL)" with "equivalent material" in the "target language (TL)." The term 'equivalent' is key, although it is a controversial concept: it suggests that the translated text should preserve the 'meaning and function' of the original, even if the linguistic forms differ. This definition highlights Catford's structuralist view that translation is not merely about transferring words but about finding appropriate equivalents within the grammatical and lexical systems of the two languages.

At the heart of Catford's theory is "translation shifts", which he describes as "departures from formal correspondence" between the source and target texts. Catford argues that these shifts are often necessary, due to variations in grammatical structures, vocabulary and linguistic conventions across languages. He categorises these shifts into two primary types: "level shifts", where translation transitions between different linguistic levels (for instance, from grammar to lexis), and "category shifts", which encompass alterations in grammatical structures ("structure shifts"), word classes ("class shifts"), linguistic rank or units ("unit/rank shifts"), and changes within a language's system ("intra-system shifts"). In the context of this research, Catford's framework serves as a descriptive tool to map the linguistic and stylistic

changes present in the Chinese translations of Woolf's works, especially those involving gendered language and narrative tone.

In the years following Catford's studies, translation scholars have understood that translation is more than merely a linguistic exchange; it is also a cultural and ideological process. Its language does not solely determine the meaning of a text but is influenced by cultural standards, power dynamics and audience expectations (Liu, Wang & Huang, 2023). Catford's model does not address the socio-cultural, ideological or historical contexts of translation. It also overlooks the translator's agency which highlights the capacity of the translator's active role to make interpretive, strategic, or ideologically motivated choices influenced by their own beliefs, identity, and the socio-cultural context in which they work, particularly in culturally or ideologically significant texts, such as those concerning gender representation, as illustrated in Woolf's writings.

This study expands upon Catford's model by incorporating insights from Gideon Toury's (1995) concept of "optional shifts," as introduced in *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond*. Beginning in the late 1980s and early 1990s, Western translation studies underwent a significant transformation known as the "Cultural Turn", which shifted the focus from structural linguistic transfer to a broader cultural analysis. This shift redirected attention to the intersection of translation with other emerging disciplines in cultural studies (Bonnell & Hunt, 2023). Rather than viewing translation solely as a linguistic operation concerned with equivalence, scholars began to explore its ideological, political and cultural dimensions. This evolution in thought gave rise to influential theoretical frameworks, such as the Manipulation School proposed by Bassnett and Lefevere (1990), who argued that translation is deeply embedded within its sociocultural context. Lefevere, in particular, conceptualised translation as a form of rewriting shaped by ideological agendas, institutional pressures and cultural norms, positioning the translator as an active cultural agent who adapts the source text for the target culture.

Similarly, Even-Zohar's Polysystem Theory (1990) emphasised that translations function within literary and cultural systems, asserting that they do not exist in isolation but are influenced by the surrounding social and literary contexts. In this theoretical landscape, Toury (1995) made a critical contribution by distinguishing between two types of translation shifts: "obligatory shifts", which are necessitated by structural differences between languages, and "optional shifts", which result from the translator's interpretative choices and which are influenced by cultural, ideological and stylistic considerations. These optional shifts reveal how translation is shaped by broader socio-cultural forces, such as translation norms, ideological positioning and political influences. This approach underscores the central role of culture in

translation and aligns with the broader trend in translation studies which values the translated text not merely as a derivative of the source but as a meaningful and autonomous contribution to the target culture. As Even-Zohar views it, translated literature should be recognised as an integral part of the target culture's literary and social system, rather than as a secondary or supplementary text.

Toury's "optional shifts" have expanded translation studies to consider aspects such as power, identity, gender and ideology, which are crucial for analysing translations of texts with political or cultural significance. This study examines how Chinese translators interpret and express Virginia Woolf's depictions of gender roles and binaries. They encounter complex language and style challenges, further influenced by the socio-political landscape and cultural norms of modern Chinese society. For instance, existing social norms regarding gender roles and feminist discourse may affect how Woolf's concepts are presented or adapted to resonate with the values of a Chinese audience at different periods of history. Such adaptations can alter Woolf's original meaning, emphasising certain aspects of her work which align with local beliefs or omitting controversial or disruptive elements. Here, Toury's "optional shifts" serve as an essential framework to explore how historical and cultural contexts, ideological perspectives and social limitations influence translators' decisions.

This study adopts J. C. Catford's Translation Shift Theory (1965) alongside Gideon Toury's (1995) concept of "optional shifts" as its core theoretical framework, to explore the complex interplay between linguistic transformation and cultural adaptation in Chinese translations of Virginia Woolf's works. Catford's theory facilitates the identification and classification of linguistic shifts in the Chinese translations. At the same time, Toury's "optional shifts" provide insights into how these shifts are influenced by translators' historical and cultural backgrounds, as well as socio-political contexts. This integrated method is beneficial for examining how Chinese translators balance fidelity to Woolf's feminist discourse with the necessity for resonance within Chinese cultural contexts, particularly regarding evolving gender ideologies over time and space.

Building upon this theoretical foundation, the following section details the research methodology employed to examine these translation strategies comprehensively. It clarifies the criteria for text selection, the analytical procedures for identifying and categorising shifts, and the interpretative lens through which the findings will be contextualised within both linguistic and feminist-cultural paradigms.

2.2 Research Methodology

2.2.1 Dataset

As mentioned above, this study examines how historical and cultural backgrounds, ideological perspectives and social constraints influence translation strategies. This section outlines the methodological framework used to investigate how Chinese translators interpret and convey Virginia Woolf's depictions of gender roles and binaries. The study integrates corpus-based analysis with case studies, enabling both quantitative and qualitative analyses of translation shifts and interpretative variations.

In translation studies, a corpus is an organised electronic collection of texts which can be used for computational analysis to reveal patterns, frequencies and linguistic characteristics. Mona Baker's (1993) *Corpus Linguistics and Translation Studies: Implications and Applications* was instrumental in establishing what is now referred to as corpus-based translation studies. She was among the first to advocate for the formal use of corpora in translation research, initiating a methodological shift which emphasised systematic and statistical analysis of translated texts (Baker, 1996). As noted by Baker (1995), corpus-based translation studies focus on the analysis of "a large number of texts or language materials" which are processed digitally, allowing for examination either automatically or semi-automatically using various analytical tools (p. 224). This corpus-based approach enables researchers to explore extensive text collections both quantitatively and qualitatively, equipping scholars with techniques for conducting empirical, data-driven analysis of language usage in original and translated texts. Using specialised software such as WordSmith and LancBox, a corpus can uncover recurring lexical selections, syntactic patterns, stylistic characteristics and translation shifts, providing insights into translator behaviour, textual trends and ideological inclinations.

In corpus-based translation studies, corpora may be monolingual, bilingual (parallel) or multilingual, serving to analyse original texts, translated texts or both. This study features a self-constructed, diachronic corpus which explores the interpretation and representation of Virginia Woolf's feminist discourse through various Chinese translations over time. A diachronic approach, which examines time-related changes is essential because translations do not occur in a cultural vacuum; they are profoundly shaped by the sociopolitical, ideological and literary contexts of their era. This corpus comprises two primary datasets: Source Text Dataset and Target Text Dataset. The Source Text Dataset includes the original English texts of four seminal works by Virginia Woolf: *Mrs. Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse*, *Orlando* and *A Room of One's Own*.

These texts were chosen not only because of their central role in Virginia Woolf's feminist and modernist works but also because they have been translated multiple times into Chinese across different historical periods, offering rich material for diachronic analysis. Although it is acknowledged that most of Woolf's works have more than three Chinese translations, this study strategically selects three or four versions per novel to balance analytical depth with the scope of research. This selection from various eras provides a diachronic perspective to observe how translation practices and ideological stances have shifted over time. It enables an exploration of how Chinese translators have interpreted and reconstructed Woolf's feminist discourse in response to changing cultural norms, gender ideologies, and political climates. While not exhaustive, the chosen translations are representative enough to support a meaningful comparative analysis of the linguistic and cultural shifts characterising the Chinese reception of Woolf's feminist ideas over time. Three primary criteria guided the selection of these Chinese translations for inclusion in the target corpus. The first is the temporal range, selecting translations from different decades to ensure a broad span of historical and ideological contexts, facilitating analysis of how gender discourse has evolved. The second criterion is digital accessibility, ensuring compatibility with analysis software and enabling efficient processing of large amounts of text. The third criterion is reception and popularity, evaluated through user ratings and reader feedback on online platforms. This helps assess the translations' reception, perceived quality, and cultural impact. Translations with high levels of reader engagement are prioritised, as they indicate broader cultural significance.

2.2.2 Data Preparation

This study uses NVivo and Wordsmith 6 software for both quantitative and qualitative corpus analysis. NVivo is a qualitative data analysis tool commonly used in the humanities and social sciences, facilitating the systematic organisation, coding, and interpretation of textual and non-textual data. In translation studies, NVivo offers a robust platform for exploring complex linguistic and thematic patterns across various texts. It allows researchers to code large amounts of textual data, categorise themes, compare sources, and visualise connections between data points. With its sophisticated features, NVivo deepens analysis and enhances rigour, ensuring that patterns are considered within wider cultural and theoretical contexts. In this research, NVivo is employed for detailed qualitative coding and thematic analysis of Virginia Woolf's source texts and their Chinese translations. By coding aspects related to gender representation and feminist discourse, the software supports a

comprehensive comparison of how these elements are interpreted and altered across different versions.

WordSmith Tools 6 is a comprehensive suite of corpus analysis programs that facilitates the examination of patterns and structures within textual data. It provides a range of tools—most notably the Concord Tool, WordList Tool, and KeyWords Tool—that enable researchers to perform statistical analyses of word frequencies, key terms, and concordance lines, offering both quantitative and qualitative insights into text corpora. A key advantage of WordSmith is its ability to generate statistical profiles of texts, allowing for precise comparisons across different translations. The statistical data produced by WordSmith enhances the qualitative coding performed in NVivo.

The research examines the linguistic, cultural, and historical shifts in translating Virginia Woolf's feminist discourse across various Chinese versions of her works. Particular attention is paid to how key feminist sentences—those that explicitly or implicitly engage with themes of gender, identity, and power—are rendered in the target texts. For a systematic comparative analysis, it is crucial to establish clear sentence-level correspondences between the source texts (English) and the target texts (Chinese).

This process requires a comprehensive alignment procedure, which is essential in corpus analysis, especially when examining nuanced meanings, tone, and shifts. Alignment facilitates comparisons at the sentence level; both the English source texts and their Chinese translations were segmented into sentences, considering punctuation, discourse boundaries, and semantic completeness. For example, complete sentences were identified by punctuation such as full stops, question marks, and exclamation marks, while dashes and semicolons were not used as sentence boundaries. Unlike paragraphs, sentences do not always align directly between source and target texts. This often occurs because a single English sentence may expand into several in Chinese, highlighting linguistic nuances, cultural contexts, and the translator's approach (Yang, 2023). In essence, the alignment process considers various forms of correspondence, including one-to-one and one-to-many relationships between sentences. For instance, the source sentence—“Gathering a desperate courage she would urge her own exemption from the universal law; plead for it; she liked to be alone; she liked to be herself”—shows how translators may differ in their interpretive strategies. Xie Qingyao's version condenses and paraphrases the original into: “她说她是一个老处女，她喜欢孤独；她天生就不是结婚和生子女的” (“She said she is an old virgin; she likes solitude; she was not born for marriage and having children”), employing a reductive and ideologically loaded rendering that oversimplifies Woolf's introspective nuance. In contrast, Ma Ainong's translation

maintains the psychological depth and rhetorical rhythm of the original: “这时她鼓起全部的勇气，强调自己不受常规的制约；她竭力解释她愿意孑然一身；她愿意无牵无挂；常规对她来讲不合适” (“At this moment, she summoned all her courage, emphasising that she was not bound by conventions; she tried hard to explain that she was willing to remain alone; she wanted to be free from any attachments; conventions were not suitable for her”). Such differences highlight how alignment is not merely a technical task but also a vital space for observing ideological shifts and translational agency.

Such instances showcase the complexities of translation, where linguistic differences and translation choices necessitate sentence divisions, making alignment a detailed and sensitive endeavour. Furthermore, alignment facilitates consistent comparisons across versions, as the corpus holds multiple Chinese translations of the same texts from different historical eras. This method enables me to monitor how specific feminist sentences have been understood over time. At the same time, the alignment process prepares the data for software-assisted analysis with tools like NVivo and WordSmith, which often require aligned or comparable text segments to produce valuable frequency, concordance, or keyword outcomes.

The alignment process consists of several key steps. Initially, I use a semi-automated approach due to the complexities of literary texts, particularly the stylistic and structural differences between English and Chinese. The initial alignment employs the Tmxmall online platform, which identifies probable sentence boundaries and provides a basic structure for the text. This step is followed by manual verification and adjustments to ensure accuracy and fidelity, particularly in paraphrasing or syntactic restructuring. Finally, each aligned sentence pair was tagged with metadata, such as the translator's name, publication year, and related thematic codes (e.g., gender identity, societal roles, feminist voice). This tagging enabled efficient cross-referencing within NVivo and assisted in conducting thematic analysis. This approach to alignment is pivotal in analysing the translation's fidelity to the original text's feminist discourses, ensuring a comprehensive analysis of the linguistic, cultural, and historical dimensions embedded in the translation process. To illustrate this process, the following figure presents a concrete example of bilingual alignment, displaying corresponding segments from the English source text *A Room of One's Own* and its Chinese translation by Wang Huan (1947). The alignment includes sentence-level pairings that reflect both one-to-one and one-to-many relationships, capturing how linguistic and ideological nuances are transferred, expanded, or reformulated across languages. This visual representation highlights the granularity of the alignment process and supports the subsequent thematic analysis.

导出 对齐 回退 前进 合并 拆分 上移 下移 调换 插入 删除 查找与替换 提取术语 高级功能 帮助					
No.	检测语言: 中文(中国) Wang Huan 2008 Female 一间自己的屋子.d	检测语言: 英语(美国) source text A Room of One's Own.txt			
14	那么这就是我(叫我玛丽·贝登,或是玛丽·塞登,或是玛丽·卡迈克尔,或是任何别的你所喜欢的名字——完全没有关系),一两个星期以前,正是绝好的十月天气,坐在一条河岸上沉思。	Mary Carmichael or by any name you please - it is not a matter of importance) sitting .on the banks of a river a week or two ago in fine October weather, lost in thought.			
15	我所说的那条硬领、妇女和小说,逼着我对于这引起各种 偏见和情感的题目下结论,把我的头压到地上去了。	That collar I have spoken of, women and fiction, the need of coming to some conclusion on a subject that raises all sorts of prejudices and passiofts, bowed my head to the ground.			
16	我的左边, 我的右边都长着某种灌木,金黄色的和大红的,如火如荼地开着 花朵,甚至也好像为火的炙热所焦灼。	To the right and left bushes of some sort, golden and crimson, glowed with the colour, even it seemed burnt with the heat, of fire.			
17	在远一点的岸边,垂杨因 永久的悲哀而在那里暗泣,头发披在肩上。	On the further bank the willows wept in perpetual lamefttation, their hair about their shoulders.			
18	河水选择几处天桥,和如火如荼的树互相辉映。在一个大学生划着船冲破那些倒影以后,它们便又立刻不着痕迹地合上,就好像他并没有经过一样。	The river reflected whatever it chose of sky and bridge and burnifgt tree, and when the undergraduate had oared his boat through the reflections they closed again, completely, as if he had never been.			
19	在那里一个人真可以整坐一个对时沉醉在思想里。	There one might have sat the clock rouftd lost in thought.			
20	思想——给 它一个它不大配的高雅的名字——已经把钓丝垂到河里去了。	Thought - to call it by a prouder name than it deserved - had let its line down into the stream.			
	一分钟一分钟过去了,钓丝在反影与水藻之间摆来摆去,任水把 它漂起沉下,一直到——你	It swayed, minute after minute, hither and thither among the reflections and the			
总行数: 702			1/8 100 行/页 1 跳转 总行数: 702		

Figure 2. 1 Sentence-Level Alignment of Virginia Woolf’s *A Room of One’s Own* Using Tmxmall

After aligning the source and target texts at the sentence level, I employed NVivo as a qualitative data analysis tool to tag, organise, and interpret the translated materials. NVivo supports a systematic coding process that enables detailed tracking of how Virginia Woolf’s feminist ideas are preserved, adapted, or reinterpreted in different Chinese translations. NVivo was utilised to systematically identify and analyse recurring textual patterns, leading to an initial set of thematic concerns. However, the broad nature of themes such as gender identity, gender roles, and social expectations demonstrated that relying solely on automated processes was inadequate. As a result, these themes underwent careful revision and refinement to align with the research objectives. This integrated approach greatly enhances reliability: NVivo ensures consistency and transparency in coding across translations, while nuanced manual interpretation accurately captures abstract feminist concepts within their cultural and historical frameworks.

To start, aligned sentence pairs from four chosen works by Virginia Woolf— *Mrs. Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse*, *Orlando: A Biography* and *A Room of One’s Own* —and their respective Chinese translations were organised into categorised datasets. These datasets were imported into NVivo, ensuring that each English sentence aligned with various Chinese translations. Metadata such as the translator’s name, publication year and book title were incorporated into each text node to assist with filtered and comparative queries. Next, I have created a coding framework informed by initial analyses of the four texts, alongside relevant feminist translation theory literature, gender representation, and the recurring themes in

Woolf's work. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, I primarily analyse social expectations of gender roles, and the coding categories include Women's Familial Roles, the Inevitability of Marriage, and Gender-Specific Social Qualities. In *To the Lighthouse*, I emphasise gender binaries by coding those categories that include the feminist perspective on marriage versus the traditional perspective of marriage, domestic responsibilities associated with gender roles, and intellectual recognition and achievements. In *Orlando: A Biography*, I primarily analyse gender fluidity and androgyny. The coding categories include challenging fixed gender roles through dress performance, challenging gendered perceptions of creativity and literary value through the shifting reception of Orlando's poetry, and challenging traditional notions of gender identity through androgyny and gender fluidity. In *A Room of One's Own*, I focus on women's independence, and the coding categories include the male academic criticism of women and women writers, the difficulty of women's financial status, and women lacking authority in traditional customs.

Then, I conducted sentence-level coding using NVivo's textual coding feature, tagging each sentence applying the categories mentioned above that convey feminist perspectives to monitor how feminist elements are preserved or altered in translations. While the sentence served as the primary unit of coding, the unit of analysis was not restricted to individual sentences. Because of Woolf's characteristic use of stream of consciousness, feminist meanings are often constructed across multiple sentences rather than within isolated sentence. Consequently, the coding process frequently identified clusters of related sentences that functioned as coherent discursive units. The analysis therefore incorporates multi-sentence passages where necessary to capture the contextual and discursive development of feminist perspectives. Rather than representing a departure from sentence-level analysis, this approach strengthens the methodological framework by recognising that the interpretation of individual sentences is often dependent on their immediate textual context. While tagging sentences which express feminist ideas in both the source texts and their Chinese translations, I adhere to a carefully defined and theoretically informed set of principles, ensuring that the identification and categorisation of relevant textual material are systematic and consistent with the objectives of the research: to clarify how feminist narratives and gendered discourses are reshaped through translation.

The first principle focuses on sentences thematically centred on gender identity, power dynamics, and societal expectations concerning femininity. Drawing on feminist literary theory and recurring themes from Woolf, such as intellectual freedom within the domestic sphere and the material realities of women's lives, this approach identifies sentences that reflect or challenge prevailing gender ideologies. For example, I marked the sentences about the male academic criticism of women and women writers: "Even had I been admitted, still I could not

have brought myself to enter. Perhaps the verger would have stopped me at the door and demanded to see my baptismal certificate or a letter of introduction from the Dean.” Each selected sentence undergoes an evaluation of its semantic meaning and discursive function, determining whether it critiques, employs irony, or subverts societal gender norms. Once these feminist sentences are identified, they are traced across all translation versions to analyse how the feminist intent is maintained, diminished, or altered. The second principle emphasises analysing translation shifts, especially optional shifts that are not dictated by language but intentionally made by the translator. These shifts include changes in tone, emphasis, word choice, or sentence structure that demonstrate how feminist content can be reframed, intensified, or diluted in translation. Using Catford's translation shifts theory and Toury's optional shifts model, exploring these shifts stems from the understanding that translation is influenced by ideology, context, and agency, rather than being a neutral process. Therefore, this principle involves a detailed examination of the historical, cultural, and ideological contexts in which each translation takes place. By analysing these shifts, the research seeks to understand how translators' choices may be consciously or unconsciously affected by prevailing socio-political narratives, state censorship, or market pressures.

In practice, I tagged and segmented the original English texts and their Chinese translations according to the established coding principles. Throughout tagging, I extensively utilised NVivo's memo and annotation tools to document my evolving thoughts, interpretive choices, and analytical reflections. As my understanding grew, I adjusted the coding scheme as needed, merging, separating, or redefining codes to reflect the nuances present in the data more accurately. The feminist content identified in the corpus was ultimately organised into sub-nodes, each signifying distinct thematic aspects of feminist perspectives. This organisation enabled a more detailed and meaningful exploration of Woolf's feminist ideas in translation.

As shown in Figure 2.2, the NVivo coding interface provides a clear example of how thematic classification was used to identify feminist elements in Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*. In this process, coded segments were organised into thematic nodes, allowing for both the quantification of key feminist concerns and a comparative analysis of how different translators engaged with Woolf's ideological nuances in the source text. The coding results thus establish the methodological foundation for the detailed textual analyses in the subsequent chapters. The coding results for the Chinese translations and the original English texts of Virginia Woolf's four works are shown in the appendix. Due to word count and space limitations, the appendix includes only a selected segment of this categorisation rather than the full dataset, although it extends beyond what is covered in the main chapters.

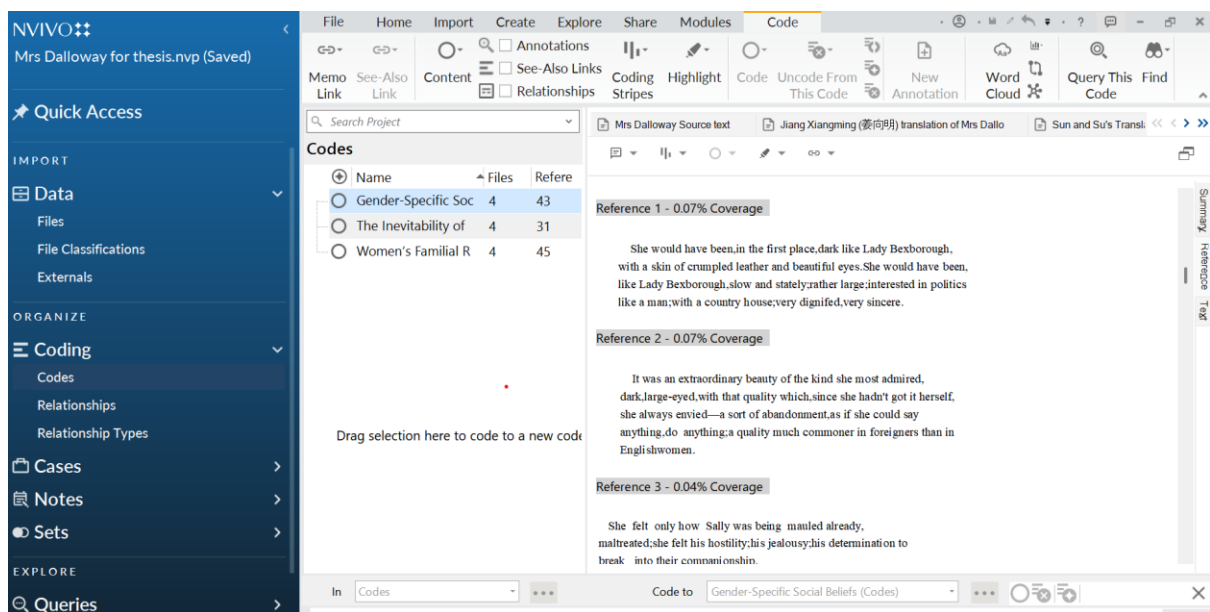


Figure 2. 2 NVivo coding interface showing thematic classification of feminist elements in Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*

2.2.3 Data analysis

The data were systematically categorised into the thematic codes mentioned above after meticulous tagging of the original texts alongside their Chinese translations in NVivo. These codes significantly influenced the design and emphasis of the subsequent case studies. The identified themes, derived from the coded sections, established a robust foundation for investigating how feminist concepts and gender-related discussions were articulated, modified, or suppressed during the translation process. Consequently, each case study is firmly rooted in specific, data-driven insights from this qualitative phase. Following the qualitative analysis, the coded data of NVivo were classified and sorted and then imported into WordSmith Tools 6 for further quantitative and statistical analysis. WordSmith was utilised to assess variations in sentence structure, focusing on metrics such as sentence count, average sentence length, and the frequency of sentences containing feminist themes. Additionally, the average sentence length for translations tagged with feminist themes was calculated for each. The statistical variations across translations thus present a valuable perspective from which to observe the evolving nature of translation.

Chapter 3: Translating Social Expectations of Gender Roles in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*

3.1 Introduction

The term 'feminism' is derived from the Latin 'Femina' and promotes the idea that women ought to have equal social, economic, and political powers to those held by men, alongside identical rights and opportunities (Raina, 2021, p.3372). As outlined in the Introduction, the definition of feminism has evolved through four distinct waves. *Mrs. Dalloway*, for example, addresses issues typical of second-wave feminism, which frames feminism as a movement seeking to achieve constitutional, financial, individual and social equality between the sexes, and the definition of feminism sees it as the struggle against all forms of patriarchal and sexist attacks (Humm, 2003). In other words, this movement advocates for women's autonomy and the establishment of equality between the genders in all life aspects, focusing on developing new female identities and awareness of rights, and it represents a significant drive towards empowering women and encompassing their rights: to vote, to engage in work, to earn an equal salary, to possess property, to pursue advanced education, and to hold equal rights in marriage, including entitlement to maternity benefits (Montashery, 2012).

During the early 20th century, feminism underwent significant transformations, shifting from the suffrage movements of the late 19th and early 20th centuries to a broader examination of women's roles in society, encompassing their intellectual and economic independence (Ma, 2021). Virginia Woolf, born in 1882 and living until 1941, witnessed and participated in the transformative years for feminism. Her work is often seen as a bridge between the first-wave feminism of the suffrage movement, which focused on legal issues and inequalities such as the right to vote, and the emerging second-wave feminism, which discussed a wider range of social, cultural, and psychological issues affecting women (Humm, 2003).

Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* follows a day in the life of Clarissa Dalloway, an upper-class woman in post-World War I London, as she prepares for and hosts a party at her house that same evening. The story unfolds over a single day, intertwining different characters through their shared thoughts, memories and personal histories. As Clarissa prepares for her party, she reminisces about her younger years, particularly her past relationship with Peter Walsh and her eventual decision to marry Richard Dalloway. The unexpected return of Peter to London leads her to contemplate the different directions their lives have taken. Throughout

the day, the lives and inner worlds of various characters are intertwined within the narrative, which is notable for its shifting character focalisation and the use of free indirect discourse, both central to the novel's exploration of consciousness and the fluidity of time and memory in revealing their internal conflicts, aspirations, and regrets (Khan & Khattak, 2022). *Mrs. Dalloway* critiques British society post-World War I, examining class dynamics, women's roles, self-identity, and societal norms (Bouzid, 2013). The character of Clarissa embodies the restrictions and expectations imposed on upper-class women.

Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* has been translated into at least 32 languages, evidencing its extensive linguistic and cultural reach. These translations encompass a diverse linguistic spectrum, such as Afrikaans, Arabic, Catalan, Czech, German, Chinese, Spanish, Persian, French, and many others. This extensive range of translations underscores the novel's global literary significance and appeal. Most academic discussion around Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* delves into its portrayal of the perception of time, the effects of World War I, mental health, and class structure in society. As regards the research related to the study of the Chinese translation of *Mrs. Dalloway*, no articles have been found in the Web of Science, the most popular and extensively utilised database for academic research and publications. Only two analytical studies about the Chinese translation of *Mrs. Dalloway* have been found within the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI), China's leading academic digital library. One is research carried out by Yu Yin (2014), entitled *A Study on Feminist Poetics in the Two Chinese Versions of Mrs. Dalloway from the Perspective of Feminist Translation Theories*. This work examines two Chinese translations of *Mrs. Dalloway* and finds that the impact of feminist poetics in translation stems from the translator's interpretation of the original text and their awareness of gender issues. Another one is Yang's (2021) *An Analysis of Mrs. Dalloway's Translation—From the Perspective of Feminist Translation Theory*, which explores two Chinese translations of Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, Wang Jiaxiang's (2001) and Sun Liang & Su Mei's (1988), through feminist translation theory. The study examines strategies such as supplementing and hijacking, emphasising how translator identity influences interpretation. This research shows how a translator's gender identity and ideological view based on feminist theory can greatly impact choices in literary translation. It highlights how feminist translation strategies are applied in practice and how they affect the reception and faithfulness of a text, especially one rich in interiority and female perspective like *Mrs. Dalloway*. Yu and Yang's works lack in-depth consideration of the strategies used by translators to capture the specific historical, cultural and literary nuances inherent in Woolf's original text. This gap in the discussion leaves unexplored aspects which are crucial to understanding the full impact of the translations on cultural and literary discourse in China.

To bridge this gap, the following research questions need to be answered in this chapter as follows:

Q1: What kinds of translation shifts have the Chinese translators employed in translating *Mrs. Dalloway*?

Q2: To what extent do the historico-cultural backgrounds of the Chinese translators shape their interpretation and decision-making in translating Woolf's feminist ideas over time and space?

Q3: How do the Chinese translators navigate the balance of translation shifts between fidelity to the original text and the need for the translation to resonate with Chinese audiences?

To explore these research questions, upcoming sections will introduce the theoretical framework and datasets utilised in this study.

3.2 Methods

3.2.1 Dataset

The study focuses on how each translator balances and redefines the patriarchal norms and power dynamics prevalent in modern Chinese society through his/her translation decisions. To compare how different translators deal with Woolf's feminist ideological narratives in the target text, this study employs a combined corpus-based approach and case studies to analyse Chinese translations of *Mrs. Dalloway*. The corpus-based approach is instrumental in providing insights into the linguistic nuances and patterns of the translations, while the case studies offer detailed examinations of specific instances (Yang, 2023). This combined methodology facilitates a thorough analysis of different translated versions of the novel, allowing for a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the translations.

As indicated in Table 3.1, the self-constructed corpus used in this study comprises two main datasets. The first dataset includes the original text of *Mrs. Dalloway* by Virginia Woolf, providing the source material for analysis. The second dataset includes a diachronic Chinese translation corpus comprising three different Chinese translations of *Mrs. Dalloway*- Sun & Su 1988 (hereafter T1), Wang 2001 (T2), and Jiang 2014 (T3). There are five existing Chinese translations of *Mrs. Dalloway* in total, and in the selection process for my self-constructed corpus, two main criteria were employed: 1) the publication period of the translations, and 2) the ratings and comments provided by users on Douban, a Chinese social networking site and online database known for its comprehensive information on various forms of media, including

books, films, and music. The Douban ratings and comments were used to identify translations that showed significant readership and ongoing engagement, ensuring that the chosen texts had both cultural influence and interpretative visibility. Special attention was given to versions with a high number of reader responses, especially longer, more meaningful comments, as these suggested that the translation had sparked active discussion and critical reflection. Such evidence served as a valuable criterion for prioritising translations most likely to reveal how Woolf's feminist ideas were understood and debated within the Chinese context.

ST/TT	Author/Translators	Version names	Publication Date	Publisher	Place
ST	Virginia Woolf	<i>Mrs. Dalloway</i>	1925	Hogarth Press	UK
T1	孙梁 & 苏美 (Sun Liang & Su Mei)	达洛卫夫人 (<i>Mrs. Dalloway</i>)	1988	Shanghai Translation Publishing House	Shanghai, China
T2	王家湘 (Wang Jiexiang)	达洛维夫人 (<i>Mrs. Dalloway</i>)	2001	Yilin Press	Nanjing, China
T3	姜向明 (Jiang Xiangming)	达洛维夫人 (<i>Mrs. Dalloway</i>)	2014	Shaanxi Normal University Press	Shaanxi, China

Table 3. 1 The Chinese translation of *Mrs. Dalloway*

This study argues that literary translation is not a neutral or purely linguistic activity, but a culturally and ideologically influenced practice shaped by the translator's positionality and the historical context in which the translation is produced. The varied strategies used by Chinese translators when rendering Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*—a novel rich in feminist subtext and narrative innovation—do more than show textual differences; they also mirror the translators' responses to changing political climates, gender ideologies, institutional pressures, and developing intellectual discourses. Each translation originates from a distinct cultural and historical context and is shaped by the translator's educational background, scholarly interests, gender identity, and access to theoretical frameworks, such as feminism or translation theory.

The initial translation featured in this self-compiled diachronic translation corpus is the first Chinese translation - Sun Liang & Su Mei's translation in 1988, published by Shanghai

Translation Publishing House. This translation was produced during a pivotal period in modern Chinese history—the early years of the Reform and Opening-Up policy that began in the late 1970s and continued into the 1980s. This era marked a significant shift toward intellectual liberalization and cultural exchange, following decades of socio-political turbulence (Vogel, 2011). Throughout much of the 20th century, literary production and translation in China had been subordinated to political and economic imperatives, shaped by limited access to foreign texts and disrupted by major historical events such as the Great Chinese Famine, the Cultural Revolution, and the broader ideological tensions of the Cold War (Li, 2008). Against this backdrop, the Reform era opened new possibilities for engagement with Western thought, allowing for the gradual introduction of Western literary theory, including feminist translation theory, into Chinese academic discourse (Yu, 2020). By the 1980s, feminist ideas, filtered through both Marxist ideological frameworks and emerging liberal perspectives, began to gain visibility within public and scholarly debates on gender (Pei, Petula, & Lun, 2007). Nevertheless, longstanding patriarchal values continued to permeate Chinese social, cultural, and institutional life, often reinforcing traditional gender hierarchies under the guise of moral order or social stability (Zhang, 2021).

Sun and Su's translation thus emerged in a transitional moment: one marked by increasing openness to feminist discourse but still constrained by residual conservative ideologies. As co-translators, Sun Liang and Su Mei brought together distinct professional backgrounds: Sun, a male professor of English literature with a solid grounding in modernist studies of European and American literature, and who held leadership roles in the Shanghai Foreign Literature Society and the Translators Association; and Su, a female university lecturer with a developing interest in feminist criticism. The presence of two translators, one male and one female, suggests a potential balancing of interpretive viewpoints, although limited paratextual commentary from the translators themselves makes it difficult to confirm the nature of their collaborative dynamic. Overall, their work must be understood within this context of ideological negotiation, where the act of translating Woolf's feminist modernism involved both linguistic mediation and careful cultural adaptation.

The second translation, Wang Jiexiang's 2001 edition published by Shanghai Yilin Press, emerged at a time of heightened feminist activity in China's literary and academic spheres. The mid-to-late 1990s experienced a notable shift in gender discourse within China, largely driven by the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing. This historic event not only introduced global feminist agendas to the Chinese public domain but also ignited a surge of feminist activism, scholarly research, and critical discussion of women's voices across various disciplines (Zheng & Zhang, 2010). Wang Jiexiang herself was uniquely positioned to

contribute to this movement. As a Professor at Beijing Foreign Studies University, she served as Director of the National Society of American Literature and was an active member of the National Society of Comparative Literature. Her academic expertise spans American literature, African American writing, and women's literature, fields in which she has published and translated extensively. Wang's dual role as both translator and literary scholar gave her a solid theoretical foundation in feminist and comparative literary theories, arming her with the critical tools needed to engage with Woolf's feminist discourse both linguistically and ideologically.

The third selected translation, completed by Jiang Xiangming in 2014 and published by Shaanxi Normal University Press, emerged during a period of heightened feminist activism in China. By the 2010s, social media and digital platforms had begun to play a transformative role in shaping cultural discourse, allowing feminist activists to mobilise, circulate ideas, and engage directly with a wider public (Hou, 2015). This digital shift expanded the reach of feminist discussions beyond academic and institutional settings, embedding them into everyday debates on gender inequality, sexuality, and social justice (Hou, 2020). Campaigns advocating for women's rights, especially the anti-sexual harassment movements inspired by global developments such as MeToo, brought renewed urgency to feminist critique in literature, translation, and cultural production (Chau, 2019). Within this climate, Jiang Xiangming contributed to this project with a notable academic and professional background. He graduated from Shizuoka National University in Japan, where he specialised in European and American literature, gaining a solid foundation in Western literary traditions and critical methodologies. As a member of the Shanghai Translators Association, Jiang built a reputation as a skilled and versatile translator, with major works including F. Scott Fitzgerald's short-story collection *All The Sad Young Men*, Philip Roth's *Exit Ghost*, and Richard Yates's *A Good School*.

Taken together, this historical and biographical context highlights how each translator's intellectual background, ideological orientation, and the cultural moment of publication are likely to have informed their approach to Woolf's feminist ideas, shaping the interpretive strategies evident in their translations.

3.2.2 Analytical Approach

This study argues that the translational shifts in the three Chinese translations of *Mrs Dalloway* extend beyond the linguistic dimension and demonstrate the translators' commitment to challenging traditional gender roles and promoting gender equality. The

primary objective of this research is to identify the complex patterns and motivations which shape the linguistic, cultural and historical transformations observed in the translated sentences conveying Virginia Woolf's feminist ideologies. It is essential to understand how translations reflect, alter or amplify the feminist nuances embedded in Woolf's original text. To achieve this, a corpus-based method is employed to explore the feminist ideas in *Mrs. Dalloway*, and a systematic methodology is important for tagging and organising sentences which are imbued with feminist sentiments, thus facilitating a detailed comparative analysis. The research design and data preparation have been finalised following the process outlined in Chapter 2.

First of all, the study's critical initial step involved converting the English source texts of *Mrs. Dalloway* and the selected Chinese target texts into TXT format. The research aimed to identify and compare the underlying patterns and motivations which influence linguistic, cultural and historical shifts in translating sentences that convey Virginia Woolf's feminist ideas. An alignment process was undertaken to establish a translation relationship at the sentence level between the English and Chinese texts to facilitate this comparative analysis. Aligning texts at the sentence level presents unique challenges: as mentioned in Chapter 2, sentences cannot always be matched one-to-one between the source and target texts. This discrepancy often arises because a single sentence in the English text may be expanded into several sentences in the Chinese translation, reflecting linguistic nuances, cultural contexts and the translator's strategies (Yang, 2023). Such phenomena highlight the complexity of translation, where linguistic differences and translational choices necessitate the division of sentences, making alignment a meticulous and nuanced task. In this sense, the alignment was pivotal in analysing the translation's fidelity to the original text's feminist themes, ensuring a comprehensive analysis of the linguistic, cultural and historical dimensions embedded in the translation process.

Subsequently, I utilised Nvivo, an advanced software programme, as an essential tool. As detailed in Chapter 2, this programme excels at handling qualitative data and provides a structured and personalised platform for data management and analysis, including node creation and synthesising codes from various sub-nodes. This capability not only assists in systematically categorising and storing pertinent data but also plays a crucial role in revealing and clarifying recurring themes and patterns within the data. After carefully reading the source text, taking notes, establishing a pre-defined file classification, and tagging the source text and translations with revisions to these pre-defined codes, the feminist ideas in the corpus have been organised into three sub-nodes with distinct themes which reflect different dimensions of women's experiences and societal perceptions.

The first code highlights Women's Familial Roles, referring to the traditional expectations and responsibilities of women within the family structure. For instance, I tagged the sentences that state:

"That was herself when some effort, some call on her to be her self, drew the parts together, she alone knew how different, how incompatible and composed so for the world only into one centre, one diamond, one woman who sat in her drawing-room and made a meeting point, a radiancy no doubt in some dull lives, a refuge for the lonely to come to, perhaps; she had helped young people, who were grateful to her; had tried to be the same always, never showing a sign of all the other sides of her—faults, jealousies, vanities, suspicions, like this of Lady Bruton not asking her to lunch (Woolf, 1925, p.29)."

This passage exposes the emotional labour and performance involved in a woman's family and social role. Clarissa, like many women, becomes a symbol rather than an individual, a static image of grace and support that hides the complexity and pain of her inner life. Woolf critiques the patriarchal ideal of womanhood: to be a refuge, a centre, a diamond — brilliant, yet hard, polished, and shaped by others' expectations. Clarissa is depicted assembling her identity ("drew the parts together") not because she feels complete, but because her social role demands a stable, elegant outward appearance. The "diamond" symbolises the patriarchal ideal of womanhood that Clarissa becomes flawless but is also stiff, cold, and artificial. The drawing-room she inhabits is a stage for performance, and she takes on the unchanging centrepiece role, radiating emotional warmth outward while suppressing her own inner turmoil. The mention of "never showing... jealousy, vanity, suspicion" underlines the emotional restraint women must maintain to uphold such an image. Her resentment at Lady Bruton's luncheon snub, though small, is profoundly felt, yet Clarissa must conceal it beneath layers of performative composure. Woolf highlights the unseen burden of being "the ideal woman" — how emotional authenticity is sacrificed for societal harmony. In this way, Clarissa's internal fragmentation mirrors the wider disintegration of women's roles in a society that values their symbolic utility more than their inner truth.

The second code stresses the Inevitability of Marriage, limiting women's autonomy by defining their worth in relation to their marital status and reinforcing patriarchal systems that restrict personal freedom and self-determination. For instance, I tagged these sentences 'Inevitability of Marriage':

"You'll get married, for you're pretty enough, thought Mrs. Dempster. Get married, she thought, and then you'll know. Oh, the cooks, and so on. Every man has his ways. But whether I'd have chosen quite like that if I could have known, thought Mrs. Dempster, and could not

help wishing to whisper a word to Maisie Johnson; to feel on the creased pouch of her worn old face the kiss of pity for it's been a hard life, thought Mrs. Dempster (p.21).”

This passage reflects the internalised societal expectations and sacrifices imposed on women, particularly concerning marriage and domestic life. Mrs. Dempster’s thoughts reveal how women are conditioned to equate their value with beauty and marriage—“You’re pretty enough” becomes both a compliment and a prophecy tied to societal pressures. Mrs. Dempster’s desire to warn Maisie Johnson suggests her awareness that marriage can result in a lifetime of unnoticed and undervalued work for women.

The third code focuses on the Gender-Specific Social Qualities, which refer to the traits, behaviours, roles, and expectations that society traditionally associates with individuals based on their gender. For instance, I tagged the sentences:

“But if he can conceive of her, then in some sort she exists, he thinks, and advancing down the path with his eyes upon sky and branches he rapidly endows them with womanhood; sees with amazement how grave they become; how majestically, as the breeze stirs them, they dispense with a dark flutter of the leaves charity, comprehension, absolution, and then, flinging themselves suddenly aloft, confound the piety of their aspect with a wild carouse (p.46).”

This passage reflects how women are defined through the lens of male perception and imagination. The idea that a woman only exists if a man can conceive of her highlights the patriarchal notion that women’s identities and value are validated through male recognition. The narrator’s projection of womanhood onto nature—seeing trees as charity, comprehension, absolution—reveals how femininity is romanticised and idealised, rather than acknowledging their autonomy and complexity.

As mentioned previously, the study employs advanced software tools—NVivo and Wordsmith 6—to systematically organise and analyse translational shifts in Virginia Woolf’s *Mrs. Dalloway*. These tools process corpus data from the source text and its three translations, identifying linguistic patterns, frequency distributions, and collocations. Furthermore, these tools provide a deeper analysis by offering statistical evidence of shifts in translation strategies, particularly in the conveyance of Woolf’s feminist ideas. Variations in sentence structure, such as sentence counts and average lengths across translations, reflect distinct strategies of expansion or condensation, with the statistical differences emphasising how feminist ideas are reinterpreted in various cultural contexts, as demonstrated in Tables 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5.

	Source text	T1 Sun Liang & Su Mei (1988)	T2 Wang Jiaxiang (2001)	T3 Jiang Xiangming (2014)
Wordcount	54,520	128,374	124,829	133,847
Total number of sentences	3,889	4,724	4,693	4,873
Average sentence length	14.02	27.17	26.59	27.47
Sentences with feminist ideas	108	132	138	126
Average feminist sentence length	18.87	35.72	36.17	37.51

Table 3. 2 Statistics of sentences with feminist ideas

Table 3.2 highlights significant differences in word count, sentence length, and the representation of feminist ideas across the three translations. The Source Text (ST) contains 54,520 words and 3,889 sentences, with an average length of 14.02 words per sentence. Of these, 108 sentences explicitly convey feminist ideas, with an average length of 18.87 words. T1 Sun Liang & Su Mei (1988) extend the text to 128,374 words and 4,724 sentences, with 132 feminist sentences averaging 35.72 words. Although longer than the source, T1 remains the most restrained in its treatment of feminist sentences when compared with later translations. T2 Wang Jiaxiang (2001) contains 124,829 words and 4,693 sentences, with 138 feminist sentences averaging 36.17 words. Wang's translation thus conveys slightly more extended feminist expressions and shows a tendency towards expansion and interpretive depth. T3 Jiang Xiangming (2014) is the most extensive overall, totalling 133,847 words and 4,873 sentences, despite containing fewer feminist sentences (126) than T1 and T2. However, these sentences are on average the longest, at 37.51 words.

Tables 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5 further analyse feminist ideas by dividing them into three thematic areas: women's familial roles, the inevitability of marriage, and gender-specific social beliefs. In each theme, compared to the Source Text, the translations increase both the number of sentences and the overall complexity.

Women's Familial Roles	Source text	T1 Sun Liang & Su Mei (1988)	T2 Wang Jiaxiang (2001)	T3 Jiang Xiangming (2014)
Total number of sentences	43	53	57	51
Average sentence length	17.37	38.29	38.71	39.14

Table 3. 3 Statistics of sentences with feminist ideas of Women's Familial Roles

The Inevitability of Marriage	Source text	T1 Sun Liang & Su Mei (1988)	T2 Wang Jiaxiang (2001)	T3 Jiang Xiangming (2014)
Total number of sentences	28	35	36	33
Average sentence length	19.17	39.66	39.24	39.86

Table 3. 4 Statistics of sentences with feminist ideas of The Inevitability of Marriage

Gender-Specific Social Beliefs	Source text	T1 Sun Liang & Su Mei (1988)	T2 Wang Jiaxiang (2001)	T3 Jiang Xiangming (2014)
Total number of sentences	37	44	45	42
Average sentence length	17.98	37.74	37.44	38.14

Table 3. 5 Statistics of sentences with feminist ideas of Gender-Specific Social Beliefs

For women's familial roles (Table 3.3), the ST comprises 43 sentences with an average of 17.37 words each. T1 contains 53 sentences averaging 38.29 words, T2 has the highest total with 57 sentences averaging 38.71 words, and T3 delivers 51 sentences with an average of 39.14 words. Regarding the inevitability of marriage (Table 3.4), the ST has 28 sentences averaging 19.17 words. T1 expands this to 35 sentences with an average of 39.66 words, T2 produces 36 sentences averaging 39.24 words, and T3 offers 33 sentences with an average of 39.86 words. Concerning gender-specific social beliefs (Table 3.5), the ST features 37 sentences with an average of 17.98 words. T1 translates 44 sentences with an average of 37.74 words, T2 again produces the highest count with 45 sentences averaging 37.44 words, and T3 results in 42 sentences with an average of 38.14 words. Across all three themes, the translations significantly exceed the source's average sentence length.

While expansion remains a consistent trend across all three translations, the methods employed in Tables 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5 display subtle differences. Compared to the other two translations, T1 Sun Liang & Su Mei (1988) holds an intermediate position among the tables,

indicating that it maintains a sense of balance by expanding the source through moderate segmentation that extends Woolf's critique. T2 Wang Jiaxiang (2001) produces the highest number of sentences across the three thematic categories, suggesting a reliance on segmentation combined with addition as a means of convey feminist ideas with greater visibility. T3 Jiang Xiangming (2014), in contrast, translates fewer sentences but significantly expands them in length, reflecting a preference for verbose elaboration and creating structural shifts to preserve feminist discourse of the source text through syntactic complexity, which may reduce readability and increase the effort required for textual processing, as conventional Chinese discourse favours shorter and paratactic structures.

As previously outlined, this thesis employs a mixed-method approach, combining a self-constructed diachronic corpus with detailed textual analysis. This dual-method framework allows for a comprehensive examination of the linguistic, cultural, and historical variations in the Chinese translations of *Mrs Dalloway*, with particular focus on the transmission of feminist ideas. The statistical analysis presented in Tables 3.2 through 3.5 provides essential insights into the quantitative patterns underlying each translation, including word count, sentence structure, and the thematic distribution of feminist expressions across time. Although the corpus-driven data analysis has identified macro-level trends and patterns across the translations, it is insufficient to fully capture how feminist meanings are constructed, reshaped, or even downplayed in translation. Therefore, the following chapter offers a close textual analysis of selected case studies, focusing on specific sentences that highlight the three key feminist themes—women's familial roles, the inevitability of marriage, and gender-specific social beliefs. By examining the linguistic features, translation shifts, and ideological undercurrents in each version, this upcoming section will demonstrate how feminist ideas are negotiated textually. In doing so, it enriches the quantitative insights with qualitative depth, thus fulfilling the aims of the mixed-method research design.

3.3 Analysis

3.3.1 Case Study 1: Women's Familial Roles

In Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, Woolf examines women's roles within the family and society, especially the expectations placed on them in the post-World War One British upper class. Through her characters, especially Clarissa Dalloway, she examines the complexities and constraints of familial roles. Clarissa embodies the expectations of upper-class British

society during the 1920s. Through her character, Woolf critiques the superficiality and rigidity of social conventions, particularly those related to gender and class (Bagley, 2008). Clarissa's role as a "perfect hostess" and a dutiful wife highlights the societal pressures on women to conform to prescribed roles. Example 1 serves as a testament to Clarissa's struggle to maintain her personal identity while fulfilling the traditional roles expected of her.

Example 1

"How he scolded her! How they argued! She would marry a Prime Minister and stand at the top of a staircase, the perfect hostess he called her (she had cried over it in her bedroom); she had the makings of the perfect hostess, he said (Woolf, 1925, p.5)."

Example 1 reflects the memories of the protagonist, Clarissa Dalloway, as she contemplates her past relationship with Peter Walsh. The sentence highlights a mix of emotions and dynamics within Clarissa and Peter's relationship, as well as Clarissa's internal conflicts and the societal expectations placed upon her. The exclamation "How he scolded her! How they argued!" conveys a heightened emotional intensity that signals a moment of gendered conflict. This suggests that Peter Walsh attempts to define Clarissa's future within the bounds of traditional domestic and social expectations. Specifically, he projects onto her the identity of the "perfect hostess," a socially constructed ideal associated with feminine decorum, familial obligation, and public performance of social status and behaviour in support of male success. Clarissa's emotional reaction ("she had cried over it in her bedroom") reveals a deep-seated resentment towards this imposed role. She recognises both the limitations it entails and the inevitability with which such gendered identities are externally imposed, highlighting the tension between individual agency and socially sanctioned femininity. The scene responds to the restrictive gender roles and expectations that society typically imposes on women. By calling Clarissa a "perfect hostess," he delivers a pointed and disparaging critique, driven by jealousy and designed to reduce her identity to a socially decorative, domestic role—one he knows from their shared history will resonate deeply. In terms of translating these sentences with distinctive feminist ideas, the three translations treat the ideas differently.

Source text	"How he scolded her! How they argued! She would marry a Prime Minister and stand at the top of a staircase, the perfect hostess he called her (she had cried over it in her bedroom); she had the makings of the perfect hostess, he said (Woolf, 1925, p.5)."
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Translator	Target text	Literal translation
Sun Liang & Su Mei (1988)	他把她骂得多厉害啊!他俩争论得多激烈! 他说她会嫁给一个首相, 站在楼梯顶上迎接宾客。他称她为地地道道的主妇(她曾为此在卧室里哭泣), 还说她天生具有这种平庸的气质嘛。	How badly he scolded her! How fiercely they argued! He said she would marry a prime minister and stand at the top of the stairs to greet guests. He called her an authentic housewife (she used to cry in her bedroom about it) and said that she was born with this mediocre temperament.
Wang Jiaxiang (2001)	他是怎样地责骂她啊!他们的争论是多么激烈啊! 她会嫁给一个首相, 站在楼梯顶上; 他称她是个完美的女主人(为此她在卧室里哭了一场), 他说她具有成为完美的女主人的一切内在素质。	How he scolded her! how heated their arguments were! She would marry a prime minister and stand at the top of the stairs; he called her a perfect female master (for which she cried in her bedroom), saying that she had all the intrinsic qualities to be a perfect female master.
Jiang Xiangming (2014)	他曾经多么严厉地叱责过她! 他们曾经吵得多凶呀! 她会嫁给一个首相, 站到人生阶梯的最高一级, 而他把她称为地道的家庭主妇(她为此在闺房里哭得一塌糊涂), 她身上有家庭主妇的所有气质, 他说过。	How harshly he had rebuked her! How fiercely they had quarreled! She would marry a prime minister and stand at the top of the ladder of life, and he called her an authentic housewife (she cried so hard in the boudoir) that she had all the dispositions of a housewife, he said.

Table 3. 6 Chinese translations of Example 1

In T1, Sun Liang and Su Mei maintain a faithful, formal, and academic approach, preserving the narrative's integrity while sensitively engaging with the feminist nuances embedded within the source text. As mentioned before, their translation emerged during China's early Reform and Opening-Up period, a time marked by intellectual liberalisation and growing cultural exchange. This environment facilitated greater exposure to feminist discourse while still being influenced by lingering conservative ideologies. For instance, the translation of the sentence "How he scolded her! How they argued!" into "他把她骂得多厉害啊! 他俩争论得多激烈!" ("How badly he scolded her! How fiercely they argued!") reflects a nuanced approach which is both faithful to Virginia Woolf's original narrative and sensitive to its feminist nuances. The translators have exaggerated the emotion to uphold the integrity of the source text, capturing the intensity and dynamism of the interaction between the characters. By translating directly to "他把她骂得多厉害啊! 他俩争论得多激烈!", they preserve the original's emphasis on the emotional intensity of the scene. The use of "多厉害" ("how badly") and "多激烈" ("how fiercely") effectively conveys the emotional solid undertones present in the original English text, reflecting the depth of the characters' interaction. Emphasising "他" ("he") and "他俩" ("they") as the subjects, along with added adverbial intensifiers ("badly" and "fiercely"), highlights the action "争论" ("argue"), strategically positioning the characters at the centre of the action and accentuating the interpersonal dynamics involved. This focus is faithful to the original text's emphasis on the characters' active participation in their disagreements, showcasing the intensity of their relationship and the conflicts inherent within it.

In translating the phrases "She would marry a Prime Minister and stand at the top of a staircase" and "the perfect hostess" into "他说她会嫁给一个首相, 站在楼梯顶上迎接宾客" ("She would marry a prime minister and stand at the top of the stairs to greet guests") and "他称她为地地道道的主妇" ("He called her an authentic housewife"), Sun Liang & Su Mei employ an additive translation strategy which extends beyond literal interpretation to the conveying of deeper cultural and symbolic meanings. Their translation of "stand at the top of a staircase" into "站在楼梯顶上迎接宾客" ("stand at the top of the stairs to greet guests") does more than merely translate the words; it embodies the text with a culturally resonant interpretation which slightly literalises the original's metaphorical intent. The original metaphor, "stand at the top of a staircase," symbolises a pinnacle of social success and visibility, particularly when marrying a high-status individual like a Prime Minister. It evokes the image of a woman who has

achieved the highest social standing, yet her role remains traditionally feminine, centred around hospitality and social grace. By the addition of "迎接宾客" ("to greet guests"), the translators emphasise the expectation of the woman's role in a high-status marriage, highlighting the societal expectations placed on women to aspire to marriage as a form of social elevation and remain limited by traditional roles, even when they reach such heights. The translation of "the perfect hostess" into "地地道道的主妇" ("authentic housewife") similarly reflects a nuanced approach. While "hostess" typically translates into "主妇" ("housewife"), a term defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as traditionally carrying connotations of domesticity and conventional femininity. The term "housewife" possesses a broader meaning which relates to all a woman's domestic duties and suggests a socially acceptable and even idealised role, and "hostess" is a narrower term referring to a woman's role in entertaining guests and carries more upper-class connotations. The inclusion of "地地道道" ("authentic") suggests a deep-rooted adherence to traditional roles, emphasising the woman's expected perfection in domestic and social duties. This translation captures the essence of the character's societal expectations and highlights the inherent critique of limiting women to such roles. Besides, in their translation of "she had the makings of the perfect hostess" into "她天生具有这种平庸的气质嘛" ("she was born with this mediocre temperament"), Sun Liang & Su Mei implement a transformative translation strategy which profoundly reinterprets the original text. By shifting "the perfect hostess" to "mediocre temperament", they introduce a critical perspective on the societal expectations surrounding the role of a hostess, embedding a nuanced critique of these roles within the translation. The translators' choice to replace "perfect" with "mediocre" dramatically shifts the tone, suggesting a more literal and explicit critique of the notion of perfection in the societal role of women. By characterising the expected social persona as "mediocre," the translation challenges the value and authenticity of these roles and intensifies a subversive take on the conventional accolades given to women. Through these translations, Sun Liang and Su Mei effectively convey the layered meanings of Woolf's original text, translating not just the words but also the cultural and feminist nuances. Thus, they offer readers insight into the complex interplay of gender, social expectations, and individual identity in the source material.

In T2, Wang Jiaxiang's translation enriches the text with layers of meaning and broader feminist themes from the source material. As mentioned earlier, Wang's translation was influenced by the post-1995 intellectual climate, which witnessed a growing focus on gender issues following the Beijing World Conference on Women. In response to this cultural shift,

she consciously heightened the source text's irony in passages of feminist significance, aligning her approach with the era's increased sensitivity to women's voices and experiences. For instance, Wang Jiaxiang's translation of "How he scolded her! How they argued!" into "他是怎样地责骂她啊! 他们的争论是多么激烈啊!" ("How he scolded her! How heated their arguments were!") shifts the narrative's focus. The subjects of the source text are "he" and "they", but Wang's version emphasises the actions of "they" to highlight their mutual engagement in the arguments. The emphasis on "how heated" their arguments were intensified the sense of conflict and emotional turmoil, providing deeper insight into the intensity of their interactions. Wang Jiaxiang's translations of "She would marry a Prime Minister and stand at the top of a staircase" and "the perfect hostess" into "她会嫁给一个首相, 站在楼梯顶上" ("She would marry a prime minister and stand at the top of the stairs") and "完美的女主人" ("perfect female master") reflect a nuanced approach which retains the original text's meaning while subtly shifting the connotations associated with the terms. By choosing a direct translation strategy, Wang preserves the literal essence of Woolf's words. However, her choice of phrases such as "女主人" ("female master/mistress of the house") infuses the translation with a nuanced interpretation of status and power dynamics. The term "女主人" ("female master/mistress of the house") carries connotations of authority, control and respect, distinctly more empowered than what "hostess" might traditionally imply. Within the adversarial context of Clarissa and Peter's arguments, Wang renders "hostess" as "女主人" ("female master/mistress of the house"), a seemingly honorific diction that heightens the irony of Peter's remark, exposing the satirical element in his attempt to define Clarissa's identity through laudatory language. Furthermore, the translation of "the makings of the perfect hostess" into "具有成为完美的女主人的一切内在素质" ("had all the intrinsic qualities to be a perfect female master") reinforces the irony of societal expectations imposed on women. The emphasis on "intrinsic qualities" in the translation highlights these traits as inherent and expected to be recognised by women within her social context, reflecting the pervasive nature of gendered expectations. Wang's translation offers a rich, contextual reinterpretation which chimes with target readers by directly conveying the original text's meanings and employing culturally resonant terms, emphasising the themes of societal expectations and gender roles.

In T3, Jiang Xiangming's translation strategy is characterised by offering a nuanced interpretation of Woolf's narrative irony. As mentioned earlier, Jiang's translation period

coincided with a time of heightened feminist activism in China, as the women's liberation movement gained significant momentum nationwide.

For example, his translation of "How he scolded her! How they argued!" into "他曾经多么严厉地叱责过她! 他们曾经吵得多凶呀!" ("How harshly he had rebuked her! How fiercely they had quarrelled!") maintains the narrative's focus on the characters and their interactions by highlighting "他" ("he") and "他们" ("they") as the subjects and add the adverbs "harshly" and "fiercely" to modify the verb "吵" ("quarrel"), which emphasises the intensity of their interactions while maintaining the original's focus on their active engagement in conflict. Jiang's translation of "She would marry a Prime Minister and stand at the top of a staircase" into "她会嫁一个首相, 站到人生阶梯的最高一级" ("She would marry a prime minister and stand at the top of the ladder of life") introduces a metaphor "人生阶梯" ("ladder of life"), suggesting a broader, more universal quest for social ascension and fulfilment through marriage. Jiang translates the term "staircase" into a metaphor "人生阶梯" ("the ladder of life"), which provides the text with a cultural and social dimension that emphasises the social value of marriage and closely ties a woman's worth and success to her marital alliance. This translation portrays marriage as the ultimate achievement in life, highlighting the target of satirical criticism. Besides, in translating the phrase "the perfect hostess he called her ... she had the makings of the perfect hostess," Jiang renders it as "他把她称为地道的家庭主妇... 她身上有家庭主妇的所有气质" ("he called her an authentic housewife ... that she had all the dispositions of a housewife"). Like Sun and Su, Jiang translates "the perfect hostess" as "地道的家庭主妇" ("authentic housewife"), capturing the essence of the character's societal expectations. However, his choice to render "she had the makings of the perfect hostess" into "她身上有家庭主妇的所有气质" ("she had all the dispositions of a housewife") shifts the tone considerably. Whereas Woolf's original conveys Peter's satirical critique of Clarissa's social role, Jiang's phrasing reframes it as a neutral, even complimentary, description of her domestic virtues. This lexical shift softens the irony that underpins Woolf's critique of the limited roles available to women, recasting Peter's judgment as an affirmation of Clarissa's role of "housewife." By emphasising "气质" ("disposition"), Jiang aligns the character with Chinese cultural ideals of propriety and domestic virtue, thereby downplaying the tension of patriarchal expectation that Woolf sought to expose. Jiang Xiangming's translation, whilst preserving the

core narrative, adjusts the tone and nuances of the irony to resonate with a distinct cultural context.

In summary, each translator brings a distinct interpretative lens to Woolf's text, shaped by their cultural, historical and ideological contexts. Sun Liang and Su Mei adopt a faithful yet subtly critical approach, remaining close to the source while amplifying its feminist undertones—most notably by intensifying emotional expressions like “他把她骂得多厉害啊! 他俩争论得多激烈!” (“How badly he scolded her! How fiercely they argued!”). Wang Jiexiang, translating in the post-1995 feminist climate, preserves the literal meaning of the source while enriching it with nuance; her choice of “女主人” (“female master/mistress of the house”) conveys greater agency and status, aligning with the era's heightened attention to women's empowerment. Jiang Xiangming, translating in a digital era of rising feminist discourse, translates “she had the makings of the perfect hostess” into “她身上有家庭主妇的所有气质” (“she had all the dispositions of a housewife”), which shifts the tone as a neutral, even complimentary, description of women's domestic roles, which adjusts the satirical tone and nuances of the irony to resonate with a distinct cultural context. Together, these translations illustrate how translators' choices shaped by historical moments, gendered ideology and cultural priorities inevitably reshape the reception and meaning of the original feminist narrative.

3.3.2 Case Study 2: Inevitability of Marriage

Women's gender identity and self-expectations are central themes which are explored in depth through the lives and experiences of the characters, particularly Sally Seton. Sally Seton is a significant character in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*. She represents a contrast to the conventional world of the protagonist, Clarissa Dalloway, particularly in the context of marriage and societal expectations. Sally is remembered by Clarissa as a rebellious and daring young woman, embodying a sense of freedom and challenge to the restrictive society of their youth. In their younger years, Sally was a figure of unorthodox views and behaviours, challenging societal norms. Her actions, for example, “she forgot her sponge and ran along the passage naked” in her youth (Woolf, 1925, p.33). Running naked down a corridor symbolises her challenge to the repressive norms of the time, especially regarding women's independence and sexuality. Besides, the intensity of the emotional connection between Sally and Clarissa, highlighted by their youthful kiss, suggests an alternative to the traditional marital

relationships portrayed in the novel (Singh, 2015). In this way, the unconventional behavior and attitudes which she displays contrast sharply with the typical image of women of that era, thus embodying a kind of emotional and intellectual independence and highlighting the progressive representation of women's autonomy and agency (Marshall, 2014). However, Sally's eventual marriage to a rich man can be viewed as a personal compromise that individuals, particularly women, often make. Her choices reflect the tension between youthful idealism and the resigned acceptance of adult responsibilities and social norms (Bagley, 2008). Example 2 below provides evidence of the inevitability of marriage for women, and its renderings into Chinese identify translation shifts among translators, which capture their decision-making process in translating feminist ideas.

Example 2

“Who - Peter Walsh asked himself —married a rich man and lived in a large house near Manchester? —Sally Seton, of course! It was Sally Seton—the last person in the world one would have expected to marry a rich man and live in a large house near Manchester, the wild, the daring, the romantic Sally who implored him, half laughing of course, to carry off Clarissa, to save her from the Hughs and the Dalloways and all the other "perfect gentlemen" who would “stifle her soul” (she wrote reams of poetry in those days), make a mere hostess of her, encourage her worldliness (Woolf 1925, pp. 65- 67).”

Example 2 depicts the reflections of the character Peter Walsh upon learning about Sally Seton's life choices. Peter remembers Sally as a wild, daring, and romantic girl, contrasted with the conventional lifestyle of marrying a “rich man” and living in a grand house near Manchester. In Peter's memory, Sally persuaded him to carry Clarissa off to save her from the lives of conventional "perfect gentlemen" like Hugh Whitbread and Richard Dalloway, who would suppress her true self and “stifle her soul” to “make a mere hostess of her, encourage her worldliness” (Woolf, 1925, p.67). Woolf's repeated use of “hostess” underscores her critique of the narrow social roles imposed on women. Unlike the broader term “housewife,” “hostess” reduces a woman to a decorative, performative function—entertaining rather than living. The repetition signals Woolf's disdain for how such roles stifle female identity and autonomy. Sally implores Peter Walsh to “carry off” Clarissa to save her from "perfect gentlemen"; this illustrates Sally's view of the constraints placed on women by society, foreseeing that Clarissa will lose her individuality if she succumbs to traditional roles and societal expectations. Such a depiction reflects a critique of the social conventions of the time, which tended to relegate women to domestic and social roles; like in Example 1 being a “hostess”, limiting their personal growth and expression (Marshall, 2014).

Source text	“Who - Peter Walsh asked himself —married a rich man and lived in a large house near Manchester? —Sally Seton, of course! It was Sally Seton—the last person in the world one would have expected to marry a rich man and live in a large house near Manchester, the wild, the daring, the romantic Sally who implored him, half laughing of course, to carry off Clarissa, to save her from the Hughs and the Dalloways and all the other "perfect gentlemen" who would “stifle her soul” (she wrote reams of poetry in those days), make a mere hostess of her, encourage her worldliness (Woolf 1925, pp. 65- 67).”	
Translator	Target text	Literal translation
Sun Liang & Su Mei (1988)	彼得·沃尔什思量着，是谁嫁了个有钱人？——噢，当然是萨利·赛顿喽！是她——那个任性、大胆、浪漫的萨利！无论谁也想不到她竟会嫁给一个阔佬，……萨利又恳求他把克拉丽莎带走(诚然她是半开玩笑地说)，把她从休和达洛卫之流“不折不扣的绅士们”那里拯救出来，他们只会“扼杀她的灵魂”(那时萨利写了许多诗歌)，只能使她成为一个主妇，滋长她的世俗感。	Peter Walsh mused, who married a rich man? --Oh, Sally Seton, of course! It was her - the willful, daring, romantic Sally! No one could have imagined that she would marry a Kuo Lao, a rich man,…… Sally begged him to take Clarissa away (admittedly half-jokingly), to save her from the "uncompromising gentlemen" like Hugh and Dalloway, who would only "strangle her soul" (Sally wrote a lot of poetry in those days), and only make her a housewife and feed her sense of worldliness.
Wang Jiexiang (2001)	让我想想看是谁这样做的来着？彼得·沃尔什琢磨着——嫁了个阔佬，住在…？——	Let me see who did that. Peter Walsh pondered - married a Kuo Lao, a rich man, living in...? --Sally

	自然是莎利·西顿啦!是莎利·西顿——怎么也不会想到她会嫁一个阔佬、住在曼彻斯特附近的一所大宅子里,那个任性的、冒失的、浪漫的莎利! 她一面恳求他, 当然是半开玩笑地说, 把克拉丽莎夺走, 以免她落入休和达洛维之流以及所有其他“完美的绅士”之手, 他们会“窒息她的灵魂”(那些日子莎利写了大量的诗),仅仅把她变成一个主妇, 鼓励她发展世故的为人处世本领。	Seaton, of course! Sally Seaton - never thought she'd marry a Kuo Lao, live in a mansion near Manchester, that willful, impudent, romantic Sally! She pleaded with him, half-jokingly of course, to take Clarissa away, so that she won't fall into the hands of Hugh and Dalloway and all the other "perfect gentlemen" who would "suffocate her soul" (Sally wrote a lot of poems in those days), and simply turn her into a housewife, encourage her to develop worldly- wise skills in dealing with people.
Jiang Xiangming (2014)	彼得·沃尔什问着自己谁已经嫁给了阔老公...? ——莎利·西顿, 当然啰! 是莎利·西顿——世界那么大, 你做梦都想不到偏偏是她嫁给了一个富翁 这个狂野的、大胆的、浪漫的莎利! 她还劝他, 当然是半真半假地, 趁早把克拉丽莎夺走, 别让她落入休、达洛维以及诸如此类的“完美绅士”之手, 因为他们会“枯萎她的灵魂”(那些日子里莎利写了许多诗歌),把她变成一个地道的家	Peter Walsh asked himself who was married to a rich husband...? --Sally Seton, of course! Sally Seton. - It's a big world. You could not even dream of it that it just has to be her marrying a man of wealth.. ...the wild, bold, romantic Sally! She also advised him, half-truthfully of course, to take Clarissa away before it was too late, and do not to let her fall into the hands of Hugh, Dalloway, and other such "perfect gentlemen", who would "wilt her soul" (Sally

	庭主妇， 一个彻底的世俗之人。	wrote a lot of poems in those days), and turn her into an authentic housewife, a thoroughly worldly person.
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Table 3. 7 Chinese translations of example 2.

As discussed in the quantitative analysis of T1 Sun Liang and Su Mei's translation, rendering the sentence from the source text, illustrates a nuanced understanding of the narrative's integrity and the embedded feminist nuances. For example, their translation of the two "rich man" instances in the source text reflects a deliberate choice to use distinct expressions, capturing the subtle shifts in tone and meaning. In the source text, Woolf's use of "rich man" is deeply ironic, highlighting the contrast between Sally Seton's rebellious, idealistic character and her eventual conformity to societal norms through marriage. By emphasising the transactional nature of such unions, Woolf reflects on the limited choices available to women, mocking society's fixation on wealth and status and reinforcing Woolf's broader feminist critique of the constraints placed on women. In the phrase "Who... married a rich man?" they translate "rich man" as "有钱人" ("rich man"), a neutral term in Chinese, which symbolically represents more than just wealth; it signifies a traditional pathway that women are often expected to aspire to—marrying well as a means to secure financial stability and social status (Hume, 2012, p.291). Whereas in the phrase "the last person in the world one would have expected to marry a rich man," they render "rich man" as "阔佬" (Kuo Lao), which, in the Chinese Dictionary, is traditionally used to refer to wealthy individuals known for their generosity in spending and carries a nuance of disdain or light contempt, signifying not just a "fat cat" or a "man of wealth" but also someone with significant financial and social power. The term "阔(Kuo)," serving as an abbreviation for "阔佬(Kuo Lao)," denotes affluence, identifying someone as a rich person or a tycoon, while "佬(Lao)" is a casual term for "man" or "guy." In the Chinese cultural context, this descriptor is often applied to individuals who spend money lavishly and extravagantly, embodying a sense of opulence and wastefulness, highlighting not only the individual's substantial wealth and the propensity to spend freely but also hinting at the societal critique of such economic disparity and the ostentatious display of wealth. By using "阔佬" (Kuo Lao), Sun Liang and Su Mei convey the social critique implicit in the source text while tailoring it to resonate with a Chinese audience, for whom the term evokes a specific image of wealth, privilege, and wastefulness.

By employing these two distinct terms, Sun Liang and Su Mei add layers of meaning to their translation. For the first occurrence, the use of "有钱人" ("rich man") maintains a neutral tone, reflecting Peter Walsh's initial musing. In contrast, the shift to "阔佬" (Kuo Lao) in the latter instance aligns with the source text's tone of surprise and subtle criticism, emphasizing the incongruity of Sally Seton—a character portrayed as "willful, daring, and romantic"—choosing to marry a man whose wealth and lifestyle likely contradict her original ideals. This linguistic choice underscores Sally's transformation and, by extension, Woolf's feminist critique of societal pressures and the compromises which women make within patriarchal structures. The translation retains the original emotional undertone and enriches it within the cultural context of the target language.

Moreover, T1 Sun and Su's translation effectively preserves the source-text's irony by rendering Woolf's sentence. As mentioned earlier, their translation appeared in the early years of China's Reform and Opening-Up, and this historical context enabled increased engagement with feminist discourse, though it remained shaped by the persistence of conservative ideological influences. They translate "who implored him ... to carry off Clarissa, to save her from the Hughs and the Dalloways and all the other 'perfect gentlemen' ... who make a mere hostess of her, encourage her worldliness," into "萨利又恳求他把克拉丽莎带走，把她从休和达洛卫之流‘不折不扣的绅士们’那里拯救出来……只能使她成为一个主妇，滋长她的世俗感" ("Sally begged him to take Clarissa away, to save her from the 'uncompromising gentlemen' like Hugh and Dalloway... who only make her a housewife and feed her sense of worldliness"). This translation maintains Woolf's irony by emphasising the contradiction between the term "perfect gentlemen" and the oppressive societal roles these men impose on Clarissa. Woolf's use of "perfect gentlemen" is heavily ironic, highlighting how these outwardly respectable men, rather than embodying virtue or perfection, are complicit in reducing women like Clarissa to shallow, socially conforming roles such as mere hostesses or housewives. The irony lies in Woolf's critique of the idealised image of "gentlemen," who, in their "perfection", reinforce patriarchal norms and stifle women's individuality. Hugh and Dalloway, representatives of these "perfect gentlemen," are portrayed as figures of authority and societal decorum, and their influence limits women's potential, reducing them to decorative roles within social functions. The phrase "encourage her worldliness" further underscores the irony by suggesting that this worldliness is not true sophistication but a superficial alignment with societal expectations.

T1 Sun and Su's translation captures this critique, retaining the sarcastic undertone of Woolf's original. For instance, in the translation "把她从休和达洛卫之流 '不折不扣的绅士们' 那里拯救出来" ("to save her from the 'uncompromising gentlemen' like Hugh and Dalloway"), Sun and Su highlight the action of "saving" Clarissa, emphasising Sally's plea as she implores Peter to rescue Clarissa from societal constraints. The translation of "perfect gentlemen" into "不折不扣的绅士们" ("uncompromising gentlemen") further intensifies the ironic tone. The phrase "不折不扣" ("uncompromising") possesses a double meaning, literally translating to "absolute" or "uncompromising", indicating an unwillingness to compromise on their gentlemanly qualities. In this context, it evokes a sense of rigidity, mocking the supposed perfection of these men. The term "绅士们" ("gentlemen") retains the cultural connotations of respectability and propriety. However, the addition of "不折不扣" ("uncompromising") imbues the phrase with a sarcastic edge, suggesting that these men are unyielding in their adherence to societal norms which ultimately stifle women's individuality and freedom. This nuanced translation mirrors Woolf's original intent, preserving the critique of patriarchal values embedded in the term "perfect gentlemen." Besides, Sun and Su's translation effectively preserve the source-text's irony while rendering renders the term "hostess" into "主妇" (housewife) and "encourage her worldliness" into "滋长她的世俗感" ("feed her sense of worldliness"). The term "hostess", which in Woolf's text conveys a tone of superficiality and social performance used ironically to criticise the restrictive roles assigned to women. By translating this as "主妇" ("housewife"), however, Sun and Su evoke a culturally charged identity in Chinese discourse, one often linked to moral stability, diligence, and dedication to family duties. This lexical substitution subtly alters the nuance while still reflecting patriarchal constraints, "housewife" suggests a socially acceptable and even idealised role, especially within middle-class contexts, where the figure of the virtuous wife and mother has long been upheld as a moral cornerstone of the household. Similarly, their rendering of "encourage" as "滋长" ("feed" or "nurture") introduces a dynamic sense of cultivation and growth. "滋长" suggests a naturalised social expectation, as if Clarissa's "worldliness" is nurtured and allowed to take root by the norms surrounding her. This lexical choice highlights how patriarchal values are not only imposed but also supported through social expectation. The pairing of "主妇" ("housewife") with "滋长她的世俗感" ("feed her sense of worldliness") thus creates a powerful irony that the culturally valorised figure of the housewife is simultaneously linked to superficial "worldliness," exposing the contradictory demands placed upon women to embody both domestic virtue and social performance. In this way, Sun and Su's translation intensifies Woolf's critique of restrained social expectations on women's roles.

T2 Wang Jiexiang's translation effectively balances the nuances of the source text, particularly in its treatment of feminist themes, while making distinct interpretative choices to preserve and amplify Woolf's irony. Similar to T1, Wang uses "阔佬" ("Kuo Lao") to translate "rich man," but unlike T1, she employs the term twice, explicitly emphasising the irony embedded in Woolf's depiction. This repetition highlights the incongruity between Sally's rebellious character and her eventual conformity to societal expectations through marriage to a wealthy, conventional man. Moreover, Wang translates Woolf's sentence, "who implored him ... to carry off Clarissa, to save her from the Hughs and the Dalloways and all the other 'perfect gentlemen'" into "她一面恳求他... 把克拉丽莎夺走, 以免她落入休和达洛维之流以及所有其他'完美的绅士'之手" ("She pleaded with him ... to take Clarissa away, so that she won't fall into the hands of Hugh and Dalloway and all the other 'perfect gentlemen'). Wang's translation not only preserves Woolf's original critique but also strategically amplifies it by portraying Clarissa's situation as captivity, thereby strengthening the critique of the so-called "perfect gentlemen," emphasising societal restrictions and the negotiated compromises women must navigate within patriarchal systems. As declared previously, influenced by the post-1995 intellectual climate shaped by the Beijing World Conference on Women and her dual role as translator and literary scholar equipping her with the critical tools to engage with Woolf's feminist discourse on both linguistic and ideological levels, Wang's translation consciously amplifies the source text's irony in feminist passages, reflecting the era's heightened sensitivity to gender issues and women's voices. For example, in T2 Wang restructures the phrase "to save her from" into "以免她落入...之手" ("so that she will not fall into the hands of"). This structure shift emphasises Clarissa as the subject of external forces, reinforcing Woolf's depiction of women as susceptible to societal expectations imposed by men like Hugh and Dalloway. The phrase "落入...之手" ("fall into the hands of") carries a tone of entrapment, amplifying the sense of danger and helplessness in Woolf's critique of patriarchal norms. At the same time, Wang captures Woolf's irony in her rendering of "perfect gentlemen" as "完美的绅士" ("perfect gentlemen"). In the source text, Woolf uses the term ironically to critique the societal image of men like Hugh and Dalloway, who appear outwardly respectable but perpetuate restrictive roles for women. Compared to T1's "不折不扣的绅士们" ("uncompromising gentlemen"), Wang preserves this critique by directly translating the phrase, maintaining the tension between the outwardly positive connotation of "perfect" and the oppressive reality these men represent. The translation subtly mocks the idealised image of such men, highlighting how their so-called perfection limits women's freedom and

individuality, reducing Clarissa to a mere hostess. Besides, Wang renders “make a mere hostess of her, encourage her worldliness” into “仅仅把她变成一个主妇, 鼓励她发展世故的为人处世本领” (simply turn her into a housewife, encourage her to develop worldly-wise skills in dealing with people). By adding the phrase “发展世故的为人处世本领” (“develop worldly-wise skills in dealing with people”) to qualify the role of “主妇” (“housewife”), Wang sharpens the critique of the socially constructed female role implied by Woolf’s ironic use of “hostess.” While “housewife” in Chinese cultural discourse often connotes respectability and moral virtue, the inclusion of “worldly-wise skills” undermines this idealisation by revealing the superficial social performance expected of women. This interpretive expansion maintains Woolf’s irony while presenting it in a way that is more comprehensible to a Chinese readership. In all, Wang’s translation amplifies the feminist critique embedded in the original text, showing a more active and interpretive engagement with Woolf’s discourse.

In T3, Jiang Xiangming's translation diverges notably from the original text's nuanced irony. This is particularly evident in the rendering of "rich man," where the terms "阔老公" ("rich husband") and "富翁" ("man of wealth") are used. "阔老公" ("rich husband") shifts the focus to Sally's marital status rather than her husband's wealth. While the word "阔" ("wealthy") suggests affluence, pairing it with "老公" ("husband") personalises the relationship. Besides, "富翁" ("man of wealth") has a broader cultural connotation in Chinese. According to the *Modern Chinese Dictionary*, while "富翁" literally means "wealthy man," it often refers to an older man who has accumulated substantial property or wealth. In the Chinese Dictionary, "富翁" often carries connotations of respect and admiration for financial success. It does not inherently critique wealth accumulation but rather reflects societal values which view economic prosperity as a marker of status and achievement. In this context, both terms are more neutral or even positive than the original, which carries an understated critique of societal values. This framing contrasts with Woolf's more subversive tone, where the term "rich man" is used ironically to underscore Sally's departure from her independent and rebellious character. The cultural nuance embedded in "富翁" subtly shifts the narrative from critique to acceptance, reflecting the translator's potential accommodation to Chinese cultural ideals of wealth and social standing. In this sense, the translation adds a layer of cultural specificity but undermines the irony of Woolf's depiction of Sally's marriage. Besides, Jiang's rendering of "who would

'stifle her soul'... make a mere hostess of her, encourage her worldliness" as "因为他们会'枯萎她的灵魂' ...把她变成一个地道的家庭主妇，一个彻底的世俗之人" ("who would 'wilt her soul' ...turn her into an authentic housewife, a thoroughly worldly person") reshapes the original meaning. In the source text, emphasising "stifle her soul," "make a mere hostess of her," and "encourage her worldliness," Woolf constructs an ironic critique of the "perfect gentlemen," whose refined propriety diminishes female subjectivity by forcing women into traditional roles and societal expectations. Such a portrayal highlights a critique of the restrictions imposed on women by society and the social conventions of the era, which tended to confine women to domestic and social roles. Jiang renders the term "hostess" into "家庭主妇" (housewife) and "encourage her worldliness" into "彻底的世俗之人" ("a thoroughly worldly person"). The phrase "世俗之人" ("worldly person") not only conveys a sense of social practicality but also implies a resignation to prevailing norms, aligning the character more closely with conventional respectability than with Woolf's original irony. By combining "housewife" with "thoroughly worldly," Jiang's translation conveys Woolf's satire in culturally resonant terms that emphasise social adaptation.

In conclusion, these translations show how each translator makes different choices which influence how Woolf's message is received by Chinese readers. Their work highlights how translation is not just about language but also about interpreting culture, values and social ideas. Sun Liang and Su Mei (T1) take a faithful yet thoughtful approach, carefully preserving Woolf's irony and feminist themes. Their use of different terms for "rich man" ("有钱人" and "阔佬") and "perfect gentlemen" ("不折不扣的绅士们") shows their attention to tone and social critique. Wang Jiayang (T2) emphasises the feminist messages more directly. She strengthens the original's irony by using phrases like "落入...之手" ("fall into the hands of") and "完美的绅士" ("perfect gentlemen") to show how women are trapped by social expectations. Jiang Xiangming (T3) adapts the language to fit traditional Chinese values but sometimes softens the original's critique. Terms like "富翁" ("man of wealth") used by Jiang give the roles a more positive or respectable tone, which reduces the sharpness of Woolf's feminist irony.

3.3.3 Case Study 3: Gender-Specific Social Qualities

In Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*, exploring gender-specific social qualities is a central theme, particularly in the context of "the essence of womanhood". The novel delves into societal beliefs which prescribe virtues and qualities as inherently feminine and examines how these traits confine women to specific roles and expectations (Sandhi & Juliasih, 2021). The essence of womanhood in *Mrs Dalloway* is depicted in the societal expectations of the time, which dictated that women embody virtues like gentleness, passivity, nurturance, and emotional sensitivity (Montashery, 2012). These qualities were considered inherently feminine, shaping how women were permitted to exist in society. The essence of womanhood in the novel is defined mainly by societal expectations and the internalisation of prescribed gender roles (Sandhi & Juliasih, 2021). Characters like Clarissa Dalloway embody traditional feminine virtues such as sensitivity, emotional depth, and a nurturing disposition. Peter Walsh, one of the central male characters who is an old friend and former suitor of Clarissa Dalloway, exhibits traits which the society of his time might consider feminine, and his 'emotional vulnerability', 'introspectiveness', and 'romantic nostalgia' contrast sharply with the more stereotypically masculine traits of emotional 'stoicism', 'decisiveness', and 'independence' (Montashery, 2012, p.26). Peter's relationship with women often reveals the societal pressures which he feels to conform to traditional masculine roles. Peter's reflections on his past and his contemplations about Clarissa and other women in his life emphasise the societal constraints which both men and women face. His experiences and internal life provide a counterpoint to the female characters, offering a broader critique of the restrictive gender norms of his time (Vallejo Álvarez, 2017). In other words, Peter highlights the fluidity of gender roles and challenges the rigid binaries of masculinity and femininity. Example 3 illustrates how gender-specific social qualities are depicted in the text and emphasises the ways these qualities are presented in Chinese translation. The analysis uncovers significant translation shifts that occur as translators navigate cultural and linguistic differences. These shifts not only reveal the translators' strategies but also illuminate their decision-making processes in conveying feminist ideas across languages and contexts.

Example 3

"This susceptibility to impressions had been his undoing, no doubt. Still, at his age, he had, like a boy or a girl even, these alternations of mood: good days, bad days, for no reason whatever (Woolf, 1925, p.58)."

Example 3 describes the reflections of Peter Walsh, who is experiencing a sensitivity to his surroundings and the people whom he observes after returning to England from India. The phrase "this susceptibility to impressions had been his undoing" suggests that emotional

sensitivity is a weakness, a trait traditionally associated with femininity in patriarchal societies. Peter's description of his emotional responses is like a 'boy or a girl even'. He mentions 'boy' first to reflect a childish version of his male self, then mentions 'girl' to repair, which suggests this kind of emotional volatility is more typical of females and 'even' intensify the comparison and extend it across gender lines. His observations challenge the idea that emotional fluctuations are inherently tied to gender roles and the impact of gender-specific societal qualities (Ma, 2021). Woolf critiques how emotional responses are shaped by ingrained societal norms, subtly exposing how patriarchy conditions both men and women to evaluate worth. It presents challenges for translators in conveying feminist themes, due to the nuanced critique of societal norms and the interplay of gender expectations.

Source text	“This susceptibility to impressions had been his undoing, no doubt. Still, at his age, he had, like a boy or a girl even, these alternations of mood: good days, bad days, for no reason whatever (Woolf, 1925, p.58).”	
Translator	Target text	Literal translation
Sun Liang & Su Mei (1988)	毫无疑问，这样敏感是他失败的原因。在他这把年纪，却还像个少男少女，易于情绪波动，莫名其妙地时而欢乐，时而颓丧。	Undoubtedly, such sensitivity was the reason for his failure. At his age, he is still like a young boy and girl, prone to mood swings, inexplicably sometimes happy, sometimes depressed.
Wang Jiexiang (2001).	毫无疑问，这样易受印象支配一直是他的致命缺点。在他这个年纪还像少女般情绪无常；毫无道理地时好时坏。	Undoubtedly, this susceptibility to impressions has always been his fatal flaw. At his age, he was still as impermanent as a girl, good and bad for no reason;

Jiang Xiangming (2014)	毋庸置疑，风景能如此感染他正是他的致命弱点。已经到了他那样的年纪，却依旧像个小伙子似的，情绪反复无常，时而开心，时而沮丧，也不知道是什么原因。	Needless to say, it was his fatal weakness that the scenery could infect him in this way. He is already at his age, but he is still like a young man, his emotions are capricious, sometimes happy, sometimes depressed, and do not know why.
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Table 3. 8 Chinese translations of example 3.

In T1, Sun Liang and Su Mei keep a neutral stance but maintain sensitivity while effectively conveying the nuanced feminist themes related to gender-specific societal norms in the original text. When translating the phrase "This susceptibility to impressions had been his undoing," they chose to render it as "这样敏感是他失败的原因" which translates back to "such sensitivity was the reason for his failure." Here, they interpret "susceptibility to impressions" as "敏感" ("sensitivity"), which is resonant because 敏感 ("sensitivity") is frequently entwined with societal expectations and stereotypes about women. This translation shows that Peter acknowledges that his sensitivity was the pivotal reason for his failure. This translation acknowledges the fluidity of emotional expression, thereby challenging the conventional gender norms which typically depict women as excessively emotional. For the segment "like a boy or a girl even, these alternations of mood," they translated it into "却还像个少男少女，易于情绪波动," which means "yet still like a young boy and girl, prone to mood swings." This translation effectively maintains neutrality by not prioritising one gender over the other, hence not aligning mood swings, particularly with either boys or girls, but instead associating them with youthfulness.

In T2, Wang Jiaxiang's translation emphasises the feminist undertones present in the original text. By translating "This susceptibility to impressions had been his undoing" as "这样易受印象支配一直是他的致命缺点" ("this susceptibility to impressions has always been his fatal flaw"), the translation not only remains faithful to the source but also enhances its connection to later instances of emotional shifts triggered by visual impressions, from joy at seeing someone attractive to sadness at the sight of someone less appealing. The phrase

appears in a passage where Peter Walsh's fluctuating moods are influenced by sensory reactions to his surroundings. "Impressions" in the Oxford Dictionary refer to immediate, emotional responses to sensory stimuli, especially visual encounters with people and scenes that evoke emotional responses. These impressions are primarily aesthetic or emotional reactions, such as finding someone attractive or being repelled by another's appearance. By underscoring Peter's mood swings in response to appearances, Wang's translation engages with feminist critiques of the societal tendency to judge individuals primarily on their looks. This choice of translation highlights how societal norms and values profoundly impact individuals, especially in their perceptions and reactions to issues of gender and beauty. For the segment "like a boy or a girl even, these alternations of mood," Wang Jiaxiang made a notable modification by omitting "a boy" and translating it into "少女般情绪无常" ("as impermanent as a girl"). As mentioned before, Peter describes his emotional responses as being like those of a "boy or a girl." By mentioning "boy" first, he reflects a childish aspect of his own male identity, while the subsequent mention of "girl" serves to amend this, implying that such emotional volatility is more commonly associated with females. Wang's translation "少女般情绪无常" ("as impermanent as a girl") subtly reinforces gendered stereotypes that associate emotional volatility with femininity; in doing so, the translation emphasises Peter's moodiness in feminised terms, heightening Woolf's satirical tone by framing his emotional instability through a lens traditionally reserved for women.

In T3, Jiang Xiangming's translation is characterised by a mistranslation or underplay of Woolf's narrative irony. By translating "This susceptibility to impressions had been his undoing" as "风景能如此感染他正是他的致命弱点" ("it was his fatal weakness that the scenery could infect him in this way"), Jiang focuses specifically on "scenery," which narrows down the original phrase's broad, nuanced meaning from an abstract sense implying a general vulnerability or sensitivity which affects Peter's life negatively to a literal interaction with landscapes or environments. This shift from a general susceptibility to the specific influence of scenery alters the original meaning and diminishes the narrative irony. Besides, Jiang's translation of the segment "like a boy or a girl even, these alternations of mood" into "却依旧像个小伙子似的, 情绪反复无常" ("still like a young man, his emotions are capricious") reflects a significant deviation from the original text, particularly in terms of gender representation and the nuanced portrayal of the character's emotions. The original phrase "like a boy or a girl" suggests a fluidity in the character's emotional state, implying that the mood swings are not confined to a single gender but could reflect characteristics traditionally associated with males

and females. By omitting "a girl" and only retaining “像个小伙子” (“like a young man”), the translation shifts the focus solely to a male perspective, thereby underplaying or losing the original's gender-inclusive nuance. Jiang's translation simplifies the text, avoiding the broader gender spectrum and losing the rich layers of meaning which Woolf might have intended.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter conducts a comparative analysis of three Chinese translations of Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*, focusing on how each translator navigates the transmission of Woolf's feminist critique of gender roles, highlighting the linguistic, cultural, and ideological shifts which emerge across distinct socio-historical contexts. Utilising a self-constructed diachronic corpus and three targeted case studies, the study examines the translation shifts employed by Sun Liang & Su Mei (T1, 1988), Wang Jiaxiang (T2, 2001), and Jiang Xiangming (T3, 2014). By exploring key themes—Women's Familial Roles, the Inevitability of Marriage, and Gender-specific Social Qualities—this chapter identifies and classifies a range of optional shifts which extend beyond basic linguistic changes. These shifts reveal how the translators made strategic decisions to either preserve, enhance, or soften Woolf's feminist critique based on their respective historico-cultural contexts. In doing so, the chapter addresses three central research aims: (1) It identifies the types of translation shifts used to reinterpret feminist themes in *Mrs Dalloway*; (2) It demonstrates how each translator's socio-historical background influenced their interpretative stance and translation choices; and (3) It assesses how these translators managed the tension between fidelity to Woolf's original narrative and the need for cultural resonance with Chinese readers. The key findings can be summarised as follows:

Sun Liang and Su Mei's (T1) co-translated work, produced in 1988 during a period of cautious intellectual openness in China, reflects a faithful, formal, and academic approach, focusing on maintaining the narrative's integrity and preserving Woolf's feminist irony through subtle interpretative strategies. Their translation is characterised by additive explanation and semantic intensification, often reinforcing Woolf's critique of gendered social expectations through culturally rich and ideologically resonant choices. For instance, they employ an additive translation strategy which extends beyond literal interpretation to capture deeper cultural and symbolic meanings. Their translation of "stand at the top of a staircase" as "站在楼梯顶上迎接宾客" ("stand at the top of the stairs to greet guests") not only translates the words but also enriches the cultural context, expanding the metaphor into a culturally

meaningful image which highlights traditional gendered expectations in high-status Chinese marriages. Additionally, Sun and Su effectively convey Woolf's irony through precise word choice and semantic intensification. By rendering "perfect gentlemen" as "不折不扣的绅士们" ("uncompromising gentlemen"), they emphasise the rigidity and oppressive nature of these men, preserving the sarcastic critique embedded in the original text. This choice aligns with Woolf's feminist undertones, highlighting the societal constraints imposed by these seemingly "perfect" figures. This nuanced rendering reflects their commitment to representing faithfully Woolf's themes, while ensuring cultural and interpretative clarity for the target audience.

Wang Jiaxiang's (T2) translation, published in 2001 in the wake of the 1995 Beijing World Conference on Women, exhibits a conscious feminist orientation, influenced by a shifting intellectual climate which foregrounded gender discourse in Chinese scholarship. Her translation features employing lexical substitution, tonal amplification, and ideologically motivated restructuring to emphasise the text's critique of patriarchy, while balancing fidelity to the original with layered meanings and engaging more deeply with Woolf's broader feminist themes. For example, in Wang's translation, the phrase "the perfect hostess" is rendered as "完美的女主人" ("perfect female master"), reconfiguring the term into one which aligns with domestic authority and social standing, as "女主人" in Chinese not only denotes a female host but also implies a woman of authority and respect within the household. The translation introduces semantic extension and adds dimensions of stability and social legitimacy which are not explicitly present in the ironic tone of Woolf's original. Moreover, by translating "to save her from..." as 以免她落入...之手 ("so that she would not fall into the hands of..."), Wang intensifies the sense of female vulnerability under male dominance. Her translation demonstrates a pattern of ideological engagement, merging textual fidelity with contemporary feminist awareness to highlight social critique.

Jiang Xiangming's (T3) 2014 translation, although in a digital era of feminist activism and persistent traditional gender norms, adopts a domesticating and culturally accommodating strategy which often softens the feminist irony of the original. Jiang is less ideologically committed to maintaining the feminist meanings of the source text, leaning towards semantic neutralisation, cultural reinterpretation, and adopting a more restrained tone. For example, his translation of "she had the makings of the perfect hostess" into "她身上有家庭主妇的所有气质" ("she had all the dispositions of a housewife"), which shifts the tone as a neutral, even complimentary, description of women's domestic roles and softens the satirical tone and nuances of the irony. Similarly, the use of "阔老公" ("rich husband") and "富翁" ("man of wealth")

for “rich man” tends to soften Woolf’s satirical edge, aligning more closely with traditional Chinese gender ideals. Moreover, Jiang shifts the gender-neutral expression “like a boy or a girl even” to “像个小伙子似的” (“like a young man”), removing the gender balance of the original and reducing the scope of Woolf’s critique.

In summary, this investigation underscores how each translator’s rendering of *Mrs Dalloway* reflects distinct patterns of response to Woolf’s feminist critique, shaped by the historical, ideological, and cultural context in which each translation was produced. Each translation becomes a site of interpretative intervention, where meaning is reshaped to reflect the translator’s context and priorities. While Sun and Su’s co-translated work, as an early translation that is not necessarily conservative, emphasises fidelity and critical nuance, Wang brings a clear feminist emphasis, and Jiang pursues cultural naturalisation. Together, their translations illustrate how Woolf’s feminist narratives are mediated through evolving translation practices—confirming that literary translation is not only an act of linguistic conversion but a dynamic process of ideological and cultural negotiation.

Chapter 4: Translating Gender Binaries in Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*

4.1 Introduction

Virginia Woolf's novel *To the Lighthouse*, a modernist novel published in 1927 notable for its experimental narrative structure, employs the stream-of-consciousness technique to delve into complex themes, particularly examining gender binaries and the societal roles assigned to different genders (Daugherty, 1991). It explores the dynamics within the Ramsay family and their interactions with guests at their summer home on the Isle of Skye in Scotland. The content includes three parts: "The Window," "Time Passes," and "The Lighthouse." The first section, "The Window," introduces the Ramsay family and their guests at their summer home. Mr. Ramsay, a philosopher, is depicted as stern and authoritative, while his wife, Mrs. Ramsay, is nurturing and deeply invested in her role as a mother and hostess. The tension between these characters and their interactions with others creates the backdrop for the exploration of gender roles and familial relationships. One of the central events in this section is the promise of a trip to a lighthouse, a source of anticipation and disappointment for the Ramsay children. In the "Time Passes" section, Woolf shifts the narrative to a broader perspective. The focus moves from the characters to the passage of time itself. This section details the decay of Ramsay's summer home during World War I, highlighting the transience of life and the effects of war and loss. We learn of significant changes, including the deaths of key characters - Mrs. Ramsay, one of her sons and her daughter - while the house slowly deteriorates in their absence. The final section, "The Lighthouse," takes place a decade later when the surviving Ramsays and some of their guests return to the summer home. Mr. Ramsay and two of his children finally make the trip to the lighthouse which was planned years before. This section explores the dynamics of change, focusing on how characters have evolved and come to terms with their memories and losses. Lily Briscoe, a guest and aspiring artist, works on completing a painting she began in the first section and puts her brushes down, symbolising her journey towards self-realisation and creative fulfilment.

In *To the Lighthouse*, Woolf explores themes related to gender roles and social expectations of women in early 20th-century society. Through the characters and narrative structure, she examines the complex family dynamics and the traditional roles ascribed to women and men. For instance, the character of Mrs. Ramsay is central to the narrative and embodies the traditional role of women as caregivers, peacemakers and supporters of men's ambitions (Mohammed, 2021). For Mrs. Ramsay, "there was nobody whom she revered as she revered him. She was quite ready to take Mr. Ramsay's word for it. They came to

her, naturally, since she was a woman, all day long with this and that; one wanting this, another that; the children were growing up" (1937, p.26). This example highlights women's quiet struggle with gender roles and societal expectations. On the other hand, the character of Lily Briscoe symbolises a different path. Lily is an independent woman and an artist who defies traditional gender roles, questioning the notion that the value of women is tied to their relationships with men (Munca, 2009). Her presence in the story and her journey involves finding her voice and artistic style, representing women breaking free from conventional constraints. By using the stream-of-consciousness technique, Woolf delves deeply into the inner lives of her characters, especially the female ones. This approach validates women's complex and nuanced inner experiences, which are often overlooked in male-dominated narratives. These Modernist techniques connect to Woolf's feminist ideas, as articulated in *A Room of One's Own*, where she advocates for a female sentence which better captures women's experiences (Nussbaum, 1995). *To the Lighthouse* embodies this concept through its poetic prose, breaking away from rigid, male-centric literary forms. Overall, *To the Lighthouse*, as a Modernist experiment in form and narrative voice, engages with feminist ideas by exploring the gender identity and expectations of women, contrasting traditional norms with a more progressive view of gender and illustrating the importance of allowing women the space and freedom to pursue their own identities and ambitions (Khirsat, 2012).

Since its publication in 1927, Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* has been translated into such languages as Spanish, French, German, Chinese, Japanese, Russian and Italian. No articles on the Chinese translation of *To the Lighthouse* could be found in the Web of Science or the Academic Research Library, two of the most widely used databases for academic research and publications. Only five studies on a translation analysis of *To the Lighthouse* were identified in the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI), China's premier academic digital library. For instance, Zhang Linling's (2022) study, *Speech Representation in Chinese Translations of English Stream of Consciousness Novels: A Case Study of Woolf's To the Lighthouse*, compares two prominent Chinese translations of the novel and examines how speech representation methods were adopted in the translation process. Her analysis reveals that translators lacked an understanding of the semantic and stylistic coherence intrinsic to the different modes of speech representation within stream-of-consciousness texts. This oversight led to significant distortion of the stream-of-consciousness style, compromising the original narrative. Yu Bingxi's (2013) study, *The Differences and Causes of Two Translation Versions of To the Lighthouse from the Perspective of Gender Identity of Translators*, examines the differences between two translations of the novel and explores how the gender identity of translators might influence these variations. Wang (2021) examine the use of feminist translation strategies, specifically "supplementation" and

"hijacking," to reflect feminist ideas. In the field of translation-style analysis, Ming Xiaohui (2022) investigates whether quantitative linguistic metrics can be used to examine translation style. Ming uses the metrics provided by the psychometric software "Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count" (LIWC) to compare two translations of *To the Lighthouse*. Her findings suggest that quantitative analysis of translation style can be practical, provided that appropriate linguistic metrics tailored to the unique characteristics of the source text are used. Similarly, Li Xinyu (2018) employs a corpus-based approach to compare the translation styles in two Chinese versions of the novel. She identifies that macro-linguistic features in the corpus statistics do not necessarily reveal the translation styles of the two translations; linguistic markers which indicate a point of view, such as transitivity, modals, demonstratives and personal pronouns, are treated differently in each translation, affecting the representation of the original narrative perspectives and reflecting distinct translation styles. The focus of these other sources does not encompass sociocultural translation shifts, indicating that this area remains unexplored. This gap leaves certain aspects critical to comprehending the full impact of the translations unaddressed in China's cultural and literary discourse. To bridge this gap, the following research questions should be considered:

Q1: What kinds of translation shifts have the Chinese translators employed in translating *To the Lighthouse*?

Q2: To what extent do the Chinese translators' historico-cultural backgrounds shape their interpretation and decision-making in translating Woolf's construction/representation of gender roles and gender binaries over time and space in *To the Lighthouse*?

Q3: How do the Chinese translators navigate the balance of translation shifts between fidelity to the source text and the need for the translation to resonate with Chinese audiences in *To the Lighthouse*?

To explore these research questions, the upcoming sections will introduce the datasets utilised and the methods in this study.

4.2 Methods

4.2.1 Dataset

To compare how different translators handle Woolf's feminist narratives, the study employs a combined corpus-based approach and case studies to analyse Chinese translations of *To the Lighthouse*. The research utilises a self-constructed corpus consisting of two primary datasets, detailed in Table 1. The first dataset features the source text of *To the Lighthouse* by Virginia Woolf, providing the baseline for analysis. The second dataset includes a diachronic corpus of four different Chinese translations - Xie Qingyao 1946 (hereafter T1), Qu Shijing 1988 (T2), Ma Ainong 2003 (T3), and Li Xiaoyan, Tian Zezhong & Meng Yuanning 2017 (T4). There are ten versions of the Chinese translation of *To the Lighthouse*. To build my self-constructed corpus, I applied three main selection criteria. First, I considered the publication period of the translations to ensure a diverse range of temporal contexts. Secondly, the digital translations are available online in Chinese, making them accessible for study and analysis. Thirdly, I examined user ratings and comments on Dushu, one of the most popular reading websites in China, and Douban, a Chinese social-networking site and online database which provides detailed information and reviews for various media, including books, films and music. These criteria ensured a representative and accessible selection of translations for the study. As mentioned previously, a high volume of ratings and substantial reader commentary provided a strong foundation for selecting translations that not only had wide cultural appeal but also involved readers in meaningful dialogue.

ST/ TT	Author/Translators	Version names	Publication Date	Publisher	Place
ST	Virginia Woolf	<i>To the Lighthouse</i>	1927	Hogarth Press	UK
T1	谢庆垚 (Xie Qingyao)	到灯塔去 (To the Lighthouse)	1946	The Commercial Press	Beijing, China
T2	瞿世镜 (Qu Shijing)	到灯塔去 (To the Lighthouse)	1988	Shanghai Translation Publishing House	Shanghai, China
T3	马爱农 (Ma Ainong)	到灯塔去 (To the Lighthouse)	2003	People's Literature Publishing House	Beijing, China

T4	李小艳 (Li Xiaoyan), 田泽中 (Tian Zezhong) & 蒙苑宁 (Meng Yuanning)	到灯塔去 (To the Lighthouse)	2017	China Book Publishing House	Beijing, China
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Table 4. 1 The Chinese translations of *To the Lighthouse*

The first introduction of Woolf and her feminist ideas to a Chinese audience was marked by the speech of Xu Zhimo, a prominent Chinese poet and literary figure. In 1928, Xu Zhimo was invited to deliver a speech at Su-Chou Girls' High School (苏州女中). This speech was later transformed into an essay titled "关于女子 *A Room of One's Own* (Zhang, 2021). Given the limited exposure to foreign intellectual movements during that era, Woolf's impact on Chinese readers was profound but slow to spread. In this sense, Xie Qingyao in 1946, published his translation of Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* (1927), solidifying Virginia Woolf's reputation in China as a leading Western modernist writer (Yang, 2022). Xie's translation bridged a significant gap between Western modernist literature and Chinese readers, contributing to Woolf's enduring influence on Chinese literary and feminist thought. However, no reliable information on Xie Qingyao could be located in the available sources. In addition, as the original translation published in the 1940s were printed in traditional Chinese with a vertical page layout, all passages have been converted into simplified Chinese to ensure consistency in the presentation of Chinese language materials throughout this thesis.

Qu Shijing's translation plays a significant role in all the re-translated works. As the first prominent Chinese scholar to study Virginia Woolf's works, Qu undertook his translation project in 1988. He was a specialist in Woolf's literature, particularly in the stream-of-consciousness style, central to her writing (Qiu, 2019). Qu's expertise is demonstrated through his publications of two monographs: *Woolf, a Novelist of Stream of Consciousness* (《意识流小说家伍尔夫》) and *Music, Art, and Literature: a Comparative Study of Stream of Consciousness Novels* (《音乐、艺术与文学：意识流小说比较研究》). Qu's translation was published in 1988, during the early period of China's reform and opening-up. At that time, women's liberation was gaining traction across the country. However, patriarchal culture, which had long held sway in Chinese society, influenced various aspects of everyday life (Zhang, 2021). His translation and studies contributed to re-introducing and re-interpreting Woolf's work within a Chinese context.

Ma Ainong published her translation of *To the Lighthouse* in 2003. Feminist translation theory had been introduced to China in the 1980s; however, it was not until the 1990s that

scholars and critics began to examine Virginia Woolf's works from a feminist perspective (Jin, 2009). The turning point came with the 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing, where women's rights took centre stage, sparking an increase in literature which focused on women's issues. This event further fuelled discussions on gender equality and encouraged more scholarly attention to feminist themes (Li, 2017). Against this backdrop, Ma Ainong's translation was part of a broader movement to re-contextualise Woolf's work within this evolving feminist landscape, resonating with the shifting attitudes towards gender equality and women's empowerment (Qiu, 2019).

Li Xiaoyan, Tian Zezhong, and Meng Yuanning published their translation—the fourth selected here—in 2017. During this period, feminist activism gained momentum through social media and online communication platforms. Since 2012, feminist activists have actively engaged in public spaces, using social media to raise awareness and drive conversations about gender equality. This activism reached a peak in 2018, due to the rise of anti-sexual harassment campaigns inspired by the MeToo movement, further amplifying feminist voices and creating a broader platform for discussing women's rights and related issues.

4.2.2 Analytical Approach

The study focuses on the translational shifts observed in the four Chinese translations selected, in order to identify critical patterns and examine specific translation choices. As Chapter 2 describes, a corpus-based approach is used to explore the feminist ideas in *To the Lighthouse* and to determine each translation's distinctive features. This approach involves a detailed and systematic text analysis to uncover how feminist themes are conveyed across different translations.

According to the procedure outlined in Chapter 2, the research design and data preparation have been completed. This process has included aligning the texts at the sentence level to compare the translations accurately. Sentences with feminist ideas have been tagged, allowing for a focused analysis of themes. This tagging process is crucial, as it identifies specific instances where feminist concepts are highlighted, downplayed or altered in translation. With the research design and data preparation now complete, I will proceed here with the data analysis.

The analytical methodology employed in this study is designed to leverage the capabilities of advanced software tools—NVivo, LancBox, and Wordsmith 6—to organise

translational shifts. This approach enhances the precision of the analysis and ensures a comprehensive evaluation of the textual data under consideration. The analysis will reveal the distinct features of each translation and contribute to a deeper understanding of how *To the Lighthouse* has been interpreted through a feminist lens in different Chinese translations.

NVivo plays a significant role in this research framework. Its code-creation feature allows for the organisation of the sentences from the source text and the translated versions, categorising them into a structured hierarchy of codes and child codes. In NVivo, codes are tags assigned to data segments representing specific themes or concepts, in which helps to categorise and identify patterns within qualitative data. Child codes, or 'sub-codes', are more specific categories under a broader parent code, allowing for detailed and nuanced analysis. This hierarchical structure organises data effectively and facilitates deeper analysis and interpretation of patterns and themes.

Regarding the procedure for tagging the codes, I followed a systematic approach. First, I read the source text, making notes on sentences with feminist ideas and identifying initial headings and themes. Subsequently, I created a pre-defined file classification, importing the prepared sources into NVivo and including the source text and four translations; I then established codes for sentences with feminist ideas, along with such child codes as women's domestic expectations in housework and social roles, traditional expectations on marriage, women's appearance and women's intellectual achievements, based on my initial notes. Next, I meticulously tagged and segmented the source text and translations according to these codes. Throughout this process, I utilised the memo and annotation features in NVivo to document my thought processes and insights. As I progressed, I refined the codes by merging and separating them as necessary.

The feminist ideas within the corpus have been categorised into four sub-nodes with distinct themes, representing various dimensions of women's experiences and societal perceptions. The first code addresses the contrast between feminist perspective of marriage and traditional perspective of marriage. For example, I tagged the sentence: "An unmarried woman (Mrs. Ramsay lightly took her hand for a moment), an unmarried woman has missed the best of life. Oh, but, Lily would say, there was her father; her home; even, had she dared to say it, her painting." This sentence highlights the differing perspectives of Lily and Mrs. Ramsay, showcasing the tension between traditional views on women's marriage and newer, more progressive thinking. The second code pertains to domestic responsibilities associated with gender roles, including housework, social activities and providing emotional caregiving. For instance, I tagged the sentence: "He liked that men should labour and sweat on the windy beach at night; pitting muscle and brain against the waves and the wind; he liked men to work

like that, and women to keep house, and sit beside sleeping children indoors, while men were drowned, out there in a storm." This sentence encapsulates traditional gender expectations, indicating that women should care for children while men engage in strenuous labour. The third code pertains to intellectual recognition and achievement. For example, I tagged the sentence: "Women can't write, women can't paint—what did that matter coming from him, since clearly, it was not true to him but for some reason helpful to him, and that was why he said it." This sentence highlights societal prejudices against women's intellectual capabilities and achievements. The fourth code addresses the appreciation of women's appearance. For example, I tagged the sentence: "He wondered if she understood what she was reading. Probably not, he thought. She was astonishingly beautiful. Her beauty seemed to him, if possible, to increase." This sentence illustrates an instance where Mrs. Ramsay's appearance is emphasised, reflecting societal tendencies to value women primarily for their beauty.

Additionally, the integration of Corpus analysis tools and Wordsmith 6, complements the Nvivo framework by offering specialised functionalities for textual analysis. These tools are adept at dissecting the corpus data about the source text and four translations to reveal linguistic patterns, frequency distributions, collocations and keyword contexts, thereby enriching the analytical depth of the study, as Table 4.2 shows:

	Source text	T1 Xie Qingyao (1946)	T2 Qu Shijing (1988)	T3 Ma Ainong (2003)	T4: Li Xiaoyan, Tian Zezhong & Meng Yuanning (2017)
Wordcount	57,874	31,084	140,057	124,686	126,662
The total of sentences	3,848	1,435	3,802	3,750	5,353
Average sentence length	15.04	21.66	36.83	33.25	23.66
Sentences with feminist ideas	112	17	138	124	192

Average feminist sentence length	20.72	23.92	40.85	35.71	30.38
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Table 4. 2 Statistics of sentences with feminist ideas

Table 4.2 reveals notable differences in the word count, sentence length, and the emphasis on feminist ideas. The table can help discuss the intricacies of translating feminist ideas from a source text into different target texts, highlighting the variation in translation strategies and their impact on the representation of these ideas.

The source text features 57,874 words and an average sentence length of 15.04 words, with 112 sentences containing feminist ideas averaging 20.72 words each. Xie Qingyao's (1946) translation is the most concise, with 31,084 words and the shortest and fewest feminist sentences, 17 sentences averaging 23.92 words, which particularly striking and emphasises what my analysis as a whole reveal: that Xie's translation is not faithful to Woolf's feminist ideas. Qu Shijing's (1988) translation is the most verbose, with 140,057 words and the longest average sentence length of 36.83 words, including 138 feminist sentences averaging 40.85 words, which may reduce readability. Ma Ainong's (2003) translation balances detail with readability, presenting 124,686 words and 124 feminist sentences averaging 35.71 words. The 2017 translation by Li Xiaoyan, Tian Zezhong, and Meng Yuanning stands out for its highest number of sentences (5,353), with 192 feminist sentences averaging 30.38 words, indicating a detailed and segmented approach.

Additionally, Table 4.3 lists the number of sentences with feminist ideas in the source text, categorised into four codes with distinct themes generated using the NVivo node creation feature. The table can help to establish the themes for the case study. Considering space and word-count limitations, I will choose the top three themes for qualitative analysis: the domestic responsibilities of gender roles, the feminist perspective of marriage versus the traditional perspective of marriage, and intellectual recognition and achievement.

Themes	Domestic responsibilities of gender roles	Feminist perspective VS. Non-	Intellectual recognition and achievement	The appreciation of women's appearance
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		feminist perspective		
Sentences	45	32	20	15

Table 4. 3 The number of sentences with feminist ideas in the four child codes

Tables 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6 show the number of sentences and the complexity of three sub-themes: the domestic responsibilities associated with gender roles, the feminist perspective of marriage versus the non-feminist (traditional) perspective of marriage, and intellectual recognition and achievement. Regarding domestic responsibilities of gender roles, the source text has 45 sentences with an average length of 18.44 words. The translations vary significantly in sentence count and complexity. Xie Qingyao's translation is the shortest and simplest, with seven sentences averaging 20.02 words. In contrast, Qu Shijing has the longest average sentence length of 34.57 words. From the feminist perspective of marriage vs traditional perspective of marriage, the source text has 32 sentences with an average length of 17.38 words. Xie Qingyao's translation again has the fewest sentences (5) with the lowest average length of 29.21 words among the translations. Qu Shijing's translation has the highest average length of 38.08 words, which indicates that Qu's translation is the most verbose. The translation by Li Xiaoyan, Tian Zezhong, and Meng Yuanning (2017) stands out for its sentence count of 53, implying a preference for more segmented and more precise sentences. Ma Ainong's (2003) translation balances the sentences by averaging a length of 35.71 words. In addition, intellectual recognition and achievement are discussed in 20 sentences in the source text, with an average length of 20.45 words. Xie Qingyao's translation is the briefest, with only three sentences, whereas Qu Shijing's and Li Xiaoyan et al.'s translations provide more detailed and complex discussions with 24 and 34 sentences respectively. The average sentence lengths are highest in Qu Shijing's translation (40.21 words), indicating a detailed exploration of intellectual recognition themes.

Domestic responsibilities associated with gender roles	Source text	T1 Xie Qingyao (1946)	T2 Qu Shijing (1988)	T3 Ma Ainong (2003)	T4: Li Xiaoyan, Tian Zezhong & Meng Yuanning (2017)
Sentences in total	45	7	56	52	79

Average sentence length	18.44	20.02	34.57	33.59	34.31
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Table 4. 4 Statistics of sentences with feminist ideas of Domestic responsibilities of gender roles

Feminist perspective VS. Non-feminist perspective	Source text	T1 Xie Qingyao (1946)	T2 Qu Shijing (1988)	T3 Ma Ainong (2003)	T4: Li Xiaoyan, Tian Zezhong & Meng Yuanning (2017)
Sentences in total	32	5	39	35	53
Average sentence length	17.38	29.21	38.08	35.83	36.67

Table 4. 5 Statistics of sentences with feminist ideas of Feminist perspective VS. Non-feminist perspective

Intellectual recognition and achievement	Source text	T1 Xie Qingyao (1946)	T2 Qu Shijing (1988)	T3 Ma Ainong (2003)	T4: Li Xiaoyan, Tian Zezhong & Meng Yuanning (2017)
Sentences in total	20	3	24	21	34
Average sentence length	20.45	22.33	40.21	37.53	39.42

Table 4. 6 Statistics of sentences with feminist ideas of Intellectual recognition and achievement

These quantitative insights highlight the translators' strategies in rendering the source text's complexity and feminist themes. For example, in Table 4.2, while translating 112 sentences with feminist ideas from the source text, Xie employs a deletion strategy, translating only 31,084 words and the shortest feminist sentences—17 in total—and Tables 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6 further confirm the tendency of his translation to be concise across the three themes. Qu has the longest average sentence length of 36.83 words in Table 4.2, with the longest average feminist sentence reaching 40.85 words. This verbosity may be due to the use of methods like

addition and adjusting word order to provide more detailed discussions. Furthermore, Li, Tian, and Meng's translation features the greatest number of sentences, nearly four times as many as Xie's, and they also have the highest count of sentences expressing feminist ideas. This may be attributed to their approach of adding content and dividing sentences, which results in a more extensive and detailed translation. Tables 4.2, 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6 prove that Ma's translation balances sentence count and complexity.

4.3 Analysis

As discussed in Chapter 2, translation is a complex task which involves transforming information and statements from one language to another. This process requires a deep understanding of the intricate relationships between languages, which can vary significantly in terms of grammar, vocabulary and cultural nuances (Catford, 1965). In this sense, translating Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* into Chinese presents translators with various challenges beyond mere language and style. In other words, they must navigate cultural and socio-political contexts which influence how the text is interpreted and understood in the target language. Chapter 2 discussed Gideon Toury's (1995) distinction between 'obligatory' and 'optional translation shifts'. Obligatory shifts refer to necessary changes resulting from formal differences between the languages of the source and target texts. Optional shifts denote discretionary changes which reflect the translator's decision-making process and their choices of translation strategies, emphasising the relation of sociocultural and economic factors to motivated linguistic choices. The study explores how Chinese translators' historical and cultural backgrounds influence their interpretation of and choices in translating Woolf's feminist concepts so that the analysis will pay more attention to optional shifts.

4.3.1 Case Study 1: Feminist Perspective of Marriage VS. Traditional Perspective of Marriage

In *To the Lighthouse*, Virginia Woolf examines gender roles and gender binaries through the interactions of the Ramsay family and their guests. Mrs. Ramsay embodies the traditional female role of the nurturing wife and mother. She is deeply invested in her domestic responsibilities, ensuring the well-being of her husband and children and often playing the role of matchmaker. Mrs. Ramsay believes that "there could be no disputing this: an unmarried woman has missed the best of life" (Woolf, 1927, p.40). In other words, she believes that

women find their true value through marriage and family life. Her character symbolises the conventional expectations of women to be selfless caretakers and moral anchors within the home (Chaudhary, 2018). In contrast, Lily Briscoe, an independent artist, represents a challenge to the traditional expectations placed on women by pursuing her artistic ambitions and valuing her individuality over the conventional roles of marriage. She declares that “there was her father; her home; even, had she dared to say it, her painting” and “she liked to be alone; she liked to be herself” (Woolf, 1927, p.40). Her character is marked by her resistance to societal pressures to marry and conform to conventional expectations of femininity. Exploring two characters reveals a significant shift in the perception of gender roles during the early 20th century. Example 1 underscores this comparison in the perception of gendered roles, which occurs when Lily gathers the courage to assert her desire for independence and exemption from traditional roles. Woolf describes Lily thus: “Gathering a desperate courage, she would urge her own exemption from the universal law; plead for it; she liked to be alone; she liked to be herself; she was not made for that” (ibid, p.40). This moment highlights her preference for solitude and self-reliance, contrasting with the path that Mrs. Ramsay believes is appropriate for women. In this sense, Mrs. Ramsay believes that Lily is making a mistake, which is evident in Lily’s refusal to marry on the grounds that she believes it is foolish.

Example 1:

“Gathering a desperate courage she would urge her own exemption from the universal law; plead for it; she liked to be alone; she liked to be herself; she was not made for that; and so have to meet a serious stare from eyes of unparalleled depth, and confront Mrs. Ramsay’s simple certainty (and she was childlike now) that her dear Lily, her little Brisk, was a fool (Woolf, 1927, p.40).”

In the context of Example 1, Lily Briscoe admires Mrs. Ramsay and values her influence over those around her. She believes that Mrs. Ramsay is a central and iconic figure in their social lives. Lily thinks: “Could loving, as people called it, make her and Mrs. Ramsay one? for it was not knowledge but unity that she desired, not inscriptions on tablets, nothing that could be written in any language known to men, but intimacy itself, which is knowledge” (Woolf, 1927, p.39). However, significant contrasts between them highlight their differing perspectives and choices. Example 1 shows that Lily Briscoe is struggling internally with societal expectations, represented by Mrs. Ramsay’s traditional views about marriage. This interaction between Lily and Mrs. Ramsay exemplifies the ideological and generational divide between the characters, illustrating the transformative shift in societal attitudes towards gender roles (Crater, 1996). Lily’s determination to remain unmarried, despite Mrs. Ramsay’s

disapproval, reflects her commitment to personal freedom and her dedication to her art. Woolf uses Lily to critique the restrictive nature of traditional gender roles and to celebrate the emerging possibilities for women to define their own identities and to pursue their ambitions independently. In this sense, Chinese translators need to balance translation shifts between fidelity and the need to resonate feminist ideas with Chinese audiences. The four translations have different treatments.

source text	"Gathering a desperate courage, she would urge her own exemption from the universal law; plead for it; she liked to be alone; she liked to be herself; she was not made for that; and so have to meet a serious stare from eyes of unparalleled depth, and confront Mrs. Ramsay's simple certainty (and she was childlike now) that her dear Lily, her little Brisk, was a fool (Woolf, 1927, p.40)."	
Translator	Target text	Literal translation
T1 Xie Qingyao (1946).	她说她是一个老处女，她喜欢孤独；她天生就不是结婚和生子女的。她觉得雷姆赛夫人相当的专横（她想到雷姆赛夫人对待同性的手腕，无其是待她---一个年青而没地位的女子---的高傲态度）	She said she is an old virgin, she likes solitude; she was not born for marriage and having children. She thinks Mrs. Ramsay is rather domineering (she thought of Mrs. Ramsay's tactics in dealing with the same sex, especially her - a young and unimportant woman - with an arrogant attitude).
T2 Qu Shijing (1988)	她拚命鼓足勇气，竭力主张她本人应该排除在这普遍的规律之外，这是她所祈求的命运；她喜欢独身；她喜欢保持自己的本色，她生来就是要作老处女的；这样，她就不得不遇到拉姆齐夫人无比深邃的双目严厉的一瞥，不得不当面聆	She bent over backwards to muster her courage and insisted that she herself should be excluded from this universal rule, that this was the fate she prayed for; she liked being single; she liked maintaining her true self, she was born to be an old virgin;

	听拉姆齐夫人坦率的教诲(她现在简直像个孩子);她亲爱的莉莉, 她的小布里斯库, 可真是个小傻瓜。	thus, she had to face Mrs. Ramsay's deeply profound and severe gaze, had to listen to Mrs. Ramsay's frank teachings (she was now just like a child); her dear Lily, her little Briscoe, was indeed a little fool.
T3 Ma Ainong (2003)	这时她鼓起全部的勇气, 强调自己不受常规的制约; 她竭力解释她愿意孑然一身; 她愿意无牵无挂; 常规对她来讲不合适; 于是她不得不面对拉姆齐夫人那双无比深邃的眼睛对她的深深凝视, 不得不接受拉姆齐夫人简单而自信的推断(她现在真像个孩子):她的亲爱的莉莉、她的小布里斯科真是个小傻瓜。	At this moment, she summoned all her courage, emphasizing that she was not bound by conventions; she tried hard to explain that she was willing to remain alone; she wanted to be free from any attachments; conventions were not suitable for her; thus, she had to face Mrs. Ramsay's profoundly deep gaze, had to accept Mrs. Ramsay's simple and confident conclusion (she now really seemed like a child): her dear Lily, her little Briscoe, was indeed a fool.
T4: Li Xiaoyan, Tian Zezhong & Meng Yuanning (2017)	她鼓起最后一丝勇气, 让自己做一个普世定律的例外, 她恳求做一个例外; 她喜欢单身生活; 她喜欢做她自己; 她天生就不该结婚; 所以她不得不面对拉姆齐夫人那深邃、严肃的眼神, 面对拉姆齐夫人对自己的简单判断(她现在就像个天真的孩子),认为她亲爱的	She summoned her last bit of courage to make herself an exception to the universal rule, she pleaded to be an exception; she liked single life; she liked being herself; she was not born to get married; thus, she had to face Mrs. Ramsay's profound and serious gaze, face Mrs. Ramsay's simple judgment of

	莉莉，她的小布里斯科，真是太傻了。	her (she now seemed like an innocent child), thinking her dear Lily, her little Briscoe, was really too foolish
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Table 4. 7 Chinese translations of example 1.

In T1, Xie Qingyao (1946) completely rewrites the source text and does not maintain fidelity, incorporating the translator's interpretations, understandings, and even biases. The translation of the sentence "Gathering a desperate courage she would urge her own exemption from the universal law; plead for it" is directly deleted. Additionally, Xie translates the sentence "she liked to be alone; she liked to be herself; she was not made for that" into "她说她是一个老处女，她喜欢孤独；她天生就不是结婚和生子女的" ("She said she is an old virgin, she likes solitude; she was not born for marriage and having children"). In this translation, Xie uses the addition method to summarise and augment a key phrase, 老处女 ("old virgin"). The term "处女" ("virgin") refers to a woman who has not engaged in sexual activity. In many cultures, including traditional Chinese culture, the term can carry moral or purity connotations, often connected with the word "chastity", which refers to the quality or state of being chaste, as defined in the dictionary. It has historically been used to bind women to stringent moral and social standards. Particularly in ancient China, there were extremely harsh expectations surrounding a woman's chastity. Women were expected to maintain their virginity until marriage or face punishment, and their moral worth was often judged based on their adherence to these expectations. The addition of "老" ("old") to "处女" ("virgin") introduces a negative connotation, implying not just age but also a sense of missing out on societal expectations of marriage and motherhood. Referring to someone as "老处女" ("old virgin") can be offensive because it reduces a person to their sexual status, perpetuating the idea that their worth is tied to their sexual behaviour, and it is especially problematic when used to judge or label someone.

Xie's translation of "she liked to be alone; she liked to be herself; she was not made for that" into "她喜欢孤独；她天生就不是结婚和生子女的" ("she likes solitude; she was not born for marriage and having children") uses a rewriting method which incorporates his own

interpretations and the cultural connotations associated with being an “老处女” (“old virgin”). Moreover, Xie completely substitutes the source text “and so have to meet a serious stare from eyes of unparalleled depth, and confront Mrs. Ramsay’s simple certainty (and she was childlike now) that her dear Lily, her little Brisk, was a fool” into “她觉得雷姆赛夫人相当的专横 (她想到雷姆赛夫人对待同性的手腕, 无其是待她---一个年青而没地位的女子---的高傲态度)” (“She thought Mrs. Ramsay is rather domineering [she thought of Mrs. Ramsay’s tactics in dealing with the same sex, especially her - a young and unimportant woman - with an arrogant attitude]”). As mentioned in the dataset section, Xie translated Woolf’s *To the Lighthouse* in 1946, a time before the establishment of the People’s Republic of China. During this era, exposure to foreign intellectual movements was limited, and Western feminist perspectives, along with feminist translation theory or practice, had not yet been introduced to China (not until the 1990s). Because of this, Xie acknowledges in his translation preface that there is a limited understanding of such works among the people, and he cannot fully convey the original text’s merits. Additionally, he notes that many phrases in the book exceed his capabilities as a translator, leading him to omit certain sections to maintain consistency. Therefore, while translating this phrase, Xie uses rewriting and omitting methods to reflect the translator’s judgments and bias, significantly altering the source text’s tone and meaning. This sentence describes an external observation of Mrs Ramsay’s demeanour and its effect on the character, maintaining a certain narrative distance. Xie’s translation shifts to an internal perspective, presenting the character’s personal judgment of Mrs Ramsay’s behaviour and attitudes. This shift moves from free indirect discourse to indirect thought or report of thought. Xie’s choice to describe Mrs. Ramsay as “专横” (“domineering”) and to emphasise her “高傲态度” (“arrogant attitude”) reflects his own interpretation and preferences of the character dynamics. Xie strips away the nuanced portrayal of Mrs. Ramsay’s character and the subtle complexity of Lily’s perception, focusing on Mrs. Ramsay’s domineering and arrogant attitude, emphasising a more one-dimensional view, and thus diminishing the richness of Woolf’s narrative voice. This approach simplifies and transforms the original, nuanced interaction into a more straightforward critique of Mrs Ramsay’s personality. In all, Xie’s translation alters the source text’s tone, depth and type, resulting in a loss of nuance and a shift in the reader’s perception.

In T2, Qu Shijing’s translation (1988) is characterised by underplaying the tone in the source text or even misreading the interpretation of Woolf’s narrative irony. Qu also rewrites the phrase “she was not made for that” as “她生来就是要作老处女的” (“she was born to be an old virgin²), a term discussed in T1, which often carries a negative judgment about personal life choices and circumstances. The source text emphasises Lily’s courage and self-assurance

and highlights Lily's positive affirmation of her identity and brave stance against societal norms. As previously mentioned, Qu Shijing's translation was completed in 1988, during a period when feminist translation theory was being introduced to China, and the women's liberation movement was gaining momentum nationwide. However, patriarchal culture, deeply rooted in Chinese society, continued to influence many aspects of everyday life. Qu has been influenced by Xie, a leading Western modernist writer, who translated the first version, solidifying Virginia Woolf's reputation in China. In this sense, Qu's translation “老处女” (“old virgin”) carries an inherent societal judgment, potentially overshadowing Lily's expression's positive and self-affirming nature. Furthermore, Qu mistranslates “confront Mrs. Ramsay's simple certainty” as “聆听拉姆齐夫人坦率的教诲” (“listen to Mrs. Ramsay's frank teachings”); this highlights Mrs. Ramsay's unwavering and somewhat condescending judgment of Lily. The term “simple certainty” is ironic because it indicates Mrs. Ramsay's firm but potentially naive belief that Lily is a fool. This judgment is not meant to be taken as wise or knowledgeable but rather as a reflection of Mrs Ramsay's narrow perspective. The word “教诲” (“teachings”) suggests imparting wisdom or knowledge, typically positively or constructively, and “聆听” (“listen to”) positions Lily as more passive. Qu's translation implies that Mrs. Ramsay is providing valuable lessons or guidance, which contrasts sharply with the source text's portrayal of her judgment as simplistic and dismissive. In all, Qu's translation underplays, even mistranslates, the ironic and judgmental nature of the source text, which shifts the reader's perception and alters the intended narrative tone.

In T3, Ma Ainong's translation (2003) is characterised by its adherence to and enhancement of the source text's meaning and tone. She carefully preserves the narrative's integrity, ensuring that the nuances and subtleties of the source text are resonant. As previously mentioned, Ma Ainong's translation was completed in 2003, following the 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing, where women's rights took centre stage, leading to a surge in literature focused on women's issues. This event further fuelled discussions on gender equality and encouraged greater scholarly attention to feminist themes. Influenced by this environment, Ma consciously emphasised and enhanced the ironic tone present in the source text when translating feminist sentences. For example, the phrase “Gathering a desperate courage” is translated as “鼓起全部的勇气” (“summoned all her courage”); this stresses the positive attitude and emphasises Lily's bravery and determination. Ma reorganises the sentence structure of “she would urge her own exemption from the universal law” as “强调自己不受常规的制约” (“emphasising that she was not bound by conventions”);

this creates an emphasis on Lily's rejection of societal norms, shifting the focus to the noun "常规" ("conventions") and the verb "不受" ("not bound by"). Ma's translation implies that Lily's exemption from conventions is an existing situation, whereas the source text suggests that she is still striving to achieve this exemption; the subtle shift from striving towards exemption to an established resistance changes the character's portrayal. This restructuring enhances the narrative tone by highlighting Lily's defiance against societal expectations. In tackling the phrase "she was not made for that," Ma rewrites it as "常规对她来讲不合适" ("conventions were not suitable for her"), which resonates with the earlier mention, reinforcing that societal norms do not apply to Lily. In other words, the translated version implies that the conventions are the problem rather than Lily, which proves even more of a positive feminist message. Ma maintains thematic consistency using a similar structure and vocabulary, stressing that social norms cannot constrain Lily. To sum up, Ma's translation emphasises courage, and the rejection of conventions portrays Lily as a determined and brave character, reinforcing the feminist message of the source text.

T4 Li Xiaoyan, Tian Zezhong, and Meng Yuanning (2017) maintain fidelity to the source text while enriching the translation with layers of meaning and broader feminist themes. As mentioned, their translation, published in 2017, emerged during a period of heightened feminist activism in China, largely propelled by the widespread use of social media and digital communication platforms. This era marked a significant shift in how feminist ideas were communicated and embraced, influencing various cultural and intellectual discourse aspects, including translation practices. For instance, in translating "Gathering a desperate courage," T4 opts for "鼓起最后一丝勇气" ("summoned her last bit of courage"). The addition of the adjective "最后一丝" ("last bit of") adds a sense of finality and exhaustion. It emphasises that Lily is continuously summoning courage and pushing herself to her limits, even to the very last bit, which further highlights her resilience and strength. T4's translation of "she was not made for that" into "她天生就不该结婚" ("she was not born to get married") uses addition and rewriting methods to provide clarity and context. By adding "结婚" ("get married"), T4 clarifies the specific social convention that Lily is resisting. In the source text, Mrs. Ramsay's judgment of Lily as a fool is rooted in her belief that Lily's refusal to marry is foolish and contrary to what she perceives as a woman's natural role. Mrs. Ramsay's "simple certainty" about the necessity of marriage for women drives her condescending view of Lily. By translating the phrase to include "结婚" ("get married"), T4 effectively captures the reason behind Mrs. Ramsay's judgement. It clarifies that Lily's perceived foolishness is directly linked to her resistance to the

expectation of marriage. T4's translation thus reflects and reinforces the feminist themes by emphasising Lily's continuous struggle and ultimate bravery and by highlighting Lily's autonomy and her rejection of a life path defined by patriarchal norms.

To summarise, while translating Example 1, Xie Qingyao (1946) significantly alters the source text's tone, depth and type, incorporating the translator's interpretations, understandings and even biases. For example, Xie shifts to present the character's judgment of Mrs Ramsay's behaviour and attitudes, which modifies the tone and injects a subjective viewpoint which is not present in the original. In T2, Qu Shijing's translation (1988) downplays the tone and misinterprets Woolf's narrative irony. For example, Qu misrepresents the ironic tone, suggesting that Mrs. Ramsay offers valuable lessons. In T3, Ma Ainong's translation (2003) preserves and modifies the source text's meaning and tone. She carefully maintains the narrative's nuances and subtleties. In T4, Li Xiaoyan, Tian Zezhong and Meng Yuanning (2017) remain faithful to the source text while enriching feminist themes.

4.3.2 Case Study 2: Domestic Responsibilities Associated with Gender Roles

To the Lighthouse offers a profound critique of the entrenched gender roles of the early 20th century, particularly regarding housework, social activities and emotional caregiving - all through a feminist lens. The novel portrays the rigid expectations placed on women to manage domestic responsibilities, to facilitate social interactions and to provide emotional support, often at the expense of their own aspirations and well-being (Khirsat, 2012). Housework is depicted as the realm of women, especially through the character of Mrs. Ramsay, who is shown managing the household, caring for her children and ensuring the comfort of her husband and guests. This portrayal underscores the societal expectation that women should find fulfilment and identity in domestic labour, while men like Mr Ramsay are largely absent from these tasks, emphasising a gendered division of labour where intellectual and professional pursuits are reserved for men (Daugherty, 1991). Social activities further reinforce these roles, with women expected to be facilitators and nurturers, orchestrating gatherings to ensure social harmony while men engage in discussions and activities which highlight their intellectual capabilities (Seshagiri, 2004). Emotional caregiving is also predominantly the responsibility of women, with Mrs. Ramsay serving as the emotional anchor for her family, constantly attuned to the needs and feelings of others, in contrast to Mr. Ramsay's emotional detachment and reliance on his wife for validation and support (Caputo, 2021). Through these portrayals, Woolf critiques the patriarchal structures which confine women to supportive roles and which advocate for greater recognition of women's contributions and autonomy. For

instance, characters like Lily Briscoe, who defies traditional roles by pursuing her passion for painting, represent Woolf's advocacy for female autonomy and the pursuit of personal fulfilment beyond societal expectations. In Example 2, Lily comments on the societal "code of behaviour" which gives a mandate to women to prioritise men's needs, even at the expense of their own pursuits, as it shows:

Example 2:

"There is a code of behaviour, she knew, whose seventh article (it may be) says that on occasions of this sort, it behoves the woman, whatever her own occupation might be, to go to the help of the young man opposite so that he may expose and relieve the thigh bones, the ribs, of his vanity, of his urgent desire to assert himself; as indeed it is their duty, she reflected, in her old maidenly fairness, to help us, suppose the Tube were to burst into flames (Woolf, 1927, p.73)."

This scene unfolds during a dinner where Mr. Tansley feels out of place and desperate to assert himself in the conversation. Lily Briscoe perceives his discomfort and the societal pressure of the "code of behaviour" for her to help him, reflecting on the ingrained belief that women should facilitate men's self-expression. However, because Mr. Tansley looks down on Lily, dismissing women's abilities to paint and write, she recalls how he sneered at women, saying they "can't paint, can't write," and questions, "why should I help him to relieve himself?" (Woolf, 1927, p.73). She resists this expectation, questioning why she should assist someone who undermines women's talents. This internal conflict illustrates Woolf's critique of the "code of behaviour" which gives a mandate to women to subordinate their activities to support men's vanity and self-assertion. While translating this internal conflict, the four translations have different translation shifts.

Source text	"There is a code of behaviour, she knew, whose seventh article (it may be)says that on occasions of this sort, it behoves the woman, whatever her own occupation might be, to go to the help of the young man opposite so that he may expose and relieve the thigh bones, the ribs, of his vanity, of his urgent desire to assert himself; as indeed it is their duty, she reflected, in her old maidenly fairness, to help us, suppose the Tube were to burst into flames (Woolf, 1927, p.73)."
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Translator	Target text	Literal translation
T1 Xie Qingyao (1946).	坐在他对面的丽莲早已觉出他那压制不住的冲动。想到他的”女人不能写作；女人不能绘画谬论”，她的同情心不禁又冷淡下去。为什么要帮助他呢？因此她就对他微笑了一下。	Lilian, who was sitting opposite him, had long noticed his uncontrollable impulse. Thinking of his absurd theory that "women can't write; women can't paint," her sympathy for him cooled down. Why help him? So she just gave him a slight smile.
T2 Qu Shijing (1988)	她知道有这么一套行为的准则，(也许是)它的第七条说，遇到这种情况，一位妇女，不论她的职业地位如何，她有义务去帮助对面那位青年男子，使他能够显示出那象肋骨和腿骨一般深藏不露的虚荣心，满足他要求表现自己的迫切欲望；她用老处女公平合理的态度来考虑问题，觉得这好比他们男性的确有责任来帮助我们女性，假如地下铁道爆炸起火的话，那么，她想，我肯定会盼望塔斯莱先生来救我出去。	She knew there was such a set of behavioral guidelines, (perhaps) its seventh rule saying that in this situation, a woman, regardless of her professional status, had the obligation to help the young man opposite her, enabling him to reveal his deeply hidden vanity, like ribs and leg bones, and satisfy his urgent desire to express himself. She considered the matter with the fair and reasonable attitude of an old maid, feeling it was similar to the responsibility men indeed have to help women. For instance, if the subway exploded and caught fire, then, she thought, I would certainly expect Mr. Tansley to rescue me.

T3 Ma Ainong (2003)	她知道，世界上有一部行为准则，其中第七条款(大概是吧)规定，遇到这种情况，应该由女人——不管她从事的是什么职业——去帮助对面的年轻男子，让他像肋骨和腿骨一样深藏着的虚荣心和强烈自我表现欲得到表现、得到解脱；她用老处女特有的公平合理的态度设想着；而如果地铁里起火，他们就有义务帮助我们逃生。	She knew that there was a code of conduct in the world, and its seventh rule (probably) stipulated that in such situations, it should be the woman—regardless of her profession—who helps the young man opposite her, allowing his deeply hidden vanity and strong desire for self-expression, like ribs and leg bones, to be displayed and relieved. She imagined this with the fairness and reasonableness typical of an old maid; and if a fire broke out in the subway, they would have the obligation to help us escape.
T4: Li Xiaoyan, Tian Zezhong & Meng Yuanning (2017)	她知道有一种行为准则，其中第七条(大概是)说，在这种情况下，无论女人当时在做什么，都理应去帮助对面那个年轻人，看穿他将肋骨和腿骨掩藏起来的虚荣心和表现自己的强烈愿望，缓解他的焦虑之情；同样，假使地铁突然起火，她以老处女式的公正想道，他们也有义务来救我们。	She knew there was a code of conduct, and its seventh rule (probably) said that in such situations, no matter what a woman was doing, she ought to help the young man opposite her, seeing through his vanity and strong desire to express himself, hidden ribs and leg bones, and alleviating his anxiety. Similarly, if the subway suddenly caught fire, she thought with the fairness typical of an old maid, they would have the obligation to rescue us.

Table 4. 8 Chinese translations of Example 2.

T1 Xie Qingyao (1946) deviates from the source text, emphasising his interpretations rather than maintaining fidelity by omitting its content and cross-references to other parts of the text. To maintain consistency, Xie chooses to omit certain sections when confronted with phrases in the book which exceed his translation abilities (Xie, Preface). While translating Example 2, Xie uses the methods of rewriting, omitting and cross-referencing to other parts of the text to achieve cohesion. The "code of behaviour" mentioned in the passage symbolises the rigid and unwritten rules governing social interactions, particularly between men and women. Woolf suggests that these rules compel women to subordinate their own needs and actions to support men in their desire to showcase their vanity and assert their dominance. In contrast, Xie's translation omits this nuanced reflection, focusing instead on Lillian's reaction to the man's sexist belief that "women can't write; women can't paint." This shift reduces the complexity of the internal struggle and social commentary, replacing it with a direct response to sexism and a simple action of giving a slight smile. Consequently, the translation proposes an opposite and more radical meaning that Lily is unprepared to 'help' Tansley, whereas the source text ironically concedes that this is a reasonable request, focusing more on immediate reactions rather than broader societal norms and personal duty.

While translating Example 2, T2 Qu Shijing's translation features underplay the source text's meaning. Qu translates the phrase "whatever her occupation might be, to go to the help of the young man opposite" as "一位妇女，不论她的职业地位如何，她有义务去帮助对面那位青年男子" ("a woman, regardless of her professional status, had an obligation to help the young man opposite her"). This translation mistranslates "whatever her occupation might be" into "职业("job") 地位("status")." In the source text, Woolf emphasises that even if the woman is occupied with something important or meaningful to her, this "code" dictates that she should set it aside to assist a man, reinforcing the idea of women's subordination to men. The phrase "whatever her occupation might be" in Woolf's text can be interpreted as referring to "whatever women are doing at that moment" because in the early 20th century, when Woolf was writing, women had few opportunities to engage in professional work, and the societal expectation was that women primarily fulfilled the roles of housewives and mothers, rather than pursuing careers or personal ambitions outside the home. Qu used the addition method to add "义务" ("obligation"), suggesting a moral or societal duty to reinforce the idea that this expectation is a cultural norm and a duty imposed upon women, and they are bound by this obligation to prioritise men's needs over their own.

Further, Qu's translation of "as indeed it is their duty, she reflected to help us, suppose the Tube were to burst into flames" introduces additional content and a specific

example. Qu translates it as "她.....觉得这好比他们男性的确有责任来帮助我们女性，假如地下铁道爆炸起火的话，那么，她想，我肯定会盼望塔斯莱先生来救我出去 ("She considered it was similar to the responsibility men indeed have to help women. For instance, if the subway exploded and caught fire, I would certainly expect Mr. Tansley to rescue me")." The phrase in the source text ironically introduces the idea that men also have a societal duty: to protect and rescue women in life-threatening situations, such as if "the Tube were to burst into flames." This contrasts with the expectation placed on women, which is to assist men in something as superficial as exposing their vanity and self-assertion. The irony is that while women are expected to subordinate their needs and actions to support men in their desires, a man's duty is framed as heroic and essential, highlighting the imbalance of these societal roles. Qu substituted the phrase as "觉得这好比他们男性的确有责任来帮助我们女性" ("feeling it was similar to the responsibility men indeed have to help women"). By adding the words "这好比" ("it was similar to"), Qu suggests an equivalence between women's and men's responsibilities to maintain fidelity of the source text, "as indeed it is their duty", which downplays the stark differences imposed by traditional gender roles. This choice of wording diminishes the contrast between the subordination of women's expected duties and the gravity of men's, thereby masking the inherent inequality in these societal expectations. Overall, Qu's translation softens the critique of gender imbalance by implying the burdens placed on men and women and underplays the disparities that Woolf's source text highlights.

In T3, Ma's translation faithfully preserves and reinforces the ironic tone in the source text. As previously mentioned, Ma Ainong's translation was influenced by the 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing, which focused on gender issues and women's rights. In translating Example 2, Ma consciously reordered the nouns to emphasise the irony in the source text. For instance, Ma translated the sentence, "he may expose and relieve the thigh bones, the ribs, of his vanity, of his urgent desire to assert himself " as "让他像肋骨和腿骨一样深藏着的虚荣心和强烈自我表现欲得到表现、得到解脱 ("allowing his deeply hidden vanity and strong desire for self-expression, like ribs and leg bones, to be displayed and relieved"). In the source text, "thigh bones" and "ribs" imply something deeply buried within, and they are described as metaphors associated with the human body's structure to suggest that the man's vanity is ingrained as if it were part of his physical being. In Ma's translation, Ma alters the order of the original sentence, placing "of his vanity" and "of his urgent desire" as the primary nouns, to emphasise the idea that it is a woman's duty to assist in exposing "虚荣心 ("vanity")" and "强烈自我表现欲 ("strong desire for self-expression")." By doing so, Ma shifts the focus

onto these superficial traits as the central objects of the sentence. Moreover, Ma uses "肋骨" ("ribs") and "腿骨" ("thigh bones") as metaphors, treating them as adjectives that modify "虚荣心" ("vanity") and "强烈自我表现欲" ("strong desire for self-expression"), thus underscoring the ingrained nature of these traits. By reordering the sentence this way, Ma draws attention to the absurdity of this societal expectation, highlighting the burden placed on women to support men in fulfilling such trivial desires. In conclusion, this shift in emphasis amplifies the irony and deepens the critique of gender roles by highlighting women's mere contributions to male vanity and self-assertion.

T4's translation is characterised by reordering the sentence and adding details to reinforce the gender roles and make the social critique more immediate and impactful. As mentioned, Li, Tian and Meng's translation, published in 2017, was influenced by a period of heightened feminist activism in China, which stressed women's rights and subjectivity in literature creation. For example, when translating, "so that he may expose and relieve the thigh bones, the ribs, of his vanity, of his urgent desire to assert himself," T4 renders it as "看穿他将肋骨和腿骨掩藏起来的虚荣心和表现自己的强烈愿望" ("seeing through his vanity and strong desire to express himself, hidden ribs and leg bones, and alleviating his anxiety"). T4 introduces several shifts which emphasise the subjectivity of the woman and further develop the metaphorical imagery present in the source text. In the source sentence, the focus is on the man's action—his effort to "expose and relieve" his vanity and desire for self-assertion. T4 shifts the focus by reordering the sentence to highlight the woman's perspective, using the verb "看穿" ("seeing through"). This shift emphasises the woman's subjectivity, presenting her as an active observer who perceives and understands the man's concealed vanity and desires; it underscores the woman's insight and awareness, rather than her role as a passive participant in fulfilling the man's needs. Moreover, T4 retains and enhances this metaphor "thigh bones" and "ribs," which are used as metaphors for "虚荣心" ("vanity") and "表现自己的强烈愿望" ("strong desire to express himself"), by adding the phrase "掩藏起来的" ("hidden") to modify. By explicitly stating that these qualities are "hidden," the translation deepens the original metaphor. The man's vanity and desire for self-expression are portrayed as deeply embedded traits, concealed within him like the ribs and thigh bones within the body. In all, T4's translation makes the metaphor more explicit, drawing a clear parallel between the body's physical structure and the deeply rooted nature of the man's vanity and desires. This preserves Woolf's original intent and makes the metaphor more accessible and striking to the reader.

In summary, T1 by Xie Qingyao (1946) is characterised by diverging from the source text, emphasising his interpretations over fidelity. T2 Qu Shijing's translation downplays the tone and misinterprets Woolf's narrative irony. T3 Ma Ainong's translation (2003) faithfully preserves the source text's meaning and tone, while intensifying the ironic critique of gender expectations. T4's translation reorders sentences and adds details to reinforce gender roles and enhance social critique.

4.3.3 Case Study 3: Intellectual Recognition and Achievements

Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* is a profound exploration of gender roles, particularly of the expectations and recognition of women's intellectual achievements. Through its characters and narrative structure, the novel delves into the societal norms of the early 20th century and critiques the limitations imposed on women. Woolf's portrayal of characters like Mrs. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe critiques the gender norms restricting women's roles and undervaluing their contributions. Mrs Ramsay's domestic responsibilities primarily define her role. When she expresses her intelligence and insight, "Speaking with warmth and eloquence, she described the iniquity of the English dairy system, and in what state milk when all round the table laughed; she was laughed at, fire-encircled, and forced to veil her crest, dismount her batteries" (Woolf, 1927, p.83). Despite her intelligence and insight, she is not encouraged to pursue or express these qualities like her husband, and her intellectual contributions are undervalued, reinforcing the idea that women's primary worth lies in their domestic skills (Prakash, 2014). Lily's character arc addresses the difficulty which women face in achieving intellectual recognition. Her success in finishing her painting by the novel's end symbolises a personal triumph over societal constraints. However, it also underscores the limited recognition which women could expect in a male-dominated society. In Example 3, Woolf exposes the pervasive attitudes undermining women's capabilities through characters like Charles Tansley. His dismissive comments about women's abilities reflect broader societal prejudices which hinder women's intellectual and artistic development, as the example shows:

Example 3:

"For he was not going to talk the sort of rot these people wanted him to talk. He was not going to be condescended to by these silly women..... They never got anything worth having from one year's end to another. They did nothing but talk, talk, talk, eat, eat, eat. It was the women's fault. Women made civilisation impossible with all their 'charm', all their silliness (Woolf, 1927, p.69)."

In Example 3, Virginia Woolf uses Charles Tansley's interior monologue to expose his deep-seated misogynistic attitudes. Tansley's view is set against the backdrop of a dinner scene where he, Mrs. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe are present. As Mrs Ramsay takes her place at the head of the table, "nothing seemed to have merged. They all sat separately. And the whole of the effort of merging and creating rested on her" (Woolf, 1927, p.67). She feels that "as a fact without hostility, the sterility of men, for if she did not do it nobody would do it" (Woolf, 1927, p.67). She questions the value of her life, feeling that her effort to merge and create harmony among the guests is a lonely and thankless task (Mohammed, 2021). Charles Tansley's irritation grows as he perceives the conversations around him as meaningless and superficial. His thoughts reveal a stark contrast between his seriousness and the perceived triviality of the women's chatter (Wang, 2020). He is particularly resentful of what he sees as their endless talking and eating, blaming them for making civilisation impossible with their "charm" and "silliness". In summary, Charles Tansley's interior monologue and interactions with the women at the dinner table in *To the Lighthouse* expose the deep-seated misogyny which undermines women's contributions and perpetuates societal prejudices. Woolf uses Tansley's character to highlight the pervasive attitudes which devalue women's roles and emphasise women's struggle to gain recognition and assert their worth in a patriarchal society (Longo, 2017). Four translators use different methods to translate the interior monologue.

The source text	"For he was not going to talk the sort of rot these people wanted him to talk. He was not going to be condescended to by these silly women..... They never got anything worth having from one year's end to another. They did nothing but talk, talk, talk, eat, eat, eat. It was the women's fault. Women made civilisation impossible with all their 'charm', all their silliness (Woolf, 1927, p.69)."	
Translator	Target text	Literal translation
T1 Xie Qingyao (1946).	他不愿意谈这些无聊的话。为什么要跟这些无知的女人说废话呢? 他觉得她们无谓极了。每天, 除了吃 ...: 吃.....说.....说以外就一无成就。这都是女人的过处。女人	He was unwilling to talk about these boring things. Why should he speak nonsense with these ignorant women? He thought they were pointless. Every day, nothing was

	真是祸水。她们的“魔力”竟将文化都弄糟了	accomplished except eating...: Eat said said. This is the fault of women. Women are truly a curse. Their 'magic' has spoiled the culture.
T2 Qu Shijing (1988)	他可不去说那些人想叫他说的 那种废话。他可不要那些愚蠢 的女人对他屈尊俯就、格外施 恩..... 一年到头，她们从来 也得不到什么有价值的东 西。她们什么也不干，光是 说、说、说、吃、吃、吃。这 全是女人的 过错。女人利用 她们所有的“魅力”和愚蠢，把 文明给搞得不成 样子。	He certainly would not say the kind of nonsense those people wanted him to say. He definitely did not want those foolish women to condescend to him and give extra favour..... All year round, they never get anything of value. They do not do anything, just talk, talk, talk, eat, eat, eat. This is all the fault of women. Women use all their 'charm' and stupidity to mess up civilisation.
T3 Ma Ainong (2003)	因为他不想再听从这些人的意 愿去说一些废话。他不愿意让 这些愚蠢的女人对他屈尊俯 就 年复一年，她们一无 所获。她们无所事事，整天闲 聊，闲聊，闲聊，吃饭，吃 饭，吃饭。这都是女人的过 错。女人用她们的“魅力”，用 她们的愚蠢，使文明变得令人 讨厌。	Because he did not want to follow the will of these people again to talk nonsense, he was unwilling to let these foolish women condescend to him Year after year, they gain nothing. They do nothing all day but chat, chat, chat, eat, eat, eat. This is all the fault of women. Women use their 'charm' and their stupidity to make civilisation detestable.

T4: Li Xiaoyan, Tian Zezhong & Meng Yuanning (2017)	因为他不想说那些别人想让他说的废话。他不想让这些愚蠢的女人在他面前摆出一副恩赐的样子..... 一年到头她们也得 不到什么有价值的东西。她们什么也不做，只是说啊说、吃啊吃。这是女人的错。女人靠自己的“魔力”，还有她们的愚蠢，让文明成为不可能。	Because he did not want to say the nonsense that others wanted him to say, he did not want these foolish women to put a gracious face in front of him All year round, they get nothing of value. They do nothing, just talk and talk, eat and eat. This is the fault of women. Women rely on their 'magic' and their stupidity to make civilisation impossible.
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Table 4. 9 Chinese translations of Example 3.

Xie's T1 translation is characterised by incorporating the translator's interpretations and biases, rather than prioritising fidelity to achieve consistency. As noted in the Preface, Xie's translation omits certain aspects of the source text and cross-references other parts with the translator's interpretation and subjective thinking. For instance, Xie translates "For he was not going to talk the sort of rot these people wanted him to talk. He was not going to be condescended to by these silly women" as "他不愿意谈这些无聊的话。为什么要跟这些无知的女人说废话呢" ("He was unwilling to talk about these boring things. Why should he speak nonsense with these ignorant women?"). "Rot" is translated as "废话" ("nonsense"), maintaining the implication of meaningless or foolish talk. The source text shows that Charles Tansley refuses to engage in what he perceives as a "rot" conversation which others, particularly women, expect him to participate in. He views himself as being above such "rot" or unmeaningful conversation, asserting his intellectual superiority and refusing to be "condescended to by these silly women." His refusal to engage is less about rejecting triviality and more about revealing his arrogance and misogyny. Xie's translation employs the rewriting method to accentuate Tansley's prejudices and sense of superiority. The substitution of words such as "无聊的话" ("boring things") and "无知的女人" ("ignorant women") intensifies the man's arrogance and misogyny, making his contempt more pronounced. By shifting from "rot" to "boring things" and from "silly" to "ignorant," Xie amplifies the man's condescending attitude and makes his sense of superiority more evident. This translation choice emphasises Charles Tansley's internal biases more clearly. Furthermore, the translation "女人真是祸水" ("Women

are truly a curse”) employs an additional method by introducing the term “祸水” (“curse”) to stress the fault of women. The term “祸水” (“curse”) is strong in Chinese, implying that women bring disaster or misfortune, which further amplifies the character's blame on women. This term intensifies the negative portrayal of women, aligning with the character's misogynistic views. Overall, Xie employs the rewriting and addition method to amplify Tansley's condescending attitude and misogynistic views, effectively conveying his internal biases.

T2 reorders the sentences and uses the substitution method to maintain the ironic meaning of the source text. As mentioned before, Qu, as the first prominent Chinese scholar to study Virginia Woolf's works, keeps the ironic tone in the source text, which is crucial for conveying the underlying critique of the male character's views on women. For instance, Qu translates “women made civilisation impossible with all their ‘charm’ and all their silliness” into “女人利用她们所有的 ‘魅力’和愚蠢，把文明给搞得不成样子” (“Women use all their ‘charm’ and stupidity to mess up civilisation”). This phrase reveals that Charles Tansley's belief that women hinder true civilisation stems from his insecurity and desire to assert dominance over those whom he deems weaker. His perspective highlights his own limitations, rather than those of women. By substituting “silliness” with “愚蠢” (“stupidity”), the translation intensifies the ironic tone of the original, making Tansley's contempt for women even more pronounced. The original English word “silliness” carries a connotation of foolishness, which is less harsh than “愚蠢” (“stupidity”). This substitution underscores the character's deep-seated misogyny clearly and forcefully. Additionally, Qu reorders the sentence to emphasise women actively using their “魅力” (“charm”) and “愚蠢” (“stupidity”) to disrupt civilisation. This reordering shifts the focus from a passive observation of women's impact on civilisation to an active portrayal of women as agents of destruction; it enhances the sense of blame which Tansley places on women, amplifying the negative sentiment behind his words.

Ma's translation (T3) is characterised by preserving the critical and ironic tone of the source text in changing the narrative perspective. As mentioned before, Ma was deeply influenced by the 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing, which stressed women's rights and subjectivity. Ma substituted the sentence “They never got anything worth having from one year's end to another. They did nothing” with three Chinese idioms “年复一年” (“Year after year”) , 一无所获 (“they gain nothing”), 无所事事 (“They do nothing”). Each idiom encapsulates a different aspect of the original text, capturing the repetition and futility in “年复

一年" ("year after year"), the sense of worthlessness in "一无所获" ("nothing gained"), and the inactivity or lack of purpose in "无所事事" ("idly doing nothing"). The English phrase "They never got anything worth having from one year's end to another" conveys a sense of futility in Tansley's attitude and reflects his deep-seated misogyny and his belief that women are inherently unproductive. He dismisses their activities as meaningless. These idioms thus heighten the emotional impact of the original text, making the contempt and disdain in Tansley's words even clearer. By employing Chinese idioms, Ma taps into culturally resonant expressions which carry connotations familiar to Chinese readers. In summary, the three Chinese idioms not only preserve the essence of the original text but also intensify its emotional impact, making Tansley's contempt more pronounced and culturally resonant.

T4 is characterised by its use of rewriting and substitution methods to keep its fidelity to the source text and its intensification of the meaning and tone of the source material. T4 translates "For he was not going to talk the sort of rot these people wanted him to talk. He was not going to be condescended to by these silly women" as "因为他不想说那些别人想让他说的废话。他不想让这些愚蠢的女人在他面前摆出一副恩赐的样子" ("Because he did not want to say the nonsense that others wanted him to say. He did not want these foolish women to put on a gracious face in front of him"). This effectively conveys Tansley's defiance against external pressures and his disdain for what he views as the condescending behaviour of women. For instance, the term "废话" ("nonsense", "rubbish") is a strong, dismissive expression which highlights the character's contempt for the conversations which he is expected to participate in. While "rot" in the original English suggests speech that is meaningless or worthless, "废话" ("nonsense", "rubbish") in Chinese retains the original meaning by more explicitly labelling the speech as utterly worthless and irritating. This choice underscores Tansley's strong aversion to conforming to social expectations, especially those which he considers beneath him. Additionally, the phrase "恩赐的样子" ("gracious face") is particularly insightful, as it captures the subtlety of Tansley's resentment towards what he perceives as the women's condescending attitude. In the source text, Tansley's disdain is directed at the perceived superiority and silliness of women. By substituting "condescended to" with "摆出一副恩赐的样子" ("put on a gracious face"), T4 highlights that Tansley feels patronised by women as if they are granting him some sort of favour, which he finds intolerable. This translation not only conveys the original intent but also introduces a layer of cultural context, as "恩" ("gratitude") and "赐" ("award") in Chinese imply an unwelcome sense of

superiority or patronage. To sum up, T4 remains faithful to the original meaning and adapts it to resonate with cultural and linguistic nuances in Chinese, providing a deeper understanding of Tansley's character and the themes of the novel.

In T1, Xie's translation involves significant rewriting and includes the translator's subjective interpretation. Xie omits parts of the source text and introduces new phrases, reflecting his views. For example, he uses the term "祸水" ("curse") to emphasise women's guilty, showcasing his interpretative approach. T2 rearranges the sentences and employs the substitution method to preserve the irony of the source text. For instance, Qu reorders the sentence to highlight women actively using their "魅力" ("charm") and "愚蠢" ("stupidity") to disrupt civilisation. Ma's translation (T3) is marked by its ability to retain the critical and ironic tone of the source text through a shift in narrative perspective. For instance, Ma uses three idioms which preserve the original text's essence and amplify its emotional impact, making Tansley's contempt more vivid and culturally relevant. Meanwhile, T4 is distinguished by its use of rewriting and substitution methods to maintain fidelity to the source text while intensifying its meaning and tone. For instance, T4 emphasises Tansley's sense of being patronised by the female characters in the novel, as if they are bestowing a favour upon him, which he finds unbearable. Overall, this translation offers a deeper insight into Tansley's character and the broader themes of the novel.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter presents a comparative analysis of four Chinese translations of Virginia Woolf's novel *To the Lighthouse*. The study utilises a specially constructed corpus comprising the chronology of four translations to explore the translation shifts and strategies adopted by the translators, focusing on how themes of social expectation and gender binaries are handled across various temporal and spatial settings. By examining different 'optional shifts', the research examines the nuances and motivations underlying the linguistic, cultural and historical adaptations in transmitting Woolf's feminist ideas. The key findings of this study can be summarised as follows:

Xie Qingyao's (1946) is the oldest Chinese translation, and it diverges significantly from the source text, reflecting his interpretations and biases; meanwhile, it omits content and cross-references to achieve consistency. For instance, Xie's portrayal of Mrs. Ramsay as "domineering" and "arrogant" simplifies Woolf's nuanced character, reducing her complexity.

Additionally, Xie overlooks subtle reflections in the text, instead amplifying the man's sexist remarks by translating phrases like "boring things" and "ignorant women," which intensifies his arrogance and misogyny. Overall, Xie's translation is probably the least faithful to the feminist essence of the original work.

Qu Shijing (1988), the first major Chinese scholar to study Virginia Woolf's works, often reorders sentences and uses substitutions to preserve the source text's irony but sometimes weakens its tone or misinterprets Woolf's narrative irony. For example, Qu mistranslates Mrs. Ramsay's judgment as valuable guidance, which contrasts with the original depiction of her views as simplistic. Additionally, Qu's addition of "it was similar to" in another translation downplays the significant differences between women's and men's roles, thereby diminishing the critique of traditional gender expectations.

Ma Ainong's (2003) translation employs substitution, addition and reordering to reinforce the source text's ironic tone. For instance, Ma reorganises sentence structure to emphasise Lily's defiance against societal expectations and alters sentence order to focus on vanity and self-expression as central themes. Additionally, Ma uses culturally familiar idioms to amplify the emotional impact, making Tansley's disdain more pronounced and resonant for Chinese readers.

Li Xiaoyan, Tian Zezhong, and Meng Yuanning's (2017) co-translated work is characterised by sentence reordering and added details, which aim to remain faithful to the source text while enriching it with more profound meaning and feminist themes. For instance, they employ additional and rewriting strategies to clarify Lily's challenge to societal expectations, explicitly introducing the phrase "get married" to emphasize her resistance to traditional roles. Additionally, they reorder sentences to highlight Lily's perspective, portraying her as an active observer who sees through man's vanity and desires.

In conclusion, this investigation accentuates the corpus's unique linguistic, cultural and historical translation shifts, illuminating the translators' methods in rendering into Chinese the Woolf's feminist narratives which Woolf creates regarding social expectations and gender identity.

Chapter 5: Translating Gender Fluidity and Androgyny in Virginia Woolf's *Orlando: A Biography*

5.1 Introduction

Gender fluidity, according to Margaret Robinson (2019) in *Two-Spirit Identity in a Time of Gender Fluidity*, describes the idea that gender is not fixed or binary, but can change over time and across different contexts. It challenges strict classifications of gender as solely male or female, acknowledging instead that individuals may experience and express their gender in ways that are flexible, dynamic, and dependent on the context. Thus, gender is considered an individual's self-identification and is fluid and continuous. Androgyny, concerning gender identity, refers to the combination of masculine and feminine characteristics. Sigmund Freud was among the first to propose the theory of human beings' androgynous subconsciousness and posited that feminine and masculine features coexist in personality through a dialectical process (Liu 2017). Virginia Woolf was among the first to articulate the idea of psychological androgyny in literature and literary criticism. She proposed that the most creative minds are not bound by rigid gender binaries but instead embody a fusion of masculine and feminine qualities. In *A Room of One's Own*, she asserts that "if one is a man, still the woman part of the brain must have effect; and a woman also must have intercourse with the man in her" (Woolf 1929, p.71).

Virginia Woolf (1882- 1941), a prominent figure of modernism and feminism in the 20th century, challenges conventional notions of gender identity, social norms, and expectations through her novel *Orlando: A Biography*. The story describes the life of its main character, Orlando, a nobleman who, after living as a thirty-year-old man for several decades, awakens in Constantinople as a woman. Orlando subsequently navigates the world both as male and female despite his or her assigned sex (Haner 2022). In this context, the gender a person identifies with does not necessarily correspond to the biological sex assigned at birth. Instead, it is a social construct that can be manipulated and performed (Li and Zhong 2022).

Through Orlando's androgynous experience, Woolf challenges traditional notions of gender by blurring the boundaries between masculine and feminine characteristics, highlighting the fluidity and variability of gender expression. Woolf (1928, p. 93) asserts that "whether Orlando was most man or woman, it is difficult to say". Woolf's representation of Orlando as a character who embodies this fluidity, conserving both masculine and feminine traits and defying gender binaries, underscores the idea that gender is not limited to fixed and immutable characteristics but rather exists on a continuum of fluidity and variability. Through

Orlando's gender fluidity, Woolf challenges the patriarchal structures of society, particularly the limitations imposed on how women dress, attitudes towards females, and conventional notions of gender identity. Her exploration of themes such as androgyny and gender fluidity continues to inspire readers almost 100 years after its publication.

Thus far, existing literature on Woolf's *Orlando: A Biography* has mainly focused on the novel's perspectives on gender and androgyny from a literary perspective. Some studies have examined how Woolf's portrayal of gender fluidity and androgyny challenges traditional gender roles and social norms. For example, Haner's work (2022) entitled *The transgender experience: Cross-dressing and sex-change in Virginia Woolf's Orlando* emphasises the importance of the emergence of the transgender protagonist Orlando who creates sexual fluidity and blurred gender identities. Similarly, Li & Zhong's work (2022) argues that Woolf's androgynous aesthetics challenge binary gender norms and reflect her belief in the importance of androgyny for achieving a more harmonious and balanced society. Li & Zhong conclude that Woolf's androgynous aesthetics are relevant to her own time and have broader implications for contemporary gender discourse.

So far, only one piece of research related to the Chinese translation of *Orlando* has been identified in the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI), China's most prominent academic digital database. Lin Jiani (2008), in his MA dissertation entitled *A Study on the Translation of Orlando into Chinese*, explores the social and cultural factors that impact the translators' decision-making processes from selection, through the translation process, to editing and the final publication of the translation. Lin employs Lefevere's rewriting theory, emphasising that rewritings serve particular ideological, political, or aesthetic agendas, and that translators play a significant role in shaping how literature is received across cultures. He argues that the rewriting of *Orlando* into Chinese plays a crucial role in tapping into the rising feminist sentiments in China and questioning established gender roles. Lin's dissertation examines only two translated versions of *Orlando* and concludes that these versions have created two distinct images of the original work within Chinese culture: one as an 'unnoticed great' work by a remarkable writer and the other as a classic work by a canonised writer. However, Lin's work does not address the challenges faced by translators in capturing the themes of gender fluidity and androgyny, nor does it discuss their approach to conveying the book's historico-cultural contexts and literary references. There is no exploration of how the translators ensure that the translated versions reflect Woolf's feminist perspective or the extent to which the translations contribute to the evolving feminist literary discourse in China. Furthermore, Lin does not investigate how the translators' choices impact the interpretation and reception of the translated versions. As the only available work discussing the translation of *Orlando* into Chinese, Lin's research has undoubtedly motivated me to explore these

questions further. In summary, there has been only minimal systematic translation-related research conducted on Woolf's works as a whole, let alone on the translation of *Orlando* into Chinese. To address this research gap, this study aims to answer the following research questions:

Q1: What kinds of translation shifts have the Chinese translators employed in translating the themes of gender fluidity and androgyny in *Orlando: A Biography*?

Q2: To what extent do the Chinese translators' historico-cultural backgrounds shape their interpretation and decision-making in translating Woolf's feminist ideas over time and space?

Q3: How do the Chinese translators navigate the balance of translation shifts between fidelity to the original text and the need for the translation to resonate with Chinese audiences regarding gender fluidity and androgynous themes through the three case studies: clothing, attitudes towards female writers, and conventional notions of gender identities?

To address these research questions, the following sections will introduce the research methodology and the datasets used for this study. I will then demonstrate in my data analysis that the work of Wei Hong and Min Le (T1) is characterized by extended explanatory paraphrases, as if conscious of their primary task in introducing the cultural specificity of this work of English literature to Chinese readers. However, they combine this with a feminist sensitivity to the social constraints placed on women (both within and beyond the text) by sometimes intensifying the effect of Woolf's words. It will show that Lin Yan's translation (T2) is a faithful, formal, academic approach to Woolf's novel, using explanation where necessary and remaining sensitive to the feminist nuances in the source text. The chapter indicates that Ren Yiming's translation (T3) is an evocative feminist rendering of *Orlando*, which sometimes expands upon and intensifies the source text's condemnation of the societal limits women face, for example, by using rhetorical devices. I also trace how Hou Yiling's academically competent translation (T4) sometimes underplays – from a linguistic perspective – the way Woolf's source text contests the treatment of women and appears to be an exercise in neutral literary translation that lacks the feminist 'urgency' of the other translations. My conclusion will summarise the key research findings and future research outlook.

5.2 Methods

5.2.1 Dataset

Integrating case studies and a corpus-based approach proves to be mutually advantageous. The corpus-based approach provides insights into the linguistic contexts and

is a valuable tool for identifying case studies (McEnery 2019; Li 2023). The combination enables a comprehensive analysis of the four translated versions of *Orlando*. As can be seen in Table 1, my self-built corpus consists of two datasets: dataset 1: the source text of *Orlando: A Biography* written by Virginia Woolf (ST); dataset 2: a self-built diachronic Chinese translation corpus that includes four translated versions of the work – Wei & Min 1994 (hereafter T1), Lin 2003 (T2), Ren (2014) (T3), and Hou (2021) (T4). In this study, I will use corpus data for two specific purposes. Firstly, the corpus data is the basis for selecting and conducting the three case studies, allowing for a focused exploration of specific aspects of gender fluidity and androgyny. Secondly, the analysis of these case studies is underpinned by the evidence elucidated from the corpus, ensuring a robust and reliable foundation for examining gender fluidity and androgynous gender identities. In my self-built corpus selection process, I have used two critical criteria: 1) publication period and 2) availability of electronic versions in mainland China.

ST/TT	Authors/ Translators	Version names	Publication Date	Publisher	Place
ST	Virginia Woolf	Orlando: A Biography	1928	Hogarth Press	UK
T1	韦 虹& 旻 乐 (Wei Hong and Min Le)	奥 兰 多: 一 部 传 记 (Orlando: A Biography)	1994	Harbin Publishing House	Harbin
T2	林燕(Lin Yan)	奥 兰 多 (Orlando)	2003	People's Literature Publishing House	Beijing
T3	任 一 鸣 (Ren Yiming)	奥 兰 多 (Orlando)	2014	Shanghai Translation Publishing House	Shanghai
T4	候 毅 凌(Hou Yiling)	奥 兰 多 (Orlando)	2021	Tianjin People's Publishing House	Tianjin

Table 5. 1 Chinese translations of *Orlando: A Biography*

Although Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* was first introduced to China in 1929 and subsequently first translated and published in 1947 during the first wave of the Chinese feminist movement, it was almost 50 years later that *Orlando* started to gain the attention of Chinese readerships. Due to prevailing socio-political conditions over the following three decades, works from capitalist countries, including those by Virginia Woolf, were banned in China. However, since the reform and opening-up (1978–present), China's policies have become more open, and interest in Western literature has grown, leading to the reintroduction of authors like Woolf into Chinese literary discourse. Woolf's novels have been re-translated into Chinese, reflecting the renewed appetite for foreign literature. Among her works, *Orlando: A Biography* (1928) emerges as the most frequently re-translated novel, indicating its sustained popularity among Chinese scholars and readers.

The first translation included in this self-built diachronic translation corpus is Wei Hong and Min Le's translation in 1994. There is little information available about these two female translators, except for their roles as lecturers at universities. 1994 saw the first translation of Woolf's *Orlando* into Chinese. This significant milestone in introducing the novel, and notably the ideas of gender fluidity to Chinese readers, was influenced by several historical, social, and economic factors. Their translation forms part of the *Houniao* series, which consists of nine Western literary works; the series aims to introduce philosophies and ideologies prevalent in Western literature and society. The series was proposed by over 15 higher education academics who form part of the non-governmental Chinese and Western literary association; these scholars sought to introduce Chinese readers to 'unfamiliar foreign masterpieces' while showcasing their unique artistic styles and philosophies (Wei & Min 1994, preface). This intention is reflected in their use of extended explanatory paraphrases as part of their translation decision process. The publication of *Orlando* in 1994 was clear evidence of the new policy that encouraged cultural exchanges and promoted cultural diversity in an evolving, cosmopolitan society.

Since the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, China has embraced Marxist ideology and Marxist feminism, which emphasise the interconnected struggles of class and gender. This framework advocates for the liberation of women through collective organisation within the working class, aiming to dismantle the patriarchal structures that perpetuate gender inequality. However, Marxist feminism in China has generally concentrated on economic roles and material conditions rather than challenging gender binaries or examining non-normative gender identities. Throughout much of the 20th century, due to limited resources and socio-political turbulence—including the Great Chinese Famine and the Cultural Revolution—as well as the broader Cold War context, literary production and translation were subordinated to political and economic imperatives (Li, 2008). All cultural

activity, including publishing and academic work, served state goals of ideological reinforcement and socialist development.

In contrast, contemporary China has undergone a shift. With the marketisation of publishing, institutions now enjoy greater autonomy in selecting topics, allowing for a broader spectrum of diverse and ideologically plural publications. This has created opportunities for works that address emerging feminist and gender non-conforming discourses, including those related to transgender identities, which, although still sensitive in public discourse, have begun to gain visibility in both academic and activist circles. Within this context, the translation and reinterpretation of texts like *Orlando* take on new significance—not only reflecting evolving feminist concerns but also subtly challenging normative assumptions about gender. The transition from class-based Marxist feminism to a more fluid, identity-conscious discourse signifies a significant ideological shift. Additionally, the introduction and fansub translation of Sally Potter's film 'Orlando' to Chinese markets was arguably another critical factor in increasing the exposure of Woolf's literary works and stimulating debates around gender fluidity and gender identity to broader audiences.

Since the 2000s, there has been a surge in Chinese translations of *Orlando: A Biography*, with an estimated nine distinct translated versions of the work documented in the Chinese national publication bibliography, Taiwan and Hong Kong. The publications reflect a changing landscape of gender and feminist ideology within contemporary Chinese academia and beyond (Liu, 2017). However, despite Woolf's increasing popularity in China, minimal research has been conducted on the decision-making process of the translators of her works.

To build a diachronic corpus, I chose one available electronic version from different decades. In this self-built diachronic translation corpus, the first translation is Wei Hong and Min Le's translation in 1994. The second translation included in the corpus is by Lin Yan, published in 2003. Lin is a proficient authorised Chinese translator and editor for China's official Foreign Translation and Publishing Corporation. As stated in the preface, Lin, being a professional translator, prioritises faithfulness to the original texts. She also incorporates her subjective expression when engaging with the source text, mainly when translating a feminist work. Lin's translation was first published in 2003 by People's Literature Publishing House and was reprinted in 2015, 2016, and 2022 by other publishers. The inclusion of *Orlando* in one of the renowned literary publishing institutions signifies the broader acknowledgement and nationwide appreciation of Woolf's literary works. This recognition is a testament to Chinese society's evolving perspectives on gender-related matters.

The third translation included in the corpus was translated by Ren Yiming. It was released in 2014 by Shanghai Translation Publishing House and reprinted in 2022. Ren is an acclaimed translator who focuses particularly on women's literature. Her personal affinity and

subjective stance towards women's literature and feminism undoubtedly shape her translation approach, particularly when dealing with texts like *Orlando: A Biography*.

The fourth translation in the corpus is by Hou Yiling, published in 2021 by Tianjin People's Publishing House. Hou is a Professor of English Literature at Beijing Foreign Studies University and is known for translating female writers' works in China as a male translator. This is especially important in feminist literary translation, where the translator's gendered position can shape interpretive choices. Hou's academic background in English literature indicates a strong foundation in literary theory and narrative analysis, which may enable a nuanced engagement with Woolf's stylistic innovations and thematic complexity. At the same time, his role as a male translator working extensively with female-authored texts prompts reflection on how gender identity interacts with translation practice, raising questions about empathy, authority, and interpretive framing when translating feminist narratives into Chinese. His work thus plays a crucial role in contemporary Chinese translation studies, where the translator's gender becomes an important factor in analysing the transmission and reception of feminist ideas.

5.2.2 Analytical Approach

As discussed in Chapter 2, translation is a craft that involves replacing information and statements in one language with information and statements in another (Newmark, 1981, p.7). This study examines how feminist themes in Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*, particularly those related to gender fluidity and androgyny, are preserved, reinterpreted, or transformed in Chinese translations across different historical contexts. Through Orlando's experience of gender transformation from male to female midway through the book—living for centuries, experiencing different periods and social norms, and finally marrying and realising the value of life in the creation of poetry—Woolf questions the rigidity of gender roles and challenges the notion that gender is limited to fixed and immutable characteristics. To compare how different translators treat Woolf's narratives of androgyny and gender fluidity in the target texts, I primarily employ qualitative methods by developing three case studies supported by corpus data to analyse the translators' decision-making processes over time and space.

The research design and data preparation have been completed in accordance with the procedure detailed in Chapter 2. The initial critical step of this study involved converting the English source texts of *Orlando: A Biography* and the selected Chinese target texts into TXT format. Next, the aligning process was essential to establish sentence-level correspondences between the English and Chinese texts for a meaningful comparative

analysis. Subsequently, I utilised NVivo, an advanced computer software program, as a key tool. Following a comprehensive review of the source text, detailed notetaking, and the development of a predefined classification system, I have identified more precise thematic focuses for this chapter— androgyny and gender fluidity—supported by the tagging of both the source text and its translations, along with necessary adjustments.

The first code highlights the theme of challenging fixed gender through dress performance. For example, I tagged the sentences: “There’s the hairdressing, she thought, “that alone will take an hour of my morning; there’s looking in the looking-glass, another hour; there’s staying and lacing; there’s washing and powdering; there’s changing from silk to lace and from lace to paduasoy; and there’s being chaste year in year out....” This sentence depicts that Woolf critiques societal expectations imposed on women, particularly regarding beauty standards, gender roles, and chastity. Through ironic listing, Woolf critiques the performative nature of femininity in Orlando, highlighting how daily rituals like hairdressing and lacing reduce womanhood to a series of exhausting, socially imposed tasks—thereby exposing the artificiality and constraint of fixed gender roles. The second code addresses challenging gendered perceptions of creativity and literary value through the shifting reception of Orlando’s poetry. For instance, I tagged the sentences: “She was forced to the conclusion that there was something in the sneer of Mr Pope, in the condescension of Mr Addison, and in the secret of Lord Chesterfield which took away her relish for the society of wits, deeply though she must continue to respect their works.” This moment reveals Orlando’s growing awareness of the subtle yet persistent misogyny embedded in literary society. Although she continues to admire these canonical male writers for their artistic achievements, she becomes disillusioned by their patronising attitudes towards women. Woolf uses Orlando’s change in gender to expose the exclusionary nature of the male-dominated literary elite, suggesting that women are often welcomed as muses or objects of flattery but not taken seriously as intellectual equals. The passage critiques the way women’s contributions are undervalued while also asserting a woman’s right to evaluate the very tradition from which she has been excluded.

The third code stresses the theme of challenging conventional notions of gender identity through gender transformation and gender fluidity. For example, I tagged the passage: “It seems no difficulty in sustaining the different parts, for her sex changed far more frequently than those who have worn only one set of clothing can conceive; nor can there be any doubt that she reaped a twofold harvest by this device.” In this sentence, Woolf explores the fluidity of gender identity and challenges rigid conventional notions surrounding gender roles and gender identity. By highlighting how Orlando’s ability to shift between male and female identities allows for a broader experience of life, Woolf critiques the restrictive binary view of gender. This passage underscores the limitations imposed by strict gender roles and

celebrates the potential for empowerment when individuals transcend these societal constraints.

The analytical methodology employed in this study incorporates advanced software tools—NVivo and Wordsmith 6—to systematically organise and analyse translational shifts. These tools effectively process the corpus data of the source text and its four translations, revealing linguistic patterns, frequency distributions, and collocations. The numerical data, including sentence counts and average lengths, serves as a quantitative indicator of how different translators have interpreted and adapted Virginia Woolf’s feminist ideas across various versions of *Orlando*. The variations in sentence numbers and lengths among the translations suggest that each translator employed distinct strategies to either expand upon or condense Woolf’s original expressions of gender fluidity, transformation, and challenges to societal norms. In this sense, the statistical differences presented in the tables are significant because they not only reveal translation shifts but also highlight how feminist ideas are received and reinterpreted across cultural contexts, as demonstrated in Tables 5.2, 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5.

	Source text	T1 Wei Hong & Min Le (1994)	T2 Lin Yan (2003)	T3 Ren Yiming (2014)	T4 Hou Yiling (2021)
Wordcount	79,065	150,342	133,847	145,266	139,526
Sentences in total	2,869	3,360	3,869	4,004	3,948
Average sentence length	27.56	44.74	34.59	36.28	35.34
Sentences with feminist ideas	127	153	171	194	202
Average feminist sentence length	19.66	45.73	35.12	37.51	36.97

Table 5. 2 Statistics of sentences with feminist ideas

Table 5.2 reveals several notable patterns across the translations of *Orlando*. All four translations exhibit higher word counts and longer sentences than the source text, likely due to linguistic differences between English and Chinese and the translators' translation strategies. All translations significantly expand on the source text's word count of 79,065 words, with T1 (Wei Hong & Min Le, 1994) having the highest at 150,342 words, followed by T3 (Ren Yiming, 2014) with 145,266 words, T4 (Hou Yiling, 2021) with 139,526 words, and T2 (Lin Yan, 2003) being the most concise at 133,847 words. Sentence counts also increase across translations, with T3 and T4 having the highest numbers (4,004 and 3,948 sentences, respectively), suggesting a modern focus on clarity and sentence segmentation, while T1 has fewer sentences (3,360) and the longest sentences (44.74 words), indicating a more traditional, verbose translation style. Whereas the average sentence length reflects that T2, T3, and T4 employ shorter sentences (34.59, 36.28, and 35.34 words, respectively) for improved readability.

In terms of feminist ideas, all translations increase the number of sentences reflecting feminist ideas compared to the source text (127 sentences), with T4 featuring the most (202 sentences), followed by T3 (194), T2 (171), and T1 (153), showing that the translators may have expanded or emphasized feminist themes, either through elaboration or interpretative translation choices. Additionally, the average length of sentences containing feminist ideas is the longest in T1 (45.73 words), suggesting a more elaborate exploration of these themes, while the shortest in T2 (35.12 words) likely prioritizes clarity and segmentation of ideas. T3 (37.51 words) and T4 (36.97 words) offer nuanced representations. In all, the upward trend from T1 to T4 also indicates a growing sensitivity toward feminist issues over time, with recent translations (T3 and T4) preserving and possibly amplifying these themes more faithfully.

The data presented in Tables 5.3, 5.4, and 5.5 highlights the number of sentences and their average lengths that reflect feminist ideas across four translations, focusing on different thematic aspects of gender transformation and gender fluidity. In Table 3 (Clothing as a vehicle for challenging fixed gender roles), the source text contains 51 sentences with an average length of 17.37 words, while T1 (Wei Hong & Min Le, 1994) slightly expands this to 57 sentences but significantly increases the sentence length to 47.09 words, reflecting a more verbose and traditional translation style. T2 (Lin Yan, 2003) further expands the sentence count to 66 with a shorter average length of 38.89 words, suggesting a more concise approach. T3 (Ren Yiming, 2014) and T4 (Hou Yiling, 2021) contain 76 and 75 sentences respectively, with average lengths of 40.72 and 39.42 words, reflecting a balance between elaboration and readability. In Table 4 (Challenging attitudes towards women and women writers through gender transformation), the source text has 39 sentences averaging 16.17 words, while the translations gradually increase sentence counts that 47 in T1, 54 in T2, 62 in T3, and 66 in T4,

with T1 once again features the longest sentences, averaging 48.66 words, while T2 presents shorter sentences at 37.24 words. In contrast, T3 and T4 strike a balance between elaboration and readability, with average sentence lengths of 39.68 words and 39.13 words, respectively. Similarly, Table 5 (Challenging conventional notions of gender identity) reveals an increase in sentence count from 37 in the source text to 49 in T1, 51 in T2, 56 in T3, and 61 in T4. The average sentence lengths follow a similar trend, with T1 having the longest at 47.71 words, while T2 features shorter sentences at 36.44 words, and T3 and T4 maintain a balance with averages of 39.16 words and 38.78 words, respectively.

Challenging fixed gender through dress performance	Source text	T1 Wei Hong & Min Le (1994)	T2 Lin Yan (2003)	T3 Ren Yiming (2014)	T4 Hou Yiling (2021)
Sentences in total	51	57	66	76	75
Average sentence length	17.37	47.09	38.89	40.72	39.42

Table 5. 3 Statistics of sentences with feminist ideas of Challenging fixed gender through dress performance

Challenging gendered perceptions of creativity and literary value through the shifting reception of Orlando's poetry	Source text	T1 Wei Hong & Min Le (1994)	T2 Lin Yan (2003)	T3 Ren Yiming (2014)	T4 Hou Yiling (2021)
Sentences in total	39	47	54	62	66
Average sentence length	16.17	48.66	37.24	39.68	39.13

Table 5. 4 Statistics of sentences with feminist ideas of Challenging gendered perceptions of creativity and literary value through the shifting reception of Orlando's poetry

Challenging conventional notions of gender identity through gender transformation and gender fluidity	Source text	T1 Wei Hong & Min Le (1994)	T2 Lin Yan (2003)	T3 Ren Yiming (2014)	T4 Hou Yiling (2021)
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Sentences in total	37	49	51	56	61
Average sentence length	18.39	47.71	36.44	39.16	38.78

Table 5. 5 Statistics of sentences with feminist ideas of challenging conventional notions of gender identity through gender transformation and gender fluidity

Across all three tables, a clear pattern emerges. T1 adopts a verbose and likely more literal translation style, characterized by significantly longer sentences. T1 may have chosen to expand upon the source text as part of a cultural adaptation strategy, potentially aiming to make the material more accessible or comprehensive for readers by providing additional context. For example, T1 Wei and Min (1994), using addition and rewriting in following Case Study 1, adapt the unfamiliar concept of "crinoline" culture for Chinese readers by translating *Orlando* as being dragged down by the weight of the skirt supported by a lined frame. This translation choice emphasizes the societal pressures women face to conform to traditional gender expectations, using attire as a metaphor for these constraints.

In contrast, T2 takes a faithful yet concise approach to Woolf's novel, maintaining sensitivity to the feminist nuances of the source text while translating the language. For example, T2 Lin (2003) uses the addition and substitution approach in case study 1 to translate 'crinoline' as '圈(circle) 环(hoop) 衬 (lining) 裙(skirt) (undergarments or petticoat) to protest against women's burden in contemporary Chinese society, which is faithful to the original text.

T3 and T4 further develop this trend by increasing the number of sentences that emphasize feminist ideas, striking a balance between elaboration and readability to ensure clarity while preserving the depth of Woolf's feminist themes. For example, In case study 2, T3 Ren (2014) uses substitution and repetition strategies to depict the deep disgust by using the terms 文人(literati) 才子 (gifted scholar) to emphasize the nature of "the society of wits" and express the disgusting attitude by 倒了(pour out) 胃口(appetite)(lose appetite). Ren's translation expresses the broader systemic impact of gender discrimination in the literary world. In case study 3, T4 Hou deletes the words in the source text 'strange and subtle' but rewrites '难以捉摸(evasive and hard to pin down)' to depict the characteristic of women that women are put in a subordinate position, which capture the surface theme. In all, the quantitative analysis reveals clear patterns across the four translations. Min Le's translation (T1) is characterized by extended explanatory paraphrasing, often expanding on the original text to provide additional context for readers. Lin Yan's translation (T2) adopts a faithful approach, carefully selecting equivalent terms and expressions in Chinese to accurately capture the essence of Woolf's original work while remaining true to its meaning and tone. Ren Yiming (T3) moves beyond a literal translation, substituting terms to strike a balance between

elaboration and readability, ensuring both clarity and depth. Hou Yiling's translation (T4) prioritizes maintaining the surface themes of the original for readability but tends to lack feminist sensitivity.

5.3 Analysis

As mentioned, according to qualitative analysis, this study will mainly focus on representing Virginia Woolf's feminist ideas by analysing androgyny and gender fluidity, including a. Clothing as a vehicle for challenging fixed gender roles; b. challenging the attitudes and conventional notions towards women or women writers through gender transformation and gender fluidity; c. challenging conventional notions of gender identity through gender transformation and gender fluidity.

5.3.1 Case Study 1: Challenging fixed gender through dress performance

In Woolf's *Orlando*, metaphors of clothing, specifically the transition from costume to custom and the connection between clothing and expectation, are potent symbols that highlight the constructed nature of gender in society (Bochicchio, 2013; Popova, 2016). Woolf (1928) often describes the connection between gender and clothing in contradictory ways. On the one hand, she views clothes as symbolic representations of hidden depths within individuals. However, she also suggests that clothing can preserve the outward appearance of male or female identity while concealing the underlying truth.

Woolf uses clothes as a symbol for challenging fixed gender roles. This is highlighted by Haner (2022), who argues that Woolf's portrayal of dressing and cross-dressing serves as a transformative act that challenges societal expectations, illuminates gender fluidity, and 'regulates the performance of gender by creating the way an individual should be interpreted and the way that individual relates to the world' (p. 2170). Thus, it is interesting to identify and compare how different Chinese translators contrasted these viewpoints that underscore the notion that gender roles and expectations are not inherent or fixed but rather artificial constructs imposed by social norms and conventions. On this point, the different translated versions of Woolf's depictions of clothing identify the differences between translators, capturing their decision-making processes regarding presenting androgyny and gender fluidity. Example 1 below provides evidence of this dynamic.

Example 1

‘So she stood mournfully at the drawing-room window (Bartholomew had so christened the library) dragged down by the weight of the crinoline she had submissively adopted. It was heavier and more drab than any dress she had yet worn’ (Woolf, 1928, p.136).

Example 1 depicts a scene where Orlando returns to England. She stands sadly by the window, feels burdened by the weight of her crinoline, a stiffened petticoat made of horsehair fabric, a type of women’s clothing designed to give an enhanced silhouette to the skirt in the late 1840s (Everett 2021): The phrasing, including “mournfully”, “dragged down”, “weight”, “submissively”, “heavier”, and “drab”, is a focused and intense description of how clothes can be used to critique social constraints on women. Orlando’s subordination is notable.

Woolf’s reference to crinoline evokes a voluminous, wide, bell-shaped skirt that encircles the entire body, creating the illusion of a smaller waistline. The large size and shape of this kind of petticoat made it difficult for women to pass through narrow doorways and passages; the weight made it impractical for women to do labour, reinforcing the idea that women are fragile and delicate. In this sense, wearing crinoline creates a class distinction among women and is often associated with middle- and upper-class women (ibid, 2021). By capturing Orlando’s melancholic state, Woolf hints at the restrictive nature of the fashion trends of that time and the societal expectations (exemplified by clothes) imposed on her. Translating this sentence presents several challenges, including the contemporary cultural context of ‘crinoline’ and how to convey the emotions and subtleties Woolf describes such as ‘mournfully’ and ‘submissively’ in Chinese.

Source text	‘So she stood mournfully at the drawing-room window (Bartholomew had so christened the library), dragged down by the weight of the crinoline she had submissively adopted. It was heavier and more drab than any dress she had yet worn’ (Woolf, 1928, p.136).”	
Translators	Target texts	Literal translations
Wei Hong & Min Le (1994)	因此，她悲哀地站在休息室的窗边（巴托罗缪已经这样命名了书房），被她已经温顺地接受的有衬架支撑的女裙的重量向下	So she stood sadly by the window of the lounge (as Bartholomew had already named the study), dragged down by the weight of the skirt with the lining frame support that she had meekly accepted. It was heavier and

	拖着。它比她曾穿过的任何礼服都沉重并且更单调而缺乏生气。	more monotonous and lifeless than any dress she had ever worn.
Lin Yan (2003/2015/2022)	因此,她悲哀地站在起居室（巴特洛莫已把它装饰成书房）的窗前,已顺从地穿上圈环衬裙,它的重量坠得她直不起腰来。她以前穿过的衣服从来没有如此沉重、灰暗、碍手碍脚。	So she stood sadly at the window of the living room (which Bartholomew had decorated it as a study) and had obediently put on the hoop petticoat, the weight of which felt so great that she could not stand upright. The clothes she had worn before had never been so heavy, grey, and in the way.
Ren Yiming (2014/2022)	她顺从地穿上了裙撑,悲哀地站在起居室（巴塞洛缪已经把它改称为书房）窗边,被裙撑的重量坠得她直不起腰。这东西比她穿过的任何衣服都要沉重和无趣,而且特别妨碍行动。	She obediently put on the pannier and stood sadly by the window of the living room (Bartholomew had renamed it the study), so pushed down by the weight of the pannier that she could not stand upright. It was heavier and more boring than anything she wore, and it was a particular hindrance to movement.
Hou Yiling (2021)	所以,她愁容满面地站在起居室的窗前（巴托洛莫太太用起居室这个词来称呼书房了）。她已经顺应时代潮流,拖曳起沉重的裙撑。她从未穿过如此沉重、如此拖	So she stood sadly at the window in the living room (Mrs Bartholomew used the word living room to refer to her study). She had gone with the trend of the times and dragged up her heavy pannier. She had never worn such heavy, draggy clothes and so much getting in the way.

	沓的衣服，还如此碍手碍脚。	
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Table 5. 6 Chinese translations of Example 1.

As can be seen in Table 6, the notion of ‘crinoline’, also known as ‘hooped skirts’ or the ‘cage crinoline’, was unfamiliar to the Chinese public and thus posed challenges to Chinese translators, resulting in various interpretations in the phrase ‘dragged down by the weight of the crinoline’. The ‘crinoline’ in this context symbolically refers to the societal pressures women faced to conform to specific standards of dress and behaviour. In T1, Wei and Min (1994) use the strategy of addition and compensation to paraphrase and describe the features and shape of a crinoline skirt with lined frame support underneath as “有(have)衬架(lining frame)支撑(support) 的(of)女(women)裙(skirt)的(of) 重量(weight) 向下(down) 拖着(drag)” (“dragged down by the weight of the skirt supported by a lined frame”) to depict the weight and drabness of this late Victorian dress that would be unfamiliar to Chinese readerships. By substituting ‘mournfully’ and ‘submissively’ with two adverbs “悲(sad)哀(grief)地(adverb marker)” and “温(gentle)顺(submissive)地 (adverb marker)” conveying Orlando’s emotion, Wei and Min emphasise how women were expected to sacrifice comfort and freedom to adhere to those expectations. Wei and Lin’s translation uses lengthier explanatory paraphrases, as if conscious of their task of introducing this piece of literature to Chinese readers. Significantly, Wei and Lin increase the adjective count from Woolf’s two (“heavier”, “drab”) to three “沉重” (“heavy”), “单调” (“monotonous”), and “缺乏生气” (“lifeless”) in the final sentence, intensifying the emotional effect. Wei and Lin’s approach displays a sensitivity towards Orlando’s plight as a woman, an awareness which in some way anticipates the post-1995 gender equality and feminist movement in China.

In contrast, Lin (2003) in T2 interprets crinoline as 衬 (lining) 裙(skirt), a more contemporary Chinese skirt that is similar to a petticoat, a skirt-like “light, loose undergarment hanging from the shoulders or waist” (Oxford English Dictionary). Thus she depicts Orlando’s dress as “圈(circle) 环(hoop) 衬 (lining) 裙(skirt)” (undergarments or petticoat); 圈 is a circle or line drawn in a certain space, indicating that the skirt encloses a woman’s body and limits movement; 环(huan), hoop, forming a ring-like structure so that it is surrounded or encircled,

the word's emphasis being on the limitations of the surrounding environment or conditions on the individual's actions. In this sense, Lin faithfully conveys Woolf's approach by using the metaphor of a skirt to depict the restraining force of social expectations and norms imposed on women; Chinese readers would sense this resonance in contemporary Chinese society. She uses additional strategies to describe Orlando's hardly being able to stand upright “直 (straight) 不(not) 起腰来(straighten up)” because of the weight of the dress. This evokes the concept of a double burden. Lin emphasises the burden that such expectations and social norms placed on women during Woolf's lifetime and before while also indirectly expressing her discontent with the double burden on women in contemporary China, where there is an expectation that women will work full time; an expectation, however, accompanied by the assumption that they will still attend to most of the housework. Significantly, she also uses three adjectives (“沉重”、“灰暗”、“碍手碍脚”) (“heavy”, “grey”, and “in the way”) to Woolf's two in the final sentence, increasing the emotional charge.

The increasing popularity of Victorian literature in China has arguably not only introduced the so-called “Lolita” fashion style, which encompasses Victorian girls' clothing and Rococo fine clothing, but has also contributed to the emergence of the neologism “裙(skirt) 撑 (support)” in China during the 2010s. Both Ren (2014) and Hou (2021) have substituted ‘crinoline’ with “裙(skirt) 撑 (support) (pannier)”, a term specially coined for the Lolita fashion style using two Chinese characters, “裙撑” (“pannier”). While Woolf uses the term “crinoline,” I have chosen to translate it as “pannier” to better reflect the period and the symbolic connotations implied in the passage. Although crinolines were fashionable in the mid-19th century, typically associated with bell-shaped skirts supported by steel hoops, this example, particularly when paired with the description of the garment's oppressive weight and sombre tone, evokes the earlier 18th-century pannier, which emphasised exaggerated width at the hips. This choice also aligns with the historical setting of the scene, which falls within the 18th century according to Orlando's shifting timeline. Translating the term as “pannier” emphasises not only the physical discomfort of such garments but also their symbolic role in enforcing restrictive gender norms. Similarly, T3 also employs addition strategies to resonate with “dragged down by the weight of the crinoline” as “被裙撑(pannier)的(of)重量(weight) 坠得(fall) 她(he) 直(straight) 不(not) 起腰(stand up)”, which describes how Orlando is so pushed down by the weight of the pannier that she could not stand upright. This translation emphasises the heavy weight of the dress to highlight her compliance, infused with a hint of irony regarding social conformity. Ren uses the positive sentence structure ‘is pushed down.... she could not stand upright’ to underscore how conventions of any epoch – including modern times - can restrict women's expressiveness and confine them to portraying social norms and

expectations. Additionally, Ren employs the substitution method to render phrases such as “heavier and more drab” as “沉重(heavier) 和(and) 无趣(more boring)” to stress the weight of the crinoline, yet women still obediently don it.

Hou (2021) depicts Orlando’s melancholy state of mind and respects Woolf’s translation by pairing it “她(he) 已经(had) 顺应(gone with) 时代(time) 潮流(trend), 拖曳起(drag up) 沉重的(heavy) 裙 撑(pannier)”. Hou uses an additional strategy and compensation to rewrite Orlando as someone who “had gone with the trend of the times and dragged up her heavy pannier”. But the impact of Woolf’s translation is not fully rendered because the brutal force of “dragged down” is missing from the Chinese, instead replacing it with “up”. Syntactically, Hou’s translation is also weaker, using the “顺应(gone with) 时代(time) 潮流(trend)” mid-phrase, an approach which does not match Woolf’s blunt directness of “...which she had submissively adopted” to close a sentence. Hou’s translation tends to render the burden imposed on women merely inconvenient.

The analysis above of the four translations in Example 1 using different ‘optional shifts’ techniques sheds light on the translators’ translation decision-making process and reflects their perceptions of women and gender roles within society. Wei and Min (1994), by using addition and rewriting to paraphrase unfamiliar “crinoline” culture to Chinese, translate Orlando dragged down by the weight of the skirt supported by a lined frame to emphasise the societal pressures women faced to conform and attire as a means of challenging traditional notions of gender expectations, which align with Woolf’s intentions. Lin (2003) is more faithful to the original text. Still, she uses the addition and substitution approach to translate ‘crinoline’ to protest against women’s double burden in contemporary Chinese society. Ren (2014) uses addition and repetition methods to stress that the weight of the pannier so pushes Orlando down that she cannot stand upright to accentuate the hereditary positions of power, reflecting a desire to voice concerns about the unfair power relations between males and females in society. On the other hand, Hou (2014) demonstrates a less sympathetic stance towards women, echoing the attitudes held by many male counterparts by using addition and compensation translation strategies to describe Orlando going with the trend of the times. Hou’s translation emerges within the context of a backlash against feminist positions during Xi’s era. These varied discursive portrayals of women by different Chinese translators over time serve as mediators for expressing the translators’ feminist perspectives, illuminating how they preserve a ‘given text world’ for the benefit of text receivers operating within different cultural and linguistic environments (Hatim 2001, p127).

5.3.2 Case Study 2: Challenging gendered perceptions of creativity and literary value through the shifting reception of Orlando's poetry

Throughout *Orlando*, poetry functions as a powerful tool for self-expression, self-discovery, and connection. It allows the protagonist to navigate shifting identities, explore their inner world, and construct meaning in a rapidly changing society. Woolf uses the changing reception of Orlando's poetry—before and after the character's gender transformation—to explore how artistic judgment and literary value are shaped by gendered social expectations. As a young nobleman, Orlando gains access to elite literary circles where his poetry is debated and, at times, admired. However, after Orlando becomes a woman, the reception of her work shifts. Critics begin to read her poetry through the lens of her gender, often devaluing or dismissing it due to prevailing assumptions about women's intellectual inferiority and artistic limitations (Haner, 2022). This shift reflects the broader historical challenges women writers have faced in seeking recognition and legitimacy within a male-dominated literary tradition.

This theme resonates strongly with Woolf's feminist politics, articulated most clearly in her work *A Room of One's Own* (1929). In *A Room of One's Own*, Woolf reflects on being barred from entering the Bodleian Library—a space symbolic of patriarchal intellectual authority—and famously suggests it is perhaps worse to be “locked in” than “locked out.” She critiques the “male sentence,” a literary mode structured by masculine logic and values, as unsuitable for expressing women's lived experiences, and advocates instead for a distinct female literary tradition. These ideas underpin Orlando's satirical portrayal of how gender affects not only identity but the reception and valuation of artistic work.

By creating a character who undergoes a dramatic transformation from a man to a woman, Woolf not only challenges the interplay between gender and power but also seeks to caution women that a man's attention to their thoughts and opinions does not necessarily imply respect or equal regard, particularly regarding intellectual and creative talents. A particularly revealing moment arises when Orlando reflects on her discomfort within the “society of wits”—the male-dominated literary elite of the 18th century. While Orlando appreciates the literary works of these men, she feels unsettled by their treatment of women upon discovering the “high opinion poets have of themselves; then the low one they have of others” (Woolf 1928, p.118). It is disheartening for her to learn that Lord Chesterfield sees women as “but children of a larger growth . . . A man of sense only trifles with them, plays with them, humours, and flatters them,” while Mr Pope posits that ‘women have no desires, only affectations. When they lack the stimulus of the other sex, women can find nothing to say to each other. When they are alone, they do not talk. They scratch’ (ibid., p.118). “The society of

wits” mentioned in Example 2 plays a significant role in Orlando's life and transformation. It represents the intellectual and cultural milieu that Orlando navigates during the 18th century of her journey and serves as an essential backdrop for examining themes of gender, identity, and the constraints of societal expectations. The loss of relish for this society reflects Orlando's changing perspective and the impact of gender transformation on her experience within this intellectual and social circle. Example 2 below illustrates her disappointment in her learned society of writers towards women, especially female writers.

Example 2:

“She was forced to the conclusion that there was something in the sneer of Mr Pope, in the condescension of Mr Addison, and in the secret of Lord Chesterfield which took away her relish for the society of wits, deeply though she must continue to respect their works (Woolf, 1928, p.121).”

When Orlando transformed into a woman, returning to England and becoming a “high-society” noblewoman, she encountered the challenges faced by women writers in gaining recognition and respect within a male-dominated literary culture. By using “took away her relish”, Orlando expresses her disgust at overhearing “the society of wits”, those successful male counterparts’ attitudes towards women. Through this argument, Woolf reflects the social expectations surrounding female writers and femininity. Example 2 is selected to demonstrate the role of translation in conveying traditional gendered notions within the realm of writers and how different translators highlight or de-emphasise Woolf's critique of the challenges and limitations women face in the literary world (Nicholson, 2013). This complex sentence embodies Woolf's literary writing style through subtle and nuanced expressions, which prove challenging for translators. Capturing the gender dynamics and power relations that underscore the dismissal of the female protagonist by male figures necessitates sensitivity and contextual knowledge from the Chinese translators (Liu, 2017). Overall, from a translation perspective, this passage presents multiple challenges. Effectively capturing the nuances of Woolf's sentence, particularly words like “sneer,” “condescension,” and “secret”, requires not only linguistic skill but also a profound awareness of the power dynamics and emotional subtleties at play. Translators must negotiate the implicit irony and ambivalence in Orlando's reaction while also preserving the feminist critique embedded in Woolf's language. Furthermore, the manner in which this passage is rendered in Chinese can significantly influence how Woolf's critique of gendered literary value is received by a new audience.

Source text	“She was forced to the conclusion that there was something in the sneer of Mr Pope, in the condescension of Mr Addison, and in the secret of Lord Chesterfield which took away her relish for the society of wits, deeply though she must continue to respect their works (Woolf, 1928, p.121).”	
Translators	Target texts	Literal translations
Wei Hong & Min Le (1994)	而且她不得不得出结论，在蒲伯先生的嘲弄中，在爱迪生先生的屈尊态度中，在柴斯特菲尔德先生的诡秘中，存在着那种使她远离天才聚会之乐趣的东西，尽管她必须继续对他们的作品保持深深的敬重。	And she had to conclude that in Mr. Pope's mockery, in Mr. Addison's condescension, in Mr. Chesterfield's mystery, there was that thing that kept her away from the pleasures of the gathering of geniuses, though she must continue to maintain a deep respect for their work.
Lin Yan (2003/2015/2022)	她不得不得出这样的结论:蒲伯先生的讥讽嘲骂、艾迪生先生的居高临下、切斯特菲尔德爵士的世事洞明，里面都有某些东西让她对文人圈子倒了胃口，尽管她必须继续尊重他们的作品。	She had to conclude that Mr. Pope's sarcastic ridicule, Mr. Addison's condescension, Sir Chesterfield's insight into the world, there was something in it that made her lose her appetite for literati circles, although she had to continue to respect their work.
Ren Yiming (2014/2022)	她不由自主地得出这样的结论，那就是在蒲伯先生的讥讽、艾迪生先生的倨傲和切斯特菲尔德勋爵的	She could not help getting this conclusion that in Mr. Pope's sarcasm, Mr. Addison's arrogance, and Lord Chesterfield's unfathomable heights, there was something which she lost appetite for the social circle of

	莫测高深中，有某些东西令她对文人才子的社交圈倒了胃口，尽管对他们的作品她仍不得不保持敬意。	the literati, although she had to pay respect for their work.
Hou Yiling (2021)	她只能得出这样一个结论：在蒲柏先生的讥讽里，在艾迪生先生降尊纡贵的态度中，在切斯特菲尔德勋爵的秘密中，有某种东西让她对文人雅士倒了胃口。尽管如此，她还一如既往地尊重他们的作品。	She could only conclude that in Mr. Pope's sarcasm, in Mr. Addison's devotional attitude, in Lord Chesterfield's secrets, there was something that made her lose appetite to the literati. Still, she had to respect their work as always.

Table 5. 7 Chinese translations of Example 2

As indicated in Table 7, the term “society of wits” carries significant cultural and historical weight, particularly in relation to 17th- and 18th-century England. Emerging during the Restoration period, this term evokes a flourishing literary and intellectual scene characterised by salons, coffeehouse debates, and elite literary circles (Levine, 1991). These societies, while intellectually vibrant, were often exclusive, with membership typically determined by wit, social connections, and literary accomplishment (Levine, 1991). However, beneath the surface of intellectual exchange, these groups were also shaped by power struggles and the performance of masculine authority. In *Orlando*, Woolf engages with this tradition but does so with a subtle irony. The use of the moniker “society of wits” is not a straightforward celebration of literary genius; rather, it serves as a critique of the hollow social performance that often accompanied male-dominated literary culture. At this point in the novel, Orlando begins to see through the reputations of Pope, Addison, and other great men of letters. While she continues to respect their written works, their legendary wit now appears tainted by masculinism, elitism, and petty interpersonal dynamics. Woolf conveys this disillusionment with deft irony: Orlando finds herself relieved that she cannot overhear their real conversations through a coffeehouse window, preferring the imagined brilliance of their minds to the triviality

and malice of their actual talk. Thus, the phrase “society of wits” functions as a kind of double gesture. On the one hand, it acknowledges the cultural capital of literary genius; on the other, it critiques the gendered and performative nature of how that genius was socially enacted and maintained. Woolf draws a line between the enduring value of their writing and the exclusionary, often demeaning behaviours exhibited in their public personas—a distinction Orlando comes to recognise and reject. In this sense, as mentioned in the source text, the negative experiences with individuals’ attitudes like “the sneer of Mr Pope, in the condescension of Mr Addison, and in the secret of Lord Chesterfield” have impacted Orlando’s perception and made her to “take away her relish” with this intellectual community. The optional shifts observed in Example 2 aim to convey Woolf’s disappointment with male writers’ attitudes towards female writers and femininity through terms like “took away her relish for the society of wits”, “sneer”, ‘condescension”, and “secret”. Translations reveal that the four translators employ different translation strategies and differences in their decision-making process, while all translators aim to replicate Woolf’s feminist point faithfully.

Wei and Min in T1 use compensation methods translating the idiomatic expression “took away her relish for the society of wits” by paraphrasing the sentence with the expression as “存在着(there exists)那种(that kind of) 使 (make) 她(her) 远离(keep away) 天才(geniuses) 聚会 (gatherings) 之(of) 乐趣(pleasure) 的(of) 东西(thing)” (“there exists something that makes her keep her away from the satisfaction of the gathering with these geniuses”) to illustrate the negative attitude from male intellectual impacting Orlando engaging in this intellectual community. The compensation method makes this translation depict the result clearly. They substitute “the society of” with “天才(geniuses) 聚会 (gatherings)”, which refers to individuals with exceptional intellectual or creative abilities, often recognised as geniuses in their respective fields. It is a neutral word that can describe both males and females. However, “天才(geniuses) 聚会 (gatherings)” does not capture the specific cultural and intellectual context of the phrase “the society of wits”, an elite group and gendered and performative nature of how that genius was socially enacted and maintained, as mentioned before. Moreover, Wei and Min use a compensation strategy by creating a parallel structure “在(zai)”, an adverb indicates an ongoing action three times, “在(indicates an ongoing action)...的(of) 嘲弄(mockery) 中 (amidst)”, “在...屈尊(condescension)态度(attitude)中(amidst)”, “在...的(of) 诡秘(surreptitious) 中 (amidst)”, to emphasise these male writers’ negative attitudes, which focuses more on conveying the negative impact on Orlando’s “relish”. They translate “sneer”, “condescension”, and “secret” as “嘲弄(mockery)”, “屈尊(condescension)”, and “诡秘(surreptitious)”, which are all negative Chinese characters which express women are

dismissed or ignored by male writers. This implies the negotiations of translators who use negative words to emphasise why Orlando loses enthusiasm for participating in these intellectual gatherings.

In T2, Lin uses the substitution method to substitute the phrase “took away her relish for the society of wits” with “让(make) 她(he) 对(for) 文人(literati) 圈子(circle) 倒了(pour out) 胃口(appetite)(lose appetite)” to express the negative attitude on those the wits' behaviour and disillusionment with the literary community. Lin uses the domestication translation method to render “the society of wits” with “文人(literati) 圈子(circle)” (“literati circle”), which is a concept deeply rooted in Chinese culture and has existed for centuries. “文人(literati)” are highly esteemed and held positions of influence in traditional Chinese society. They are often scholars, poets, artists, or government officials who possess refined literary skills and intellectual depth, and “文人(literati)” can be used to describe both men and women. “文人(literati) 圈子(circle)” is typically exclusive, and entry is based on one's literary achievements, reputation, and personal connection. “文人(literati) 圈子(circle)” is not only a platform for artistic expression but also a social occasion for networking and establishing social hierarchies (Kao & Xu 2021). As mentioned before, translating “society of wits” as “literati” risks flattening the nuance and critique embedded in Woolf's phrase. Literati carries a more uniformly positive and respectful connotation, foregrounding scholarly or literary accomplishment without the satirical edge Woolf deploys. It fails to capture the performative, hierarchical, and exclusionary dynamics that “society of wits” subtly satirises. Woolf's term invites a feminist re-evaluation of how literary authority is gendered and performed—something the more neutral literati translation might obscure.

Besides, Lin further uses the substitution and addition methods to illustrate the attitudes of “Mr Pope's sneer, Mr Addison's condescension and Sir Chesterfield's secret” using Chinese four-characters idiomatic expressions such as “讥讽(ridicule)嘲(satirise)骂(scold) (ridicule and satirise), 居高(height) 临下(look down)” (“arrogance based on one's high social status”) and “世事(worldly affairs) 洞明(insight)” (“insightful in the worldly affair”) to replicate Woolf's feminist point while conveying a formal Chinese writing style. These Chinese idiomatic expressions used by Lin are used to depict “the society of wits” who are complacent and look down on the woman writers. The translation effectively conveys the negative intent behind the “sneer”, “condescension”, and “secret” and reflects the power dynamics within the literary community. Lin's translation remains sensitive to the feminist nuances in the source text by highlighting the oppressive attitudes and behaviours directed towards Orlando.

As a feminist activist translator, Ren in T3 translates “took away her relish for the society of wits” into “令(make) 她(he) 对(for) 文人(literati) 才子(gifted scholar) 的(of) 社交圈(social circle) 倒了(pour out) 胃口(appetite)(lose appetite)” (“made her lost appetite for in the social circle of the literati and gifted scholar”) which depicts the deep disgust towards the male writers’ attitudes treatment of women. Similar to T2, Ren substitutes “the society of wits” with “文人(literati) 才子(gifted scholar) 的(of) 社交圈(social circle)”. As mentioned before, “文人(literati)” refers to those scholars, poets, and artists who possess refined literary skills and intellectual depth, and they are highly esteemed and hold positions of influence in traditional Chinese society. The “才” (cái) in “才子” refers to intellectual and artistic abilities. In this sense, the term “才子(gifted scholar)” describes those with outstanding talent in literature, art, academics, etc. and is usually used to describe men. Ren uses “文人(literati) 才子(gifted scholar)” to emphasise the sex of ‘the society of wits’ and express the disgusting attitude “倒了(pour out) 胃口(appetite)” (“lose appetite”) toward them. Ren’s evocative feminist rendering of Orlando stresses the broader impact of gender discrimination in the literary world. Besides, she further chooses “讥 (ridicule) 讽 (satirise)”, “倨傲 (arrogant and proud)” and “莫测高深 (mysterious and unfathomable depths)”, which are all negative Chinese characters to indicate the translator’s attitude on the limits faced by women writers in ‘the society of wits’. These intense negative Chinese characters explain why Orlando is disillusioned with the literary community and struggles against societal expectations.

While translating “took away her relish for the society of wits”, Hou in T4 renders it with “让(make) 她(he) 对(for) 文人(literati) 雅士(refined scholar) 倒了(pour out) 胃口(appetite)(lose appetite)” (“made her lose appetite for the literati and refined scholar”). Hou substitutes “the society of wits” with “文人(literati) 雅士(refined scholar)”. Here, there is a contradictory point on the translation “雅士(refined scholar)”. “雅(ya)” originates from ancient Confucianism and is closely related to the Confucian concept of cultivating one’s moral character and ruling the country and the world. Traditional Chinese culture considers “雅(ya)” a moral, cultural and aesthetic standard. A person with “雅(ya)” is considered to have a noble character and good upbringing, and they can reflect cultural cultivation and moral standards in their speech, behaviour, aesthetic taste and social interactions. In the concept of “文人(literati) 雅士(refined scholar)”, the meaning of “雅(ya)” is more prominent. “文人(literati) 雅士(refined scholar)” refers to a person respected and praised by society not only for his talent but also for his personal cultivation and noble moral code. “文人(literati) 雅士(refined scholar)” is mainly describe man. In this context, it stresses Orlando having a sense of disappointment

and disgust towards these male literati due to their negative attitude toward female writers while acknowledging the need to maintain respect for their literary works. “雅士(refined scholar)” is opposite to the intention of the source text. Besides, while translating ‘the condescension of Mr Addison’, Hou uses a more positive word to describe Mr Addison’s personality: “降尊纡贵” (“a person of high status deigns to serve a lower-status person to demonstrate humility”), which emphasises praise of one person’s moral value of modesty or humility even though the person is in high status. This translation shows a less sympathetic stance towards women and underplays the attitude in which Woolf’s source text contests the gender discrimination of women.

To summarise, the historical and cultural references in Example 2 present additional challenges for Chinese translators. Wei and Min (1994) use compensation and substitution by emphasising these male writers’ negative attitudes to interpret why Orlando loses enthusiasm for participating in these intellectual gatherings. Lin (2003) uses substitution and addition methods to express Orlando’s loss of appetite for the literati circle, which remains sensitive to the feminist nuances in the source text. Ren (2014) uses substitution and repetition strategies to depict the deep disgust towards the male writers’ attitudes and treatment of women, intensifying the original text’s criticism of societal limits on women through rhetorical devices. Hou (2021) uses substitution and rewriting methods to generate linguistic expressions that downplay the source text’s gender discrimination against women. Case Study 2 demonstrates the different interpretation and translation processes that have emerged over time, highlighting the importance of understanding historical and cultural context to capture the connotations and implications associated with translating the society of writers’ attitudes towards women through Orlando’s gender transformation.

5.3.3 Case Study 3: Challenging the traditional notions of gender identity through androgyny and gender fluidity

As Michel Foucault argues in his book *The History of Sexuality* (1990), Western views of gender have been suppressed since the 17th century due to the rise of capitalism and the manipulation of certain ideologies. Foucault believes that social hierarchies and norms restrict individuals to specific alliances, narrowly define gender, and impose gender roles to create a patriarchal domain. Orlando’s gender fluidity and relationship with other characters are crucial to challenging traditional gender roles, identities and expectations, primarily through Orlando and Shelmerdine’s conversions. Example 3 is selected to demonstrate challenges to the conventional notions of gender identity through androgyny and gender fluidity.

Example 3.

“For each was so surprised at the quickness of the other’s sympathy, and it was to each such a revelation that a woman could be as tolerant and free-spoken as a man, and a man as strange and subtle as a woman, that they had to put the matter to the proof at once (Woolf 1928, p.144).”

The paragraph conveys a scene in which two characters engage in a conversation where they express surprise and curiosity about each other’s gender identity and the fact that Orlando is restrained by “the spirit of the age” and women are forced to get married in the nineteenth century (ibid., p.136). Orlando and Shelmerdine’s relationship subverts the traditional notions of gender identity through androgyny and gender fluidity. Orlando and Shelmerdine’s first encounter occurs when Shelmerdine, a gentleman on horseback, meets Orlando, a young girl lying on the ground with a broken ankle. “A few minutes later, they became engaged”, and “the morning after, as they sat at breakfast”, they exchanged names (ibid., p.139). While talking, Orlando and Shelmerdine exchange: “‘You are a woman, Shell!’ she cried. ‘You are a man, Orlando!’ he cried” (ibid., p. 140). In this sense, Shelmerdine’s identity is comparable to Orlando’s, enabling him to enjoy “the love of both sexes equally” as Orlando does (cited in Kathern 1999, p. 254). In traditional notions of marriage and gender identity, men are expected to have more power and control in the relationship. In contrast, women are expected to be submissive and deferential to their husbands (Franke, 2017). However, this passage presents a pivotal moment in *Orlando*, where gender boundaries are not only blurred but inverted through mutual recognition and shared experience. This scene marks a moment of profound androgynous connection between Orlando and Shelmerdine—two characters who, while appearing as a woman and a man respectively, identify and affirm traits in each other that society has traditionally coded as belonging to the “opposite” sex.

The exchange undermines essentialist notions of gender by suggesting that qualities like tolerance, freedom of speech, subtlety, and strangeness are not biologically determined but are instead products of cultural expectations. This idea resonates strongly with Woolf’s argument in *A Room of One’s Own* (1929), where she critiques the rigidity of gender roles in literary culture and insists that the most creative minds are androgynous. There, she famously claims that “It is fatal for anyone who writes to think of their sex,” advocating for a mind that moves freely between masculine and feminine registers. The emotional and intellectual equality Orlando and Shelmerdine discover reflects Woolf’s belief that artistic and personal fulfilment requires transcending binary gender thinking. Their relationship further challenges 19th-century patriarchal marriage ideals. Instead, Woolf imagines a bond built on mutual

recognition and shared complexity—one that collapses the divide between male and female traits, proposing a model of romantic partnership that is both egalitarian and fluid.

From a translation perspective, this passage presents significant challenges. Words such as “tolerant,” “free-spoken,” “strange,” and “subtle” carry gendered connotations in both English and Chinese, but their cultural weight differs across contexts. For instance, free-spoken (直言不讳) in Chinese may be interpreted as boldness or even rudeness when attributed to a woman, potentially clashing with traditional Chinese ideals of feminine restraint. Similarly, translating “strange” (怪异) or “subtle” (微妙) risks reinforcing stereotypes of emotional instability or passivity when applied to men, unless handled with care. Moreover, Chinese, unlike English, is a grammatically gender-neutral language, yet it remains deeply embedded with cultural gender codes. This complicates the task of rendering the gender fluidity and androgynous balance in Orlando and Shelmerdine’s interaction without either dulling the contrast or overexplaining it. A translator must navigate not only the lexical meaning of each term but also the gendered subtext and Woolf’s irony, which often lies just beneath the surface.

Source text	“For each was so surprised at the quickness of the other’s sympathy, and it was to each such a revelation that a woman could be as tolerant and free-spoken as a man, and a man as strange and subtle as a woman, that they had to put the matter to the proof at once (Woolf, 1928, p.144).”	
Translators	Target texts	Literal translations
Wei Hong and Min Le (1994)	因为每一个人都对另一个人同样的感受的迅速产生感到如此惊讶，而且对每个人来说，一个女人能够象一个男人一样容忍，直言不讳，而男人则象女人一样奇特，微妙，这是意想不到的，因此他们不得不立刻检验这件事。	Because each person is so surprised by the rapid emergence of the other's empathy, and for everyone, a woman can be as tolerant and outspoken as a man, and a man as peculiar and subtle as a woman, this is unexpected, they must examine the matter at once.
Lin Yan (2003)	因为两人都为对方的默契来得如此之快感到惊奇，都觉得这	Because both are amazed at how quickly the other's tacit understanding has come, and both feel that it is a

	是一个启示，表明女子可宽容，坦率如男子，男子亦可古怪、敏感如女子，对此他们也必须立即加以验证。	revelation that women can be tolerant and frank like men, and men can be eccentric and sensitive as women, and they must also verify this immediately.
Ren Yiming (2014)	因为两人之间这么快就心心相印，实在令人惊奇，而且，女人竟会像男人一般宽容、坦率而男人竟也会像女人那样古怪、敏感对此，两人都觉得有必要立即验证一下。	Because it was amazing how quickly the two of them became heart-to-heart, and that women could be as tolerant and frank as men, and men could be as eccentric and sensitive as women, both felt the need to verify this immediately.
Hou Yiling (2021)	因为他们很惊讶彼此之间这么快就产生了共鸣，他们都发现，女人可以像男人一样宽容，坦率，男人也可以像女人一样难以捉摸，所以 they 要立刻对此验证一下。	Because they were surprised that they resonated with each other so quickly, they both discovered that women can be as tolerant and frank as men, and men can be as hard to pin down as women, so they want to check this out immediately.

Table 5. 8 Chinese translations of Example 3

Here, Woolf celebrates gender fluidity and androgyny, presenting traditionally feminine and masculine traits as equally admirable and capable of being shared between the sexes. The structure of the sentence parallels these qualities in a balanced, reciprocal way: tolerant and free-spoken (typically coded masculine) are applied to women; strange and subtle (coded feminine) to men. Woolf constructs a moment of mutual recognition between Orlando and Shelmerdine that celebrates androgyny and gender fluidity. The sentence balances traditionally masculine traits (tolerant, free-spoken) with feminine traits (strange, subtle) and presents both as equally admirable, suggesting that these qualities are not bound by biological sex but shared human characteristics. Woolf's tone is affirmative and revelatory, with the use of "revelation" suggesting a moment of mutual understanding and human connection that transcends conventional gender binaries.

However, when I examine Translation 1 (Wei Hong & Min Le, 1994), significant semantic shifts occur that notably alter the tone of the sentence and diminish Woolf's radical message. While T1 attempts to adhere closely to the structure of the original, several semantic shifts take place that considerably affect the tone and message of the passage. For example, "tolerant" is rendered as 容忍. The term "tolerant" in English implies generosity, patience, and

emotional openness. However, 容忍 (tolerant/passive) in Chinese tends to lean more towards enduring or putting up with something unpleasant, introducing a term that connotes passive endurance rather than open-minded acceptance, along with a tone of passivity or even suffering. This shift weakens the positive and empowered portrayal of the feminine capacity for tolerance. Similarly, “free-spoken” becomes “直言不讳” (“outspoken” or “sharp-tongued”). The English “free-spoken” suggests openness, honesty, and confidence—positive traits in the context of gender equality. However, “直言不讳” (“outspoken”) in Chinese often carries negative connotations, especially when applied to women. It suggests bluntness or a disregard for social tact, clashing with traditional Chinese ideals of feminine modesty and restraint. I translate “直言不讳” as “outspoken” or “sharp-tongued.” As a result, “free-spoken” translates into 直言不讳 (outspoken/sharp-tongued), a phrase that implies bluntness or rudeness, particularly problematic when describing a woman in a Chinese cultural context that traditionally values modesty and restraint in female speech. This translation may unintentionally undermines the value of a woman possessing this trait. On the male side, “strange” is translated as “奇特” (“peculiar”) and “subtle” as “微妙” (“subtle”), both of which risk pathologising or trivialising the feminine traits Woolf seeks to affirm. The English “strange” here is playful and nonjudgmental, implying uniqueness or intriguing difference. In contrast, “奇特” (“peculiar”) tends to suggest oddity or abnormality, which can evoke othering or eccentricity. “奇特” (“peculiar”) implies peculiarity or eccentricity, while “微妙” (“subtle”) may be perceived as faint or insubstantial rather than emotionally intelligent. These shifts collectively undermine Woolf’s positive depiction of androgyny, diminishing the intended positive revaluation of feminine complexity when applied to men. These translations inadvertently reframe the original tone from revelation and balance to one of tension and incongruity, thereby compromising the feminist and gender-subversive potential of the source text. Thus, the analysis of T1 reveals how seemingly minor lexical decisions can reshape the ideological force of Woolf’s prose, demonstrating the broader implications of translating gendered language across cultural contexts.

In T2, Lin Yan offers a version of the passage that appears smoother and more idiomatic than T1 but alters key nuances in Woolf’s gender politics. The phrase “a woman could be as tolerant and free-spoken as a man” is rendered with “宽容” for “tolerant” and 坦率 for “free-spoken.” Compared to T1’s more aggressive “直言不讳” (outspoken/sharp-tongued), “坦率” (meaning “frank” or “straightforward”) is a softer, more socially acceptable trait for women in Chinese discourse. While this choice avoids casting the woman as socially inappropriate, it maintains fidelity to the source text to reframe outspokenness as masculine,

suggesting that for a woman to be frank is to borrow a male trait rather than to express an equal human quality. On the male side, “strange” and “subtle” are translated as “古怪” (“eccentric”) and “敏感” (“sensitive”). This pair introduces greater interpretive distance from the source text: “古怪” (“eccentric”) suggests quirkiness, unpredictability, or even oddity—connotations that can portray the male character as unstable or deviant. Meanwhile, “敏感” (“sensitive”) connotes emotional delicacy, often linked to feminine vulnerability or hypersensitivity in Chinese culture. The cumulative effect is a subtle feminisation of Shelmerdine, but in a way that might not affirm femininity as positive but rather reinforce it as fragile or abnormal. These semantic shifts reframe Woolf’s affirmation of androgyny as a social curiosity rather than a visionary ideal. Lin’s translation reads fluently, but by smoothing over the ideological edge of Woolf’s sentence, it compromises the radical gender critique by re-embedding gendered qualities within conventional Chinese binaries.

T3 Ren Yiming’s translation closely mirrors Lin Yan’s version in both lexical choices and sentence structure, suggesting a continuation of the same interpretive logic. Like Lin, Ren uses “宽容” and “坦率” to translate “tolerant” and “free-spoken,” maintaining a respectful and conventional tone that avoids potentially negative connotations, to keep fidelity of the source text, which positions these traits as exceptional when possessed by women. Similarly, Ren follows Lin in translating “strange” and “subtle” as “古怪” (“eccentric”) and “敏感” (“sensitive”). While “敏感” (“sensitive”) is a relatively accurate rendering of “subtle” in emotional terms, in Chinese it often suggests overreactivity or sentimentality, especially when applied to men, potentially undermining the dignity of male emotional depth. “古怪” (“eccentric”), like in Lin’s version, risks pathologising what Woolf frames as positive complexity. However, Ren introduces some stylistic differences: the use of “心心相印” (literally “heart-to-heart connection”) adds warmth and emotional immediacy to the description of Orlando and Shelmerdine’s understanding. This phrase softens the contrast between gendered traits and helps preserve the sense of mutual discovery evident in the original. Still, the broader issue remains: Ren’s version ultimately retains conventional gender associations, particularly by assigning feminine traits to men in a way that may evoke novelty or deviance, rather than highlighting emotional richness and equality. Thus, while Ren preserves much of the structure of Woolf’s sentence, his lexical choices echo cultural expectations that complicate the reception of gender fluidity in the Chinese context.

Hou Yiling’s translation is noteworthy for adopting a more interpretive approach, which arguably comes closest to preserving Woolf’s tone and message. Similar to Lin and Ren, Hou translates “tolerant” and “free-spoken” as “宽容” (“tolerant”) and “坦率” (“free-spoken”),

choices that are culturally appropriate and maintain clarity. However, his treatment of “strange” and “subtle” is distinctive: he avoids directly translating these terms as “古怪” (“eccentric”) or “敏感” (“sensitive”), opting instead for the phrase “难以捉摸”—an idiom meaning “hard to pin down” or “elusive.” This term carries a neutral, even intriguing ambiguity, steering clear of the pathologising or sentimental tones found in previous versions. Rather than depicting Shelmerdine as emotionally unstable or odd, Hou preserves his complexity and mystery, thereby aligning more closely with Woolf’s affirmation of emotional nuance in men. Additionally, using “共鸣” (resonance) adds a layer of shared emotional depth between the characters, reinforcing their mutual recognition of androgynous qualities. While Hou’s interpretation deviates slightly from literal translations, it compensates by preserving both the ideological force and literary subtlety of the original. His lexical choices respect the narrative’s spirit as well as the cultural constraints of the Chinese language. Among the translations, Hou’s version best captures Woolf’s vision of androgyny not as an anomaly but as an enriching and natural fusion of human qualities.

Across Translations 1 to 4, distinct patterns emerge in how Woolf’s androgynous vision is adapted. T1 (Wei Hong and Min Le) takes a literal approach but employs terms like “容忍” (“tolerant/passive”) and “直言不讳” (“outspoken”) that cast feminine traits as passive or socially inappropriate, thereby undermining the positive framing in the source. T2 (Lin Yan) adopts smoother phrasing “宽容” (“tolerant”) and “坦率” (“free-spoken”), “古怪” (“eccentric”) and “敏感” (“sensitive”), but tends to pathologise male femininity as eccentric or overly emotional, reflecting traditional gender coding. T3 (Ren Yiming) largely mirrors T2, with slightly more emotive expressions like 心心相印 (heart-to-heart), yet still reinforces a gendered divide. T4 (Hou Yiling) stands apart for its interpretive sensitivity—retaining balance and nuance through gender-neutral terms like 难以捉摸 (hard to pin down), effectively preserving Woolf’s ironic tone and celebration of androgyny. Overall, T1–T3 show a pattern of semantic softening or distortion, especially of feminine-coded traits, while T4 better sustains the ideological integrity of Woolf’s gender critique.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter presents a comparative analysis of four Chinese translations of Virginia Woolf’s *Orlando: A Biography*, utilising a diachronic corpus-based methodology to examine how themes of gender fluidity and androgyny have been interpreted and conveyed across various historical and cultural contexts in China. Guided by three central research questions—

(1) the types of translation shifts utilised in conveying feminist ideas, (2) the impact of translators' socio-cultural backgrounds on their interpretive choices, and (3) how translators balance fidelity to the source text with cultural resonance—the study has revealed how individual translators' identities and ideologies influence the reception of Woolf's subversive gender narrative.

The earliest translation, by Wei Hong and Min Le (1994), emerged during a period when Chinese society began to reopen culturally after decades of political turbulence. Their co-translated work reflects this context using extended explanatory paraphrasing, lengthy sentences, and a pronounced tendency to provide background for unfamiliar cultural references, such as the "crinoline." Their strategy of addition and compensation seeks to domesticate Woolf's text for a readership unfamiliar with gender discourse, translating feminist symbolism into terms familiar to Chinese readers. For instance, when describing the oppressive weight of the crinoline, they add modifiers like "monotonous" and "lifeless," thereby intensifying the emotional effect and social commentary. However, this elaborative style occasionally overexplains Woolf's subtle irony, diluting her complex feminist critique. While Wei and Min exhibit a certain sympathy for women's oppression, their approach reflects an early-stage feminist consciousness within a conservative cultural framework.

Lin Yan's 2003 translation marks a transitional point in Chinese feminist translation. As a professional translator in an era of increasing openness to gender discourse, Lin adopts a relatively faithful approach, preserving much of Woolf's style and meaning while also incorporating culturally resonant terms. She uses substitution and addition techniques, in particular, translating the "society of wits" as "literati circle" which renders Woolf's critique of gendered literary power structures more accessible but less radical. Her use of traditional Chinese idioms conveys emotional nuances while still highlighting the challenges faced by women in intellectual spaces. Lin remains attuned to feminist subtexts, particularly regarding women's double burdens, yet at times reverts to conventional gender norms in lexical choices that soften Woolf's gender ambiguity and androgynous vision.

The 2014 translation by Ren Yiming engages in a deliberate feminist intensification of the source text. As a well-known feminist translator with a strong commitment to women's literature, Ren uses the strategies such as substitution, repetition, and rhetorical enhancement to emphasise the emotional depth and ideological weight of Woolf's critique. In the scene addressing male literary elites, Ren translates "society of wits" as "social circle of the literati and gifted scholar", adding gendered specificity and portraying Orlando's disgust more vividly through idioms like "lost appetite." Ren does not hesitate to amplify Woolf's condemnation of gender hierarchies, portraying female subjectivity and resistance with clarity and rhetorical power. Her translation balances readability with ideological depth, enhancing Woolf's vision rather than merely transmitting it.

In contrast, Hou Yiling's 2021 translation demonstrates a more conservative and formal approach. While it is syntactically polished and readable, Hou often underplays Woolf's feminist urgency. For instance, he renders "strange and subtle" as "hard to pin down," which removes the emotional complexity Woolf attributes to male characters. Similarly, he translates "the society of wits" as "refined literati," invoking Confucian respectability and inadvertently neutralising Woolf's critique of male-dominated intellectual circles. Hou's choice of softened or euphemistic expressions often results in the ideological dilution of key passages. While his version maintains surface fidelity, it reflects a broader political and cultural climate under Xi Jinping's leadership, one increasingly marked by conservatism and the reassertion of traditional values.

Across all four translations, clear diachronic trends emerge. The earliest co-translated work (T1) is characterised by verbosity and paraphrasing, endeavouring to make Woolf's challenging text accessible during a time when feminist and gender nonconforming discourse was still in its infancy. T2 (Lin) illustrates an increasing sensitivity to feminist nuances while maintaining fidelity to the text's structure. T3 (Ren) actively engages with feminist ideology, using translation as a vehicle for critique and amplification. T4 (Hou), although linguistically adept, leans towards surface neutrality, which can obscure Woolf's feminist and queer undertones. These patterns reveal how each translator's socio-cultural positioning and historical context influence not only their linguistic choices but also the ideological framing of Woolf's text. Ultimately, the analysis of optional shifts—additions, omissions, substitutions, and reordering—illuminates each translator's interpretive priorities and feminist alignment. These shifts are not merely linguistic tools but are embedded in ideological and cultural negotiations, particularly when translating concepts such as androgyny, performative gender, and intellectual misogyny. The translations of *Orlando* thus serve as discursive mirrors, reflecting the evolving landscape of Chinese gender discourse and feminist translation over three decades. From tentative cultural introduction to radical feminist interpretation and eventual ideological moderation, the journey of *Orlando* in China provides critical insight into the politics of literary translation and the complex mediation between authorial intent and reader reception across temporal and spatial borders.

Chapter 6: Translating Women's Independence in Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*

6.1 Introduction

Virginia Woolf is recognised as a pioneering figure in both feminism and modernism during the 20th century. Her essay *A Room of One's Own*, published in 1929, is one of her most renowned works and a seminal piece of feminist literary criticism. Woolf's extended piece draws from lectures which she delivered at two colleges, the Arts Society at Newnham and the Odtas at Girton, Cambridge (Robinson & Smith-Laing, 2017). Her central argument is captured in the line, "A woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction" (Woolf, 1929, p. 1). Woolf asks pressing questions, such as: "What is the relation between women and fiction? Why did no woman write a word of that extraordinary literature when every other man, it seemed, was capable of song or sonnet? What were the conditions in which women lived?" (Woolf, 1929, p. 31). She uses these questions to illustrate her feminist insight, highlighting how social inequalities limited women's opportunities to pursue writing. She challenges the institutional sexism and patriarchal norms which restricted women's freedoms, arguing that women had historically been denied education and opportunities to write creatively (Zimmerman, 2012).

Woolf contends that, to break free from their subordinate position in a patriarchal society, women need both financial independence and personal space—in a physical as well as psychological sense (Fernald, 1994). She argues that the structures of power replicate themselves ideologically, turning people into "subjects of ideology," and that these structures have oppressed women throughout history. In *A Room of One's Own*, Woolf discusses the material necessities required for women to write fiction and retraces the historical, cultural and societal inequalities which women have faced. These include being denied access to academic publications, education, financial means, privacy, and the pressures of psychological and moral constraints. Woolf also explores the psychological pressures experienced by women to express their complex emotions, and she highlights the emotional struggles faced by women. Through her exploration of the evolving consciousness of women, Woolf critiques the institutionalized sexism and patriarchy embedded in society.

In her essay, Woolf proposes the concept of the androgynous mind, suggesting that the best writers transcend gender biases by integrating both "masculine" and "feminine" qualities. Woolf contends that "the normal and comfortable state of being is that when the two live in harmony together, spiritually co-operating. If one is a man, still the woman part of the brain

must have effect; and a woman also must have intercourse with the man in her... Perhaps a mind that is purely masculine cannot create any more than a mind that is purely feminine, I thought" (Woolf, p.71). The sentences convey the idea of blending both masculine and feminine qualities within an individual, emphasising the importance of both gender traits coexisting within a person in order to achieve spiritual and intellectual fulfilment. It highlights an ideal state of harmony between these aspects, suggesting that genuine creativity arises from a balanced integration of both. She believes that great art emerges from a balance of rationality and intuition, strength and sensitivity, rather than rigid adherence to traditional gender roles, which challenges the gender binary and suggests a more fluid approach to creativity, as explored in *Orlando: A Biography*.

Today, Virginia Woolf garners significant scholarly interest from literary critics and theorists. However, when it comes to analysing the Chinese translations of *A Room of One's Own*, very few studies focus on feminism and literary translation (Irshad & Yasmin, 2022). Only two studies related to *A Room of One's Own* translation analysis have been identified through the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI), China's premier academic digital library, and the Web of Science, a leading global academic research database. The first is a thesis by Wang Haiqing (2021) entitled *A Study on Concentration on Women in the Chinese Version of A Room of One's Own from the Perspective of Feminist Translation Theory*, which employs feminist translation theory to analyse Jia Huifeng's (2003) Chinese translation of *A Room of One's Own*, focusing on how women's issues are represented and prioritised in the text. It examines three aspects using detailed case studies: female imagery, women's status and women's literature, exploring how *feminist* translation strategies are used to emphasise feminist concerns, with hijacking identified as the most effective. Wang's study highlights the translator's subjectivity and feminist agenda, linking these strategies to broader theoretical and practical motivations, including the regeneration of social and cultural ideas for target readers. Another one is written by Mai and Hsiung (2017), entitled *Feminist Revision on Chinese Versions of A Room of One's Own*. They engage with the cultural shift in translation studies by applying feminist translation theory to revise two existing Chinese translations of Woolf's work. Moving beyond traditional fidelity-based methods, they adopt strategies by Luise von Flotow, such as supplementing, footnoting, and hijacking, to examine how gender is translated and ideologically shaped. Their study highlights the translator's subjectivity and questions patriarchal assumptions embedded in language, proposing a new feminist translation that supports female agency and expression. These two studies do not address the analysis of translation shifts in historico-cultural backgrounds, leaving this area unexplored and creating a gap in understanding the full impact of these translations on China's cultural and literary discourse. To address this gap, the following research questions should be considered:

Q1: What kinds of translation shifts have the Chinese translators employed in translating *A Room of One's Own*?

Q2: To what extent do the Chinese translators' historico-cultural backgrounds shape their interpretation and decision-making in translating Woolf's construction/representation of academic criticism of women writers and women's financial difficulty over time and space?

Q3: How do the Chinese translators navigate the balance of translation shifts between fidelity to the source text and the need for the translation to resonate with Chinese audiences?

To explore these research questions, the upcoming sections will introduce the datasets utilised and the methods in this study.

6.2 Methods

6.2.1 Dataset

To compare how different translators treat Woolf's feminist narratives, this chapter uses a combined corpus-based approach and case studies to analyse Chinese translations of *A Room of One's Own*. The study uses a self-constructed corpus comprising two primary datasets, detailed in Table 1. The first dataset contains the source text of *A Room of One's Own* by Virginia Woolf, providing the baseline for analysis. The second dataset comprises a diachronic corpus of three different Chinese translations - Wang Huan 1947 (hereafter T1), Jia Huifeng 2003 (T2), and Dai Hongzhen & Zhou Chun 2016 (T3). There are ten different versions of the Chinese translation of *A Room of One's Own*. To build my self-constructed corpus, I applied three main criteria for selection. First, I considered the publication period of the translations, ensuring a diverse range of temporal contexts. Secondly, the digital translation is available online in Chinese, making it accessible for study and analysis. Thirdly, I examined and selected user ratings and comments based on the level of discussion on *Dushu*, one of the most popular reading websites in China, and *Douban*, a Chinese social-networking site and online database which offers detailed information and reviews for various media, including books, films and music. These criteria helped ensure a representative and accessible selection of translations for the study.

ST/T T	Authors/ Translators	Version names	Publication Date	Publisher	Place
ST	Virginia Woolf	<i>A Room of One's Own</i>	1929	Hogarth Press	UK
T1	Wang Huan	一间自己的 屋子 (A House of Oneself)	1947	Cultural Life Series	Shanghai
T2	Jia Huifeng	一间自己的 房间 (A Room of One's Own)	2003	People's Literature Publishing House	Beijing
T3	Dai Hongzhen & Zhou Chun	一间自己的 房间 (A Room of One's Own)	2016	East China Normal University Press	Shanghai

Table 6. 1 The Chinese translations of *A Room of One's Own*

Wang Huan published the first Chinese translation of *A Room of One's Own* in 1947 in Shanghai, prior to the establishment of the People's Republic of China. At that time, exposure to foreign intellectual movements was limited, and Western feminist perspectives, as well as feminist translation theory or practice, had not yet reached China. The Chinese feminist movement did not gain momentum until the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, when women's rights to education, employment and political participation were enshrined in law. During this period, the drive for feminism in China was largely propelled by male intellectuals, who recognised the importance of linking China's local gender issues to the global context as a means of addressing women's suffering under patriarchy and institutionalised sexism (Jagućik, 2021). These male intellectuals, as reformists, nationalists and socialists who led early Chinese feminism, regarded gender equality as essential to societal transformation. They advocated for education and the critique of traditional norms under the inspiration of global ideas, although their leadership reflected existing patriarchal structures (Jagućik, 2021). As the first to publish a Chinese translation of Woolf's work, Wang Huan played a crucial role in raising awareness of women's struggles and feminist ideas.

However, no reliable information concerning Wang Huan could be identified through the available sources. Moreover, as mentioned in Xie Qingyao's introduction, the original translation published in the 1940s were printed in traditional Chinese with a vertical page layout, so all passages have been converted into simplified Chinese to ensure consistency throughout this thesis.

Jia Huifeng published his translation of *A Room of One's Own* in 2003 in Beijing. During this time, the influence of Western feminist ideas about women's rights and gender in China became stronger, and Western feminist translation theory was introduced to China; this attracted more attention after conducting the reform and opening policy in 1978, especially with the influence of the 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing, where women's rights took centre stage, sparking an increase in literature focused on women's issues (Jaguścik, 2021).

The third selected translation is the one by Dai Hongzhen & Zhou Chun published in 2016. Dai Hongzhen graduated from Shanghai International Studies University in 1999 and currently teaches at the School of Foreign Languages at Shanghai University of Engineering Science. Her representative translation work includes *A Room of One's Own*, *The Diaries of Virginia Woolf* and the *Blue Blood* series. Zhou Chun is currently a faculty member at the School of Foreign Languages at East China Normal University. His academic research focuses primarily on appreciating and analysing foreign language literature. As discussed in Chapter 5, during the 2010s, feminist activism was propelled forward using social media and online communication platforms.

6.2.2 Analytical Approach

This chapter examines the translational shifts present in the three Chinese versions of Woolf's essay to identify significant patterns and to scrutinise specific translation strategies. As detailed in Chapter 2, a corpus-based methodology is applied to explore the feminist ideas presented in *A Room of One's Own*, with the aim of pinpointing the distinct features of each translation. This method involves an in-depth and systematic analysis of the texts, enabling a comprehensive exploration of how feminist sentences are interpreted and conveyed differently across the translations. By comparing these variations, the study seeks to illuminate the diverse ways in which feminist perspectives are adapted and represented in the Chinese context.

Following the procedure outlined in Chapter 2, the research design and data preparation have been finalised. This process involved aligning the texts at the sentence level to enable precise translation comparisons. As discussed in Chapter 2, Nvivo excels at managing qualitative data by providing a structured platform for node creation and synthesising coding from sub-nodes. It facilitates efficient data categorisation, storage and analysis, allowing for the identification of recurring themes and patterns to enhance the depth of qualitative analysis. Sentences containing feminist ideas were specifically tagged to support a focused thematic analysis. This tagging is essential, highlighting moments where feminist concepts are either emphasised, minimised or transformed in translation. After finishing reading the source text and making notes, creating a predefined file classification, and tagging the source text and translations according to these codes, the feminist ideas in the corpus have been divided into three sub-categories, focusing on different themes which capture various aspects of women's independence and societal views. The first code highlights **male academic criticism of women and women writers**, including the barriers to women's access to education, critiques of their writing abilities, and the lack of historical acknowledgement of female writers' contributions. For instance, I tagged the sentence:

“It is the masculine values that prevail. Speaking crudely, football and sport are “important”; the worship of fashion and the buying of clothes are “trivial”. And these values are inevitably transferred from life to fiction. This is an important book, the critic assumes, because it deals with war. This is an insignificant book because it deals with the feelings of women in a drawing room. A scene in a battlefield is more important than a scene in a shop – everywhere and much more subtly the difference of value persists.”

This sentence depicts the societal values, rooted in masculine perspectives, which consistently trivialise women's experiences and interests by framing traditionally male-dominated activities like sports and war as significant while dismissing women's emotions, interests and domestic roles as unimportant. This bias creates a disparity which shapes everyday life and influences art and literature.

The second code addresses **the challenges of women's financial status**, including the stress associated with their jobs, the laws governing women's property, the difficulties they face in earning money, and the particular importance of financial independence for women, especially female writers. For example, I tagged the sentence:

“The law denied them the right to possess what money they earned. It is only for the last forty-eight years that Mrs. Seton has had a penny of her own. For all the centuries before that it would have been her husband's property – a thought which, perhaps, may have had its

share in keeping Mrs. Seton and her mother off the Stock Exchange. Every penny I earn, they may have said, will be taken from me and disposed of according to my husband's wisdom."

These sentences elaborate on women's various obstacles to achieving financial stability and independence. They highlight restrictive property laws contributing to women's financial difficulties.

The third code pertains to **women lacking authority in traditional customs**, including societal expectations regarding domestic responsibilities and limitations on their social status. For instance, I tagged the sentence:

"She cried out that marriage was hateful to her, and for that she was severely beaten by her father. Then he ceased to scold her. He begged her instead not to hurt him, not to shame him in this matter of her marriage. He would give her a chain of beads or a fine petticoat, he said; and there were tears in his eyes."

Woolf's description of Shakespeare's sister shows how traditional customs deprived women of authority and independence. When she resisted an arranged marriage, she was beaten by her father, pressured not to bring shame on the family, and bribed with small rewards such as "a chain of beads or a fine petticoat". The sentence shows how patriarchal norms subordinated women's will to family honour, reinforcing their limited social role by trivialising women's perspectives.

The analytical methodology adopted in this study utilises advanced software tools—NVivo and Wordsmith 6—to organise and examine translational shifts systematically. These tools are effective at analysing the corpus data of the source text and its three translations, uncovering linguistic patterns, frequency distributions, and collocations, thereby enhancing the analytical depth of the study, as illustrated in Table 6.2.

	Source text	T1 Wang huan (1947)	T2 Jia Huifeng (2003)	T3 Dai Hongzhen & Zhou Chun (2016)
Wordcount	38,850	66,995	65,545	76,802
Total number of sentences	1,796	1,814	1,595	2,169

Average sentence length	21.63	36.93	41.09	35.41
Sentences with feminist ideas	258	230	183	247
Average feminist sentence length	18.23	36.33	41.32	37.92

Table 6. 2 Statistics of sentences with feminist ideas

Table 6.2 compares the source text with three translations—T1 (Wang Huan, 1947), T2 (Jia Huifeng, 2003), and T3 (Dai Hongzhen & Zhou Chun, 2016)— and reveals notable differences in word count, sentence structure, and the representation of feminist ideas. The table discusses the complexities of translating feminist ideas from the source text into three target texts, showcasing the differences in translation strategies and their effect on how these ideas are represented.

As Table 6.2 illustrates, the source text contains 38,850 words across 1,796 sentences, resulting in an average sentence length of 21.63 words. It includes 258 sentences featuring feminist ideas, with an average of 18.23 words per feminist sentence. T1 significantly expands the content to 66,995 words and 1,814 sentences, leading to a longer average sentence length of 36.93 words, while incorporating 230 feminist sentences averaging 36.33 words. T2, comprising 65,545 words and 1,595 sentences, has an average sentence length of 41.09 words and reduces feminist sentences to 183, although they average 41.32 words each. T3 further increases the word count to 76,802 with 2,169 sentences, achieving an average sentence length of 35.41 words. It restores the emphasis on feminist themes with 247 feminist sentences, averaging 37.92 words each.

Tables 6.3, 6.4 and 6.5 also illustrate the number of sentences and the length of sentences containing feminist ideas from the source text, which are categorised into three distinct themes created using the NVivo node creation feature. This categorisation serves as a foundational step in establishing the themes for the case study. I will focus on these three themes for an in-depth qualitative analysis: the criticism of scholars and academics regarding women, the challenges of women's financial status, and the undervaluation of women's activities and cultural spheres.

For the theme of the male academic criticism of women and women writers, the source text contains 121 sentences with an average length of 17.57 words. The translations vary significantly in terms of sentence count and complexity. T2 (Jia Huifeng, 2003) has the fewest sentences (83) but features the longest average sentence length at 38.71 words, indicating a detailed, verbose interpretation. While this translation preserves the content of the source text, it produces a syntactically denser translation that departs from conventional Chinese discourse organisation. Chinese readers prefer shorter, paratactic structures, and the verbose translation increases syntactic complexity is likely to reduce readability. In contrast, T3 (Dai Hongzhen & Zhou Chun, 2016) contains 111 sentences, the most among the translations, with an average length of 34.72 words, suggesting an effort to maintain elaboration while expanding on the content of the source text. Meanwhile, T1 (Wang Huan, 1947) includes 98 sentences with an average length of 35.09 words, maintaining a medium and neutral number of sentences among the translations.

In terms of the complexity of women's financial status, the source text comprises 64 sentences, averaging 16.27 words each. Conversely, T2 features the fewest sentences (46) but the highest average length of 44.12 words, suggesting a thorough and potentially dense examination of this topic. In comparison, T1 (Wang Huan, 1947) contains 48 sentences with an average length of 38.36 words, falling into a medium range. Furthermore, T3 includes 50 sentences, with an average of 39.58 words per sentence, which is the highest among the translations and closely aligns with the source text.

For the theme of women lacking authority in traditional customs, the source text features 73 sentences, averaging 18.01 words per sentence. T2 offers the fewest sentences (36), with the highest average length of 42.64 words, indicating a more elaborate exploration of this theme, which may reduce readability. In contrast, T1 and T3 each contain 50 sentences, suggesting a relatively more balanced approach than T2; however, T1 has an average sentence length of 35.42 words, while T3 averages 36.26 words, implying that T3 may include more expansive elaboration compared to T1. Overall, T2 (Jia Huifeng, 2003) employs a strategy of complexity and depth, featuring longer, more elaborate sentences which provide a rich yet sometimes dense exploration of women's independence. In contrast, T1 (Wang Huan, 1947) employs a more balanced approach and remains faithful to the source text. T3 (Dai Hongzhen & Zhou Chun, 2016), with a greater number of sentences and moderate elaboration, aims for accessibility, while still emphasising key feminist themes and cultural relevance.

The male academic criticism of women and women writers	Source text	T1 Wang huan (1947)	T2 Jia Huifeng (2003)	T3 Dai Hongzhen & Zhou Chun (2016)
Sentences in total	121	98	83	111
Average sentence length	17.57	35.09	38.71	34.72

Table 6. 3 Statistics of sentences with feminist ideas of the male academic criticism of women and women writers

The difficulty of women's financial status	Source text	T1 Wang huan (1947)	T2 Jia Huifeng (2003)	T3 Dai Hongzhen & Zhou Chun (2016)
Sentences in total	64	48	46	50
Average sentence length	16.27	38.36	44.12	39.58

Table 6. 4 Statistics of sentences with feminist ideas of the difficulty of women's financial status

Women lacking authority in traditional customs	Source text	T1 Wang huan (1947)	T2 Jia Huifeng (2003)	T3 Dai Hongzhen & Zhou Chun (2016)
Sentences in total	73	50	36	50
Average sentence length	18.01	35.42	42.64	36.26

Table 6. 5 Statistics of sentences with feminist ideas of women lacking authority in traditional customs

6.3 Analysis

As discussed in Chapter 2, translation is a complex task which involves transforming information and statements from one language to another. This process requires a deep understanding of the intricate relationships between languages, which can vary significantly in terms of grammar, vocabulary and cultural nuances (Catford, 1965). In this sense,

translating Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* into Chinese presents translators with various challenges beyond mere language and style. In other words, they must navigate cultural and socio-political contexts which influence how the text is interpreted and understood in the target language. Chapter 2 discussed Gideon Toury's (1995) distinction between 'obligatory' and 'optional' translation shifts. Obligatory shifts refer to necessary changes resulting from formal differences between the languages of the source and target texts. Optional shifts denote discretionary changes which reflect the translator's decision-making process and their choices of translation strategies, emphasising the relation of sociocultural and economic factors to motivated linguistic choices. The study explores how Chinese translators' historical and cultural backgrounds influence their interpretation of and choices in translating Woolf's feminist concepts so that the analysis will pay more attention to optional shifts.

6.3.1 Case Study 1: The male academic criticism of women and women writers

In *A Room of One's Own*, Virginia Woolf presents a critical analysis of how scholars and academics have historically perceived and portrayed women and women writers specifically. This theme runs prominently throughout the essay, as Woolf critiques the male-dominated intellectual establishment that has systematically undermined women's abilities, creativity, and contributions to literature (Alexander, 2000). Woolf points out that the scholarship surrounding women has often been marked by bias, ignorance, and condescension, thus contributing to the broader social narrative that women are intellectually inferior. For instance, when Woolf explores the library and examines the vast literature written about women, predominantly by men, she observes that male scholars have been prolific in discussing women. She writes, "Why are women, judging from this catalogue, so much more interesting to men than men are to women? A very curious fact it seemed, and my mind wandered to picture the lives of men who spend their time writing books about women, whether they were old or young, married or unmarried, red-nosed or hump-backed – anyhow feel oneself the object of such attention" (Woolf, p.21). Woolf said, "For when it came to analysing the impression left by these books, there was always an element of heat. This heat took many forms; it showed itself in satire, sentiment, curiosity, and reprobation. However, another element was often present and could not be identified immediately. Anger, I called it ... it was anger disguised and complex, not anger simple and open" (p.24). This passage highlights how the academic discourse about women is often motivated by a deeper, concealed anger—suggesting a kind of resentment or misogyny, which scholars may not even

openly acknowledge. It highlights the consensus among male intellectuals and describes how men, particularly scholars, have used women as subjects of their discourse, portraying women in a poor light, thereby reinforcing stereotypes that confined women to limited societal roles, to assert dominance and express anxieties about gender (Gan, 2009). Woolf cites Boswell, who said that "men know that women are an overmatch for them, and therefore they choose the weakest or the most ignorant. If they did not think so, they never could be afraid of women knowing as much as themselves" (p.22). Woolf suggests that this anger reveals less about women themselves and more about men's insecurity and the fragile nature of their authority. Woolf describes this masculine complex as "when the professor insisted a little too emphatically upon the inferiority of women, he was concerned not with their inferiority, but with his own superiority. He was protecting that hot-headedly and with too much emphasis because it was a jewel to him of the rarest price" (p.26). Woolf's critique is a profound examination of how the academic establishment has not only dismissed women's contributions but has also actively worked to undermine them by portraying women in a limited and unfavourable light, primarily as a means of maintaining male superiority and control and Example 1 illustrates this point as follows.

Example 1.

"It seemed a pure waste of time to consult all those gentlemen who specialise in a woman and her effect on whatever it may be – politics, children, wages, morality – numerous and learned as they are. One might as well leave their books unopened" (Woolf, 1929, p.23).

This highlights Virginia Woolf's explicit questioning of the authority of male scholars and her sharp critique of the male-dominated intellectual discourse about women. Woolf notes that male scholars often consider women only in terms of their impact on aspects of society that men consider significant—such as politics, children, wages, and morality. She uses irony in phrases like "gentlemen who specialise in a woman" to emphasise the absurdity of these experts claiming to fully understand women's lives. This irony also exposes the patronising nature of their scholarship, suggesting that these men perceive women solely through their influence on male-centric institutions.

The statement "One might as well leave their books unopened" serves as a powerful indictment of the academic work produced by these male scholars. Woolf argues that these works hold little value in genuinely understanding women. Despite being "numerous and learned," these books fail to provide real insight because they are shaped by a male-centric perspective which neglects or undervalues women's voices. The phrase "pure waste of time"

reflects Woolf's belief that such scholarship fails to illuminate women's experiences and actively distorts them. Through her language, Woolf conveys a sense of scepticism and disillusionment, emphasising the deep biases which characterise much of the academic work on women. Thus, while translating Woolf's irony and criticism of scholars, it is necessary for translators to adapt translation strategies to create a balance between maintaining fidelity to the original text and adapting it to convey feminist ideas to Chinese audiences effectively. The four translations make this balance in distinct ways.

Source text	"It seemed a pure waste of time to consult all those gentlemen who specialise in a woman and her effect on whatever it may be – politics, children, wages, morality – numerous and learned as they are. One might as well leave their books unopened" (Woolf, 1929, p.23).	
Translator	Target text	Literal translation
T1 Wang huan (1947)	似乎来请教那些先生们的结果完全是白费时间而已。虽然他们的数目是那么多，那么有学问，还自命研究妇女和妇女对一切——政治、小孩、工资、道德——的影响的专家呢！我还不如不翻开他们的书。	It seems that the result of consulting those gentlemen is a complete waste of time. Although there are so many of them, they are so learned and self-proclaimed experts in the study of women and their influence on everything: politics, children, capital, morality! I might as well not open their books.
T2 Jia Huifeng (2003)	这些有教养的绅士，人数众多，学问渊博，谙熟 妇女和她们对政治、儿童、工资、道德等等随便哪类问题的影响，但看来向他们请教不过是平白耽误时间。我还不如 从不打开他们的书。	These educated gentlemen, who are numerous and well-read, are well-versed in women and their influence on politics, children, wages, morals, and any other issue, but it seems like consulting them would be for nothing

		delay time. I might as well never open their books.
T3 Dai Hongzhen & Zhou Chun (2016)	向这帮绅士请教，纯粹是在浪费我的时间。尽管这些人一辈子都在研究女性，研究她们对事物——政治、孩子、薪资、道德——的种种影响，尽管他们数量庞大，学识渊博，但是，这些人的书还是不看为妙。	Asking these gentlemen for advice is a complete waste of my time. Despite the fact that these people have spent their entire lives studying women and their influence on everything – politics, children, salaries, morality – and despite their vast numbers and vast knowledge, it is best not to read their books.

Table 6. 6 Chinese translations of Example 1

In T1, Wang's translation is distinguished by its adherence to the source text's meaning, while also reinforcing the irony embedded in the original narrative. One key example of this character can be seen in Wang's translation of the phrase, "those gentlemen who specialise in a woman and her effect on whatever it may be – politics, children, wages, morality." In T1, Wang renders this phrase as "还自命研究妇女和妇女对一切——政治、小孩、工资、道德——的影响的专家呢!" ("self-proclaimed experts in the study of women and their influence on everything: politics, children, capital, morality!") This translation employs a strategic addition, specifically the phrase "自命...专家" ("self-proclaimed experts"), to amplify the speaker's scepticism towards these so-called "gentlemen." The phrase "自命...专家" signals that these men have essentially granted themselves the title of "experts," and the word "自命" reflects a lack of faith in the legitimacy of these gentlemen's claims to expertise; this scepticism is crucial for understanding the speaker's overall dismissive attitude. As mentioned before, Wang Huan, who published the first Chinese translation of Woolf's work, sought to extend Woolf's feminist perspectives within the unique context of addressing the oppression faced by Chinese women under patriarchy and institutionalised sexism. In order to integrate Woolf's ideas into this translation, Wang chose to add the term "自命" ("self-proclaimed"), to add a layer of irony and mockery which was implicit in the source text. In other words, the irony of consulting "gentlemen" who are supposedly well-versed in women's issues is made explicit through Wang's phrasing, which suggests an inflated sense of authority that the original author was

keen to ridicule. This addition highlights the doubtful nature of the gentlemen's supposed expertise and underlines the speaker's cynicism regarding their authority. Through this subtle but impactful addition, Wang captures the critical tone of the source text, underscoring the lack of genuine respect for these men's authority and reinforcing Woolf's satirical tone.

In T2, Jia's translation is characterised by underplaying the tone of the source text and, in some instances, even making controversial the interpretation of Woolf's narrative. Jia's translation, completed in 2003, followed the surge of interest in women's rights sparked by the 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing. This event placed women's issues at the forefront of the national debate and inspired a wave of literature focused on gender equality. Despite these advancements, deeply ingrained patriarchal culture continued to shape Jia's translation. For instance, in translating the phrase "all those gentlemen who specialise in a woman and her effect on whatever it may be – politics, children, wages, morality – numerous and learned as they are," Jia adjusts the sentence structure to achieve a structure shift by rendering it as "这些有教养的绅士，人数众多，学问渊博，谙熟妇女和她们对政治、儿童、工资、道德等等随便哪类问题的影响" ("These educated gentlemen, who are numerous and well-read, are well-versed in women and their influence on politics, children, wages, morals, and any other issue"). The source text presents the 'learned and numerous' aspect as an aside subordinate clause at the end, whereas Jia's translation highlights these qualities as the main theme of the sentence, giving them greater prominence. He used terms like "有教养的" ("educated") and "学问渊博" ("well-read") to describe the "gentlemen", presenting them as credible and competent, which softens the satirical edge and dismissive attitude essential to the source text. Besides, the term "谙熟" ("well-versed") is a positive term that suggests a genuine familiarity rather than the inflated, self-appointed expertise implied in the source. This diminishes the critical nuance of the original phrase. The ironic portrayal of the "gentlemen" in the source text is of a group of self-important, supposedly learned men whose expertise is fundamentally flawed. Despite their education, numbers, and professed specialisation, their knowledge is portrayed as irrelevant, shallow, and disconnected from the reality of women's experiences. By translating this passage in such a way, Jia presents the gentlemen in an overly positive light, ignoring the irony in the original context. This shift in tone reduces the critical impact of Woolf's narrative, resulting in a more neutral or even admiring depiction of the so-called "experts" rather than the ironic critique intended in the source text.

In T3, Dai & Zhou's translation preserves the original's critical tone most effectively, while maintaining fidelity to the source text. Both translators are known for their strong appreciation and analysis of foreign-language literature and their affinity for feminist works, which have clearly impacted their translation choices. For example, in translating the phrase

"all those gentlemen who specialise in a woman and her effect on whatever it may be – politics, children, wages, morality – numerous and learned as they are. One might as well leave their books unopened," Dai and Zhou added connective words like "尽管" ("despite") and "但是" ("but") to adjust the sentence structure, rendering it as "尽管这些人一辈子都在研究女性，研究她们对事物——政治、孩子、薪资、道德——的种种影响，尽管他们数量庞大，学识渊博，但是，这些人的书还是不看为妙" ("Despite the fact that these people have spent their entire lives studying women and their influence on everything – politics, children, salaries, morality – and despite their vast numbers and vast knowledge, it is best not to read their books"). The use of these conjunctions effectively emphasizes the ultimate futility of consulting these so-called "experts." By introducing "尽管" ("despite") and "但是" ("but"), Dai and Zhou create a clear contrast between the seemingly impressive qualities of the gentlemen (their numbers, lifelong dedication, and scholarly knowledge) and the ultimate irrelevance of their contributions. In the source text, the sentence appears in the context of Woolf's critique of male scholars who write about women's supposed influence on various societal aspects—politics, children, wages, morality, and more. Woolf ironically dismisses these men's views, suggesting that consulting their writings is futile. The phrase "One might as well leave their books unopened" underscores the insignificance and irrelevance of these works in understanding women's realities, reflecting Woolf's sharp critique of patriarchal scholarship. In this context, "One" refers to any reader, presumably a general audience, and serves as a universal, detached pronoun which conveys an ironic detachment while inviting the reader to share Woolf's scepticism about the value of such writings. A notable adjustment occurs in Dai and Zhou's rendering of the sentence, "One might as well leave their books unopened." They rephrase it as "但是，这些人的书还是不看为妙" ("it is best not to read their books"). This marks a significant structural and tonal shift. The English original— "might as well leave their books unopened"—conveys a sense of futility or indifference; it implies that reading these books is unlikely to enhance one's understanding of women, but not necessarily that it would be detrimental. In contrast, the Chinese version—particularly the phrase "不看为妙" (literally, "not reading is wiser")—carries a stronger cautionary tone, implying that reading these works could be misleading or even harmful. Thus, the translation shifts the nuance from passive resignation to active avoidance, subtly heightening the critique of the male-authored texts in question.

Overall, Wang's translation stands out for its adherence to the source text's meaning and conveys a somewhat softer critique. Jia's translation softens the source's tone, occasionally leading to a controversial interpretation of Woolf's narrative. In contrast, Dai &

Zhou's translation effectively enhances the original's critical tone, while staying faithful to the source text.

6.3.2 Case Study 2: The difficulty of women's financial status

Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* stresses the theme of women's financial status and the inherent challenges they face due to their economic dependence. Woolf's argument is centred on the idea that financial autonomy is essential for women to pursue intellectual freedom, creativity and self-expression, particularly in the context of writing. One of the most notable direct assertions about the challenges of women's financial status is Woolf's insistence that "a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction." This claim highlights the crucial link between financial independence and creative potential. Woolf emphasises that, without a stable financial footing, women cannot access the privacy or resources needed to create art, particularly literature. She writes, "Of the two—the vote and the money—the money, I own, seemed infinitely the more important" (p.28). Here, Woolf stresses that financial security represents a freedom far greater even than political enfranchisement, as it ensures independence from the necessity to marry for security or rely on the charity of men. This economic freedom allows Woolf to "not merely do effort and labour cease, but also hatred and bitterness. I need not hate any man; he cannot hurt me. I need not flatter any man; he has nothing to give me" (p.28).

Woolf also reflects on the lack of opportunities for women, both in terms of earning their living and being financially rewarded for their intellectual labour. Woolf states that the occupations available to women are often low-paid or unpaid, such as "addressing envelopes, reading to old ladies, making artificial flowers, teaching the alphabet to small children in a kindergarten" (Woolf, p. 28); thus, it is impossible for women to earn enough money to support themselves. The absence of essential material needs renders women utterly powerless. Without financial security, women can hardly attain independence and freedom. Woolf critiques the systemic economic structures which have long confined women to the domestic sphere, leaving them financially dependent on their husbands or fathers. She reflects on the struggles faced by countless women, noting how "women working year after year [found] it hard to get two thousand pounds together"; this underscores the difficulty they face in gaining financial independence. Example 2 below further supports her argument for gender equality, as Woolf outlines the challenges for a woman to earn money and achieve financial independence.

Example 2:

“At the thought of all those women working year after year and finding it hard to get two thousand pounds together, and as much as they could do to get thirty thousand pounds, we burst out in scorn at the reprehensible poverty of our sex. What had our mothers been doing then that they had no wealth to leave us? Powdering their noses? Looking in at shop windows? Flaunting in the sun at Monte Carlo?” (Woolf 1929, p16).

In this passage, Woolf reflects on the lack of inherited wealth which women receive, attributing it not to personal failures but rather to systemic inequality. She employs irony and rhetorical questions to reveal how societal expectations have shaped women's roles in ways which inhibit their financial agency.

The sentences begin with Woolf thinking about “all those women working year after year” and yet “finding it hard to get two thousand pounds together.” Here, she highlights the economic barriers faced by women. Despite their hard work, the lack of opportunities and restrictions placed on them makes it nearly impossible for women to earn or accumulate substantial wealth. She contrasts the difficulty of obtaining two thousand pounds with the challenge of accumulating “thirty thousand pounds,” implying that the latter is an almost insurmountable goal. The phrase “we burst out in scorn at the reprehensible poverty of our sex” reveals Woolf’s use of irony in this passage. She adopts the voice of someone who sarcastically blames their foremothers for failing to accumulate wealth to leave to their descendants. This irony becomes evident in the exaggerated and dismissive questions which follow—asking whether these women spent their time frivolously powdering their noses, window shopping or idling in Monte Carlo. Woolf’s tone is not a straightforward critique of patriarchy but instead a layered commentary. She imagines the misplaced frustration of modern women, who might scorn their predecessors for not ‘doing better,’ while the real cause of their inherited poverty lies in the systemic disenfranchisement of women under patriarchal structures. This rhetorical strategy draws attention to the historical economic oppression of women, subtly exposing its injustice without directly stating it. The use of “our sex” reveals a collective identity, highlighting that this economic injustice is not limited to individual women but impacts the entire gender. Woolf then turns to a series of rhetorical questions: “What had our mothers been doing then that they had no wealth to leave us? Powdering their noses? Looking in at shop windows? Flaunting in the sun at Monte Carlo?” Here, Woolf employs biting irony to critique the roles which society assigns to women. “Powdering their noses?” suggests that women are preoccupied with appearance—an activity which society encouraged in women as a form of femininity. It points to the restrictive social norms which shapes women’s

roles, forcing them to prioritise beauty over intellectual or economic endeavours. "Looking in at shop windows?" conveys the image that women's roles are limited to consumers rather than producers. "Flaunting in the sun at Monte Carlo?" evokes the image of wealthy leisure. They have, in fact, been economically restricted to the point of being unable to produce or accumulate wealth (Gan, 2009). Through irony and biting criticism, Woolf urges recognition of the injustices faced by women and serves as a call to action for women to break free from these restrictive social roles. Three translators have different translation shifts when translating these points.

Source text	"At the thought of all those women working year after year and finding it hard to get two thousand pounds together, and as much as they could do to get thirty thousand pounds, we burst out in scorn at the reprehensible poverty of our sex. What had our mothers been doing then that they had no wealth to leave us? Powdering their noses? Looking in at shop windows? Flaunting in the sun at Monte Carlo?" (Woolf 1929, p16).	
Translator	Target text	Literal translation
T1 Wang huan (1947)	想起那些妇女一年一年地工作下去要想捐两千镑都那么困难,用尽了气力才得了三万镑,我们实在不得不对我们女人的不可恕的穷苦加以轻蔑。我们的母亲们都做什么来着而不能留给我们一点钱?擦粉?流连在铺子的窗子前面?在蒙特卡洛的阳光下摆阔?	When we remember how difficult it is for those women to work year after year to donate even £2,000 and how they have managed to raise £30,000 by exhausting all their efforts, we really cannot help but feel contempt for the unpardonable poverty of our women. What did our mothers do that they could not leave us any money? Powder their faces? Hang around shop windows? Flaunt their wealth in the sunshine of Monte Carlo?

T2 Jia Huifeng (2003)	想到那些女人，年复一年，积攒两千镑也难，却尽力而为，筹到三万英镑，我们禁不住大大奚落了一番女性活该受人指摘的贫穷。那时，我们的母亲都做了些什么，竟然不给我们留下一点财富？忙着涂脂抹粉？浏览橱窗？在蒙特卡洛的艳阳下招摇？	When we think of those women who, year after year, could hardly save £2,000, but did their best and managed to raise £30,000, we cannot help but sneer at the poverty that women deserve to be blamed for. What were our mothers doing back then that they did not leave us any wealth? Were they too busy applying make-up? Window shopping? Flaunting themselves in the sun of Monte Carlo?
T3 Dai Hongzhen & Zhou Chun (2016)	那些女人年复一年终日劳作，只攒得起两千英镑；为了筹集三万英镑，她们使出了浑身的解数！一想到这个，我忍不住发作起来，对我们这个女性群体，予以强烈的鄙视与谴责。我们的母亲究竟干什么去了，连一点财产都没给我们留下？是忙着涂脂抹粉吗？在逛街看橱窗，还是在蒙特卡罗招摇过市？	Those women worked day in and day out for years on end and could only save 2,000 pounds; they did everything they could to raise 30,000 pounds! When I think about this, I can't help but burst out in anger and strongly condemn our group of women. What on earth did our mothers do that they didn't leave us any wealth? Were they busy applying make-up? Window shopping? Or strutting their stuff in Monte Carlo?

Table 6. 7 Chinese translations of example 2

Wang Huan (1947) was the first female to publish a Chinese translation of Woolf's work, and her translation is notable for its fidelity to the source text, making a sincere effort to convey Woolf's intended meaning. During an era when exposure to foreign intellectual movements in China was limited, Wang's work made a significant contribution by helping to reveal the

suffering of women under patriarchy and institutionalised sexism. By bringing Western feminist perspectives to Chinese readers, Wang played an important role in promoting feminist awareness. Her translation is characterised by a faithful rendering of Woolf's arguments, including the nuanced critique and irony of gender inequality. For example, when translating the phrase "we burst out in scorn at the reprehensible poverty of our sex," Wang rendered it as "我们实在不得不对我们女人的不可恕的穷苦加以轻蔑" ("we really cannot help but feel contempt for the unpardonable poverty of our women"). This translation effectively preserves the collective identity "我们女人" ("our women"), maintaining the sense of shared frustration and solidarity which Woolf originally intended. At the same time, the translation captures the nuanced irony in Woolf's critique, where she evokes a sense of unity among women. However, it simultaneously appears to chastise them for their poverty, thus creating a tension between solidarity and blame. The absurdity of the critique stems from the juxtaposition of the monumental efforts of these women to overcome systemic obstacles with the unreasonable scorn directed at them for failing to accumulate wealth. Wang's choice of words successfully mirrors Woolf's subtle rhetorical irony, as the critique is not genuinely aimed at the women themselves but instead highlights the injustices of a patriarchal system which makes such poverty inescapable, despite their efforts. This layered critique creates a space for readers to question the fairness of the judgment and reflect on the systemic issues at play. It underscores that women's economic difficulties are not isolated instances but systemic issues impacting the entire gender across generations. The translation maintains Woolf's focus on women as a collective, ensuring that her message of shared struggle and systemic critique is preserved.

Jia's 2003 translation notably underplays and misrepresents Woolf's intended tone, particularly the use of irony, thereby shifting the original message. This is especially evident in his translation of the sentence, "we burst out in scorn at the reprehensible poverty of our sex," which he renders as "我们禁不住大大奚落了一番女性活该受人指摘的贫穷" ("we cannot help but sneer at the poverty that women deserve to be blamed for"). In Woolf's original text, the irony is sharp yet carefully layered. He uses the phrase "we burst out in scorn", which signals a moment of collective indignation, while the phrase "reprehensible poverty of our sex" does not literally condemn women but critiques how society has historically shamed them for the conditions imposed upon them. The phrase "our sex" is crucial—it expresses solidarity and a collective identity, reinforcing the idea that the scorn is not aimed at women themselves but at the injustice they endure. Irony in Woolf's prose depends on such subtle linguistic and rhetorical cues: shared pronouns ("our"), elevated diction ("reprehensible"), and tonal juxtaposition between serious content and light or playful expression. These cues enable readers to grasp that Woolf does not mean what she literally says but instead critiques the absurdity of patriarchal assumptions. Jia's translation appears to take the statement at face

value, rephrasing it in a manner that makes the critique seem self-directed and literal. The phrase “女性活该受人指摘的贫穷” (“women deserve to be blamed for their poverty”) conveys the ironic meaning that Woolf carefully constructs by positioning women as the appropriate targets of criticism. Ultimately, this example illustrates how irony—when successfully employed by Woolf—depends on subtle linguistic cues and a shared understanding with the reader.

Dai Hongzhen and Zhou Chun’s 2016 translation, T3, is characterised by its ability to preserve Woolf’s intended message, effectively capturing both the collective struggle of women and the ironic tone of Woolf’s critique. Influenced by the rise of feminist activism driven by social media and online platforms, Dai and Zhou’s interpretation reflects a modern understanding of gender equality and shared struggle. For instance, in translating the phrase “we burst out in scorn at the reprehensible poverty of our sex,” they rendered it as “忍不住发作起来，对我们这个女性群体，予以强烈的鄙视与谴责。” (“I can’t help but burst out in anger and strongly condemn our group of women”). The phrase “strongly condemn our group of women” is laden with irony, as it superficially appears to attack women themselves while critiquing the systemic forces that perpetuate their marginalisation. The irony lies in the act of turning blame inward, as if the group of women is at fault for their own disenfranchisement, poverty, or lack of progress. This rhetorical device highlights the absurdity of holding women responsible for conditions shaped by patriarchal structures that have historically denied them access to education, wealth, and independence. In translating this phrase, Dai & Zhou’s translation—using “发作起来” (“burst out in anger”) and “强烈的鄙视与谴责” (“strongly condemn”)—successfully conveys Woolf’s sense of urgency and exasperation regarding women’s economic struggles. The tone is intentionally forceful, mirroring Woolf’s emotional intensity. It effectively communicates that Woolf adopts the voice of an overly critical observer who unjustly targets women as the cause of their own plight by using this ironic condemnation. Additionally, the translation substitutes “对我们这个女性群体” (“our group of women”) to render Woolf’s “our sex,” preserving Woolf’s focus on women as a collective. The explicit use of “女性群体” (women’s group) reinforces the concept of sisterhood and shared identity, aligning with Woolf’s goal to emphasise the common struggle faced by women.

In all, Wang’s translation stands out for its fidelity to the source text, sincerely conveying Woolf’s intended meaning, which challenges the conservative paradigm of early translations. At the same time, Jia’s translation uses subtle linguistic cues and a shared understanding with the reader to convey the tone of the original message’s implication. In contrast, Dai and Zhou’s translation is distinguished by its ability to preserve Woolf’s intended

message, effectively capturing both the collective struggle of women and even enhancing the ironic meaning of her critique.

6.3.3 Case Study 3: Women lacking authority in traditional customs

Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* is a powerful exploration of gender inequality, and one of its central themes is the lack of authority afforded to women under traditional customs. One significant aspect Woolf addresses is domestic responsibility, which is deeply embedded in social norms and has deprived women of the time and independence needed to cultivate their intellectual potential. Woolf highlights this when she notes, "A woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction." This statement points directly to the constraints placed on women by traditional roles. Moreover, Woolf illustrates women's lack of authority by depicting women's social status in the historical and literary traditions. She directly references how, throughout history, women have been largely excluded from higher education and denied access to intellectual pursuits. This exclusion reflects the broader social framework in which women had no recognised authority, particularly within academia or the literary canon. For example, Woolf mentioned the social expectation of women: "The bishops and the deans, the doctors and the professors, the patriarchs and the pedagogues all at her shouting warning and advice. You cannot do this, and you shall not do that! Fellows and scholars are only allowed on the grass! Ladies, not admitted without a letter of introduction!" (Woolf, p.68)

Woolf also uses the character of "Shakespeare's sister" as an allegory to emphasise the plight of talented women silenced by societal norms. Imagining a hypothetical sister of Shakespeare, Woolf presents a woman equally gifted but lacking any opportunity to develop her talent due to the customs of her time. Woolf writes that "to have lived a free life in London in the sixteenth century would have meant for a woman who was poet and playwright a nervous stress and dilemma which might well have killed her" (Woolf, p.37) and Shakespeare's sister would have faced ridicule, coercion, and eventually ruin, highlighting how societal norms robbed even the most gifted women of authority over their own lives. Example 3 below says, "It was the relic of the sense of chastity that dictated anonymity to women even so late as the nineteenth century... Anonymity runs in their blood." Through these examples, Woolf clarifies that traditional customs—encompassing family duties, social expectations, and limited access to intellectual spaces—have kept women in positions of inferiority. Example 3 is good to prove that these norms have deprived women of autonomy and authority, leaving them with little room to explore or express their creative potential.

Example 3:

“It was the relic of the sense of chastity that dictated anonymity to women even so late as the nineteenth century. Currer Bell, George Eliot, George Sand ... they did homage to the convention, which, if not implanted by the other sex, was liberally encouraged by them (the chief glory of a woman is not to be talked of, said Pericles, himself a much-talked-of man) that publicity in women is detestable” (Woolf, 1929, p.37).

This passage addresses the historical requirement for women to publish anonymously or under male pseudonyms. It serves as a broader illustration of the suppression of women's voices and their lack of social authority. The quote begins with Woolf highlighting how "the relic of the sense of chastity" leads to women writers feeling compelled to hide their identities in the nineteenth century. The concept of "chastity" here is not only about sexual purity, but it also relates to the idea of modesty, discretion and invisibility traits which were traditionally demanded of women (Gan, 2009). The restriction on women to remain unseen and unheard took various forms, notably in the literary world. Women authors such as Currer Bell (Charlotte Brontë), George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans), and George Sand (Amantine Lucile Aurore Dupin) adopted male or gender-neutral pen names—a powerful illustration of how societal restrictions limited their authority to engage openly in public discourse.

These women had to disguise their gender to be taken seriously as writers, reflecting the deep-seated belief that women lacked the intellectual capacity or credibility to be authors (Duhan, 2019). Woolf points out that this expectation of chastity and anonymity was a "relic"—an old belief which continued to affect women well into the nineteenth century, stifling their authority over their work and public personas. Woolf's parenthetical remark, quoting Pericles, is particularly telling: "The chief glory of a woman is not to be talked of, said Pericles, himself a much-talked-of man." By including this quote from the famous Athenian statesman, Woolf highlights the double standard inherent in traditional customs. Pericles, a prominent public figure, felt entitled to dictate that a woman's virtue lay in her silence and invisibility, while he enjoyed the privilege of public recognition and admiration. This speaks to the unequal allocation of authority in traditional gender roles: men were expected to be seen, heard and discussed, traits viewed as evidence of their accomplishments and social influence. Conversely, women were expected to remain in the private sphere, which was largely invisible and not publicly discussed (Zimmerman, 2012). Thus, the expectations of chastity and anonymity were tools used by patriarchal society to keep women subdued, stripping them of the authority to represent themselves.

Moreover, Woolf's comment that this convention "if not implanted by the other sex, was liberally encouraged by them" points to the underlying power dynamics at play. Even if men did not exclusively create the idea of chastity and anonymity, it was undoubtedly maintained

and promoted by them, serving their interests in ensuring that women remained confined to the margins of society. Men effectively preserved their exclusive authority over intellectual and cultural domains by keeping women out of public visibility. Woolf's analysis in this passage is a powerful critique of how traditional customs have kept women from attaining authority or recognition in the public sphere. By referencing these nineteenth-century female authors, Woolf illustrates the enduring challenges faced by those women who sought to break into intellectual and creative pursuits. Their need for anonymity is emblematic of a broader cultural silencing which deprived women of public authority and agency. The only way that they could succeed was by conforming to the expectations that they remain modest, invisible, and anonymous—ultimately reflecting the significant social barriers which kept women out of positions of influence and power (Gonick, 2006).

Source text	"It was the relic of the sense of chastity that dictated anonymity to women even so late as the nineteenth century. Currer Bell, George Eliot, George Sand ... they did homage to the convention, which, if not implanted by the other sex, was liberally encouraged by them (the chief glory of a woman is not to be talked of, said Pericles, himself a much-talked-of man) that publicity in women is detestable" (Woolf, 1929, p.37).	
Translator	Target text	Literal translation
T1 Wang huan (1947)	而命令女作家匿名隱姓的正是貞操觀念的遺毒，甚至晚到十九世紀還如此。科勒·貝爾、喬治·愛略特、喬治·桑……她們至少對習俗致了敬意。習俗即使不是男人培植出來的，也是他們竭力鼓勵的。他們說女人出名是最可厭的事（伯里克利說一個女人最高的榮譽就是不被人談論，可是他自己是最受人談論的男人）。	It was the lingering poison of the concept of chastity that ordered female writers to remain anonymous, even as late as the 19th century. Currer Bell, George Eliot, George Sand... they at least paid homage to custom. Custom, even if not cultivated by men, was certainly encouraged by them. They said that the most annoying thing for a woman is to be famous (Pericles said that the

		highest honour for a woman was not to be talked about, but he was the man most talked about).
T2 Jia Huifeng (2003)	贞洁观的遗风仍然迫使女人隐姓埋名。科勒·贝尔、乔治·艾略特、乔治·桑 她们就迎合了常规，囿于常规，女人抛头露面是可耻的，而这一常规，即使并非由男性树立，至少也经过他们大力鼓吹（伯里克利说，女人的荣耀不再为人津津乐道，他本人倒是时常给人挂在嘴边）。	The legacy of the concept of chastity still forces women to hide their names. Currer Bell, George Eliot, George Sand... They all conformed to the norm, which confined women to the norm; women were shameful to be seen. This norm was not set by men, but it was undoubtedly strongly promoted by them (Pericles said that women's glory was no longer talked about, but he was often the subject of people's conversations).
T3 Dai Hongzhen & Zhou Chun (2016)	甚至在隔了很久的十九世纪，名节观的余毒依然让女性不得不用匿名来写作。柯勒·贝尔、乔治·艾略特、乔治·桑 她们无可奈何，只得向习俗低头，用男人的名字作为化名，来掩盖自己的真实身份。即便这个习俗不是另一个性别的人制定的，也是他们大力鼓励的（伯里克利说过，女人最大的荣耀就是不被人议论，而他本人则是一个饱受争议的人物）。女人只要抛头露面，就是惊世骇俗的丑闻。	Even in the long-gone nineteenth century, the lingering effects of the concept of female chastity still make women write anonymously. Currer Bell, George Eliot, George Sand... They had no choice but to bow to custom and use a man's name as a pseudonym to conceal their true identity. Even if this custom was not set by people of the other gender, they strongly encouraged it (Pericles said that a woman's greatest glory is not being discussed, and

		he was a controversial figure). As long as a woman shows her face publicly, she is a shocking scandal.
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Table 6. 8 Chinese translations of Example 3

Wang's translation T1 is marked by a deliberate intensification of Woolf's critical tone, emphasising the damaging impact of entrenched societal norms on women's autonomy. As the first to publish a Chinese translation of Woolf's work, Wang Huan played a pivotal role in raising awareness of women's struggles within the broader cultural landscape of China. Her work also highlighted the necessity of aligning local reform with international feminist discourse, encouraging a more empowering perspective for Chinese women. This commitment to promoting feminist ideas heavily influenced Wang's translation strategy. One notable example of this strategy is Wang's interpretation of the phrase "the relic of the sense of chastity," which she translated as "贞操观念的遗毒" ("the lingering poison of the concept of chastity"). By choosing "遗(leftover) 毒(poison)" ("lingering harmful effect") instead of a more neutral equivalent, Wang emphasises that the concept of chastity is not merely an outdated relic but an actively harmful cultural remnant. This term conveys a far more substantial critique of the lingering effects of chastity than Woolf's original use of "relic," underscoring its negative impact and continuing harm. In adding "毒" ("poison"), Wang injects a damning judgment that conveys a more profound cultural criticism—making it clear that such ideologies are not just obsolete but are actively toxic. Another example of Wang's translation approach is her rendering of Pericles' quote: "(the chief glory of a woman is not to be talked of, said Pericles, himself a much-talked-of man)." Wang employs an additive method to capture Woolf's irony fully, translating it as "(伯里克利说一个女人最高的荣誉就是不被人谈论,可是他自己是最受人谈论的男人)" ("Pericles said that the highest honour for a woman was not to be talked about, but he was the most talked about man"). By including "可是" ("but") to explicitly contrast Pericles' ideal for women with his own widely discussed reputation, Wang directly highlights the contradiction in his statement. This addition effectively preserves Woolf's original irony while making the translated version even more explicit to readers. The emphasis on "他自己是最受人谈论的男人" ("he was the most talked about man") ensures that Woolf's criticism of Pericles' hypocrisy is not only conveyed but amplified, making the sarcasm unmistakable.

Jia Huifeng's translation is characterised by a softened critical tone, an emphasis on clarity, and a direct approach to conveying irony. For example, the original phrase "the relic of the sense of chastity" is translated as "贞洁观的遗风," which means "the legacy of the concept

of chastity." Jia's use of "遗风" ("legacy") carries a somewhat gentler connotation compared to "遗毒" (lingering effect) used in Wang's T1 translation and even gentler and more positive than "relic", which has more archaic connotations, implying that the tradition is not compatible with a modern outlook. Instead of depicting this concept as explicitly harmful, Jia represents it as an inherited tradition or a leftover influence from the past. The term "遗风" ("legacy") implies an effect that continues to linger rather than an actively harmful force, presenting it as a softer but still limiting tradition. Thus, Jia seems less confrontational in her tone and chooses a phrase pointing to traditional morality's lasting influence without directly labelling it as destructive. In this translation, Jia uses "迎合" ("conformed to" or "catered to") and "囿于" ("confined to") to describe how these female authors adhered to societal norms. "迎合" ("conformed to" or "catered to") implies that the female authors acted by the conventions. This contrasts with T1's emphasis on paying homage ("致敬"), which may convey reluctant respect. Jia's phrasing underscores the limitations imposed on women, as the authors were not only conforming but were also being confined ("囿于") by the norms. This choice presents a slightly more passive view of the women's actions, suggesting that the social norms trapped them rather than presenting them as having made an active choice to comply. Moreover, Woolf uses the phrase "publicity in women is detestable" to assert a more explicit and direct condemnation of the idea that women's engagement in public life is inherently undesirable. The word "publicity" in this context carries a dual meaning: it refers both to public visibility and to the idea of women actively asserting themselves or seeking attention in male-dominated societal spaces. Woolf's phrase is less about the shame associated with public appearances and more about the societal disdain for women breaking the boundaries of domesticity and participating in public discourse or activities. In translating the phrase "publicity in women is detestable," Jia rendered it as "女人抛头露面是可耻的" ("women were ashamed to be seen"), which adds a layer of clarity and cultural specificity to the social expectation regarding women's public behaviour. The term "抛头露面" (be seen) in Chinese literally translates to "showing one's head and face in public," and it carries strong connotations of a traditional Confucian ideology that values women's modesty and discourages them from being visible or active in the public sphere. It reflects a deeply ingrained social expectation that women should confine themselves to domestic roles and avoid public exposure, which is considered inappropriate or even disgraceful. Jia's translation only conveys one meaning of the word "publicity" - public visibility and softens the critical tone of the source text.

Jia's translation of Pericles' quotation, "the chief glory of a woman is not to be talked of", renders the phrase as "女人的荣耀不再为人津津乐道" ("a woman's glory was no longer

talked about"), which deviates from the original meaning and means something different. Woolf's original statement was that "the chief glory of a woman is not to be talked of," which implies an ideal of female invisibility. However, Jia's addition of "他本人倒是时常给人挂在嘴边" ("he was often the subject of people's conversations") effectively conveys the irony of Pericles' statement. The phrase "时常给人挂在嘴边" ("often on people's lips") emphasises the contradiction between Pericles' belief about women and his public persona, retaining Woolf's criticism of the hypocrisy inherent in his statement. Jia's treatment of Pericles' quotation effectively preserves Woolf's irony, although she rephrases it slightly to imply a temporal element ("no longer talked about") not present in the original. However, her addition, highlighting Pericles being frequently talked about, clearly conveys the hypocrisy that Woolf intended. Jia thus makes the critical point very evident to her readers, emphasising the double standard without ambiguity.

Dai Hongzhen and Zhou Chun's 2016 translation is characterised by an intensification of Woolf's critical tone, highlighting the severity of women's struggles and the ironies of patriarchal expectations more sharply than the original. The translation style is influenced by feminist activism, which social media may propel forward. For instance, Dai and Zhou translate "the relic of the sense of chastity" as "名节观的余毒," meaning "the lingering effects of the concept of female chastity." The term "余" ("remain") 毒 ("poison") ("lingering effect") conveys a similar sense of harm as in Wang's translation T1, indicating a clear stance that these remnants are damaging to women. The choice of "余毒" ("lingering effect") emphasises that the influence of these norms is not just residual but actively harmful, much like toxic remains that continue to afflict those exposed. Besides, Dai & Zhou add detail to the actions of the female authors. They expanded Woolf's original "they did homage to the convention" into "她们无可奈何，只得向习俗低头" ("they had no choice but to bow to custom"). The phrases "无可奈何" ("had no choice") and "低头" ("bow to") amplify the sense of resignation and reluctance felt by these female authors. This reflects the coercion and helplessness experienced by these women under societal pressure. Furthermore, while translating "himself a much-talked-of man", Dai & Zhou make a substitution into "他本人则是一个饱受争议的人物" ("he was a controversial figure"), effectively captures Woolf's irony. The phrase "饱受争议" ("controversial figure") underlines the paradox of Pericles being heavily discussed, in stark contrast to his advice for women. This loses the humour of the original but retains Woolf's criticism of Pericles' hypocrisy and presents it more sharply by characterising him as "controversial."

Overall, in translating Example 3, Wang's translation amplifies Woolf's critical tone, underscoring the harmful effects of deeply rooted societal norms on women's freedom. Jia

Huifeng's translation takes a softened critical tone, focusing on clarity and directly expressing Woolf's irony. Dai Hongzhen and Zhou Chun's translation maintain fidelity to convey Woolf's critique, emphasising women's societal pressure and the sharp contradictions within patriarchal expectations.

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter has compared three Chinese translations of Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*. Using a specially constructed corpus, the study investigates the translation shifts and strategies employed by the translators mainly how themes of social expectations and women's independence are interpreted across different temporal and cultural contexts. By analysing various optional shifts, the research explores the subtleties and motivations behind the linguistic, cultural and historical adaptations made in conveying Woolf's feminist ideas. The key findings of this study are as follows:

T1, Wang Huan's 1947 translation emerged in a pre-PRC era, during which feminist discourse was largely driven by male intellectuals who, influenced by global ideas, regarded promoting education and challenging traditional norms as essential to national and societal transformation, although their leadership of early Chinese feminism remained constrained by existing patriarchal structures. Wang frequently employs optional shifts such as additions and lexical intensification to enhance Woolf's critical tone. For instance, in Example 1, Wang translates "gentlemen who specialise in a woman" using "自命...专家" ("self-proclaimed experts"), thereby heightening the irony of Woolf's scepticism towards patriarchal academia. In Example 3, she strengthens the critique of chastity norms by translating "relic" as "遗毒" ("lingering poison"), which not only preserves the metaphor but makes its social critique more explicit to Chinese readers. Wang's strategies lean toward contextual adaptation and ideological amplification, aiming to align Woolf's feminist critique with China's emerging awareness of gender oppression while retaining formal fidelity. Her optional shifts often clarify Woolf's subtle sarcasm for an audience less familiar with Western feminist irony.

T2, Jia Huifeng's 2003 translation, reflects a period of growing yet conflicted feminist visibility in China following the 1995 Beijing World Conference on Women. Jia's approach is characterised by tone softening, semantic generalisation and, in some instances, a misinterpretation of Woolf's ironic voice. In Example 1, his use of terms like "有教养的绅士" ("educated gentlemen") and "谙熟" ("well-versed") undermines the original sarcasm,

suggesting respect rather than critique. Similarly, in Example 2, his phrase “活该受人指摘的贫穷” (“poverty that women deserve to be blamed for”) distorts Woolf’s collective irony as literal scorn, stripping the sentence of its rhetorical power. Jia’s strategy appears orientated towards domestication and accessibility, employing optional shifts which neutralise satire to evade ideological confrontation. This reflects both the translator’s context and a potential tendency to prioritise fluency over critical fidelity, thereby diminishing the impact of Woolf’s feminist vision.

T3, Dai Hongzhen and Zhou Chun’s 2016 co-translated work, produced during an era of heightened feminist activism via digital platforms, demonstrates an assertive and ideologically conscious strategy. Their use of restructuring, explicitation, and emotional intensification conveys Woolf’s irony, critique, and feminist tone more powerfully than other versions. For example, in Example 1, they restructure the sentence using “尽管...但是” (“although... but”) to highlight the contradiction between scholarly claims and practical irrelevance. In Example 2, they render “reprehensible poverty of our sex” as “强烈的鄙视与谴责” (“strong contempt and condemnation”), elevating Woolf’s ironic frustration to a more visceral emotional response. In Example 3, their phrase “余” (“remain”) 毒 (“poison”) (“lingering effect”) reinforces the harmful legacy of chastity norms. Their translation presents Woolf’s critique as neutral, prioritising fidelity.

In summary, this study highlights the corpus’s distinctive linguistic, cultural, and historical shifts, shedding light on the translators’ approaches to conveying Woolf’s feminist narratives on social expectations and gender identity. Wang (T1) employs subtle amplification and ideological reinforcement, Jia (T2) relies on neutralisation and simplification, and Dai & Zhou (T3) adopt intensification and feminist fidelity. These translation choices shape how Woolf’s feminist arguments are framed for Chinese audiences, confirming that translation is not merely a linguistic act but a culturally and ideologically charged process.

Chapter 7: Discussion

This chapter provides a critical analysis of the main findings from this study, which has explored how Virginia Woolf's feminist discourse has been translated and transformed within the Chinese context through linguistic, ideological and cultural shifts. Drawing on Catford's 'translation shift' theory (1965) and Toury's concept of 'optional shifts' (1995), this study examines how Woolf's complex feminist discourse has been interpreted and adapted across various Chinese translations over time. The analysis has focused on linguistic, ideological and stylistic shifts, as well as the socio-historical factors which influence each translator's decision-making and their translation strategies.

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining a self-constructed diachronic corpus with close textual analysis and content coding using Wordsmith 6 and NVivo. It has systematically examined lexical, structural and ideological shifts in multiple Chinese translations of Virginia Woolf's key feminist texts, including *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), *To the Lighthouse* (1927), *Orlando: A Biography* (1928), and *A Room of One's Own* (1929). These texts were selected because they each engage with major feminist issues such as social expectations, gender binaries, gender fluidity and women's independence, and have been translated several times in China over recent decades. The research has been guided by the following three questions:

Q1: What kinds of translation shifts have the Chinese translators employed in translating Virginia Woolf's novels?

Q2: To what extent do the Chinese translators' historico-cultural backgrounds shape their interpretation and decision-making in translating Woolf's construction/representation of gender roles and gender binaries over time and space?

Q3: How do the Chinese translators navigate the balance of translation shifts between fidelity to the source text and the need for the translation to resonate with Chinese audiences?

These questions have been addressed through both quantitative corpus evidence (e.g., wordcount, sentence length, sentences with feminist ideas) and qualitative close reading (e.g., analysis of shifts in tone, structure, metaphor and cultural meaning), which has enabled the identification of how each translation negotiates between Woolf's feminist voice and the ideological norms of the Chinese readership at the time of translation.

This chapter seeks to demonstrate that translation is a practice shaped by cultural and ideological influences. The diverse strategies used by Chinese translators in conveying Woolf's feminist discourse not only highlight linguistic complexities but also reflect complex negotiations with dominant social norms, political structures and gender ideologies. These factors support the main argument of this thesis: translation acts both as a means for feminist advocacy and as a contested space of ideological resistance or adaptation, depending on the translator's position and the historical context in which the translation takes place.

To ensure a coherent and analytically rigorous discussion of the findings, this chapter is organised into two interconnected sections: 7.1 Challenging the Conservative Paradigm of Early Translations and 7.2 Co-Translations versus Gendered Intervention in Individual Translations. Together, these sections offer a comprehensive interpretation of the results presented in the preceding chapters, directly addressing the research questions and theoretical framework established at the beginning of the study. Rather than merely restating the findings, this chapter critically examines how the translators' decisions, particularly their use of optional shifts, reveal the complex dynamics between ideology, gender, and cultural context in translating feminist literature from English into Chinese. As mentioned before, using Catford's translation shift theory and Toury's concept of optional shifts, the analysis highlights how translators negotiate meaning in response to changing socio-cultural and institutional conditions. It also considers how translator identity, historical context and collaborative dynamics shape the feminist discourses present in Virginia Woolf's texts. Each subsection examines a key thematic finding, compares it with prior research in feminist translation studies and Chinese translation history, and provides interpretative explanations for both expected and unexpected patterns. Through this structure, the chapter enhances the understanding of literary translation as a culturally embedded, ideologically charged act of rewriting.

7.1 Challenging the Conservative Paradigm of Early Translations

7.1.1 Deviation from Existing Studies

This study challenges the dominant assumption in existing scholarship that earlier Chinese translations of Virginia Woolf's works are more ideologically conservative and more likely to weaken or obscure her feminist discourse than later translations. As mentioned before, this study proposes a three-phase periodisation of Virginia Woolf's reception in China: the first phase covering the Republican era (1920s–1949) and the early post-reform decades (late

1970s to early 1990s), the second phase occurring in the late 1990s and 2000s, and the third phase starting in the 2010s. In both feminist translation studies and Woolf scholarship in China, early translations, particularly those produced during the Republican era (1920s–1949) and the early post-reform period (late 1970s–1990s), are generally regarded as conservative in their portrayals of female characters and cautious in their engagement with feminist issues. Scholars widely contend that the feminist elements of Woolf's works became more explicitly visible in Chinese translations only after the 1990s. This dominant perspective is well supported in recent academic work.

In *East Meets West: Chinese Reception and Translation of Virginia Woolf*, Jin (2009) employs a historical contextualization approach from a cross-cultural standpoint to examine the evolution of Virginia Woolf's reception in China, emphasising the treatment of her feminist perspectives. Drawing upon reception studies and comparative literature, Jin divides the Chinese reception of Woolf into two distinct stages. The first is the 1930s–1940s, characterised by an interaction between the Bloomsbury Group and China's Crescent Moon Group. During this period, translators and critics primarily engaged with Woolf's modernist techniques, selectively critiqued her feminist essays, and even emulated her stream-of-consciousness style. The second stage (1990s–present) is informed by political, cultural and literary agendas, wherein Woolf's works have been systematically published and her feminism explored more deeply alongside her formal innovations. Jin concludes that, while Woolf's status is now well-established in China, earlier translations and criticisms addressed her feminism only superficially, focusing more on aesthetic form than on ideological content. In contrast, later translations and scholarship integrate both aspects.

Similarly, in *Virginia Woolf in China: Translation, Study, and Influence*, Yang (2022) employs a historical-cultural contextual approach, utilising feminist literary criticism to position Virginia Woolf's translation and scholarship within the socio-political and cultural history of modern China. Through a diachronic historical analysis, Yang categorises the reception of Woolf into two main periods: the Republican era (1929–1949), when Woolf's works were first introduced during the early modernist literary exchanges and were often mediated through selective translations, and the post-reform period (late 1980s–present), when renewed interest correlated with the influence of modernism and the emergence of feminist criticism. Yang observes a distinct shift in the representation of Woolf's feminist thought over time. Early translations, influenced by the prevailing cultural and literary norms, tend to portray female characters and gender relations in a conservative manner, muting or reframing feminist elements. In contrast, later translations, especially those from the 1990s onwards, more

explicitly highlight women's agency, critique gender inequality and align with Woolf's feminist vision.

This broader ideological shift in Chinese literary translation, moving from conservative portrayals to increasingly feminist-orientated reinterpretations, is further supported by a growing body of scholarship on the Chinese translations of Virginia Woolf's works. As discussed in Chapter 3, Yu Yin (2014), in her study titled *A Study on Feminist Poetics in the Two Chinese Versions of Mrs. Dalloway from the Perspective of Feminist Translation Theories*, provides a comparative analysis of the 1988 translation by Sun Liang and Su Mei and the 2001 version by Wang Jiaxiang. By utilising feminist translation strategies like hijacking, supplementing and embodying female experiences, Yu (2014) classifies twelve representative examples into three modes of intervention: fidelity to the source text, reasonable deviation, and creative rewriting. Her analysis demonstrates that earlier translations often simplify or obscure the feminist implications of the text, while later versions exhibit a heightened sensitivity to Woolf's gender-critical perspective, thus better capturing the nuances of feminist poetics.

Moreover, Zhang's (2021) work *Empowering Mrs. Ramsay: Chinese Feminist Translations of Virginia Woolf's To the Lighthouse*, as discussed in Chapter 4, situates her analysis within the broader scholarly consensus regarding the evolution of feminist translation practices in China. She compares Qu Shijing's 1988 translation with Ma Ainong's 2003 version. Through a close examination of diction, tone and characterisation, Zhang argues that the earlier translation—shaped by the conservative ideological climate of the late 1980s—portrays Mrs. Ramsay as passive, self-sacrificing and confined to the domestic sphere. In contrast, the later version depicts her as more assertive, self-reflective and subtly resistant to patriarchal constraints, reflecting the increasing influence of feminist discourse in the post-millennial period. Further evidence is presented in Mai and Hsiung's (2017) *Feminist Revision on Chinese Versions of A Room of One's Own: An Experimental Case Study*, which assesses two Chinese translations of Woolf's foundational feminist text, both crafted by female translators operating within distinct ideological frameworks. Utilising Luise von Flotow's (1991) feminist strategies, specifically supplementing, footnoting and hijacking, they illustrate how the earlier translation, shaped by traditional norms and translator invisibility, adopts a restrained and self-effacing style which diminishes Woolf's political critique. In contrast, the experimental revision proposed by Mai and Hsiung adopts an explicitly feminist stance, amplifying Woolf's subversive insights into gender and power relations and aligning with a more activist model of translation. Collectively, these studies have strengthened the widely accepted scholarly view that early translations of Woolf's works often neutralised or domesticated her feminist voice.

However, some of the early translations examined in this study challenge the prevailing scholarly view that earlier Chinese renderings of Virginia Woolf's works are inherently more ideologically conservative and more likely to diminish or obscure her feminist discourse. Although previous research has primarily associated early translations with ideological restraint, the analysis reveals that early Chinese translators were not only able to preserve but also to amplify feminist elements in Woolf's texts. By employing a dual methodological approach, combining diachronic corpus analysis with close comparative readings of three to four Chinese translations of each of Woolf's four major works, this study reveals that some early translations demonstrate an intentional engagement with Woolf's feminist vision. Rather than reproducing the source text passively or cautiously, these translators employed various strategies, including metaphorical intensification, lexical enrichment and cultural clarification, to highlight Woolf's critique of gender roles and patriarchal structures. In doing so, they made her ideological nuances more accessible and resonant for Chinese readers, thereby challenging the notion of a conservative approach in early Chinese translations of Woolf. The diachronic Chinese translations of Virginia Woolf's four works examined in this study are presented in the following table.

Version names	T1	T2	T3	T4
<i>Mrs. Dalloway</i> (1925)	孙梁 & 苏美, (Sun Liang, Male & Su Mei, Female), 1988	王家湘 (Wang Jiexiang, Female), 2001	姜向明 (Jiang Xiangming, Male), 2014	No
<i>To the Lighthouse</i> (1927)	谢庆堃 (Xie Qingyao, Male), 1946	瞿世镜 (Qu Shijing, Male), 1988	马爱农 (Ma Ainong, Female), 2003	李小艳 (Li Xiaoyan, Female), 田泽中 (Tian Zezhong, Female) & 蒙苑宁 (Meng Yuanning, Female) 2017
<i>Orlando: A Biography</i> (1928)	韦虹 & 旻乐, (Wei Hong, Female & Min	林燕 (Lin Yan, Female), 2003	任一鸣 (Ren Yiming, Female), 2014	侯毅凌 (Hou Yiling, Male), 2021

	Le, Female), 1994			
<i>A Room of One's Own</i> (1929)	王 还 (Wang Huan, Female) 1947	贾 辉 丰 (Jia Huifeng, Male), 2003	戴 红 珍& 周 淳 (Dai Hongzhen, Female & Zhou Chun, Male), 2016	No

Table 7. 1 Chinese translations of four works of Virginia Woolf

Evidence of this challenge to the conservative paradigm of early translations can be observed across the texts examined. For example, in their 1988 translation of Mrs. Dalloway, Sun Liang and Su Mei rendered the phrase "This susceptibility to impressions had been his undoing," as "这样敏感是他失败的原因" which translates back to "such sensitivity was the reason for his failure." By interpreting "susceptibility to impressions" as "敏感" ("sensitivity"), the translation emphasises societal associations of emotional sensitivity, often stereotypically linked to women, while attributing this trait to a male character. This translation shows that Peter acknowledges that his sensitivity was the pivotal reason for his failure. This translation challenges traditional gender norms and supports a more fluid understanding of emotional expression. Similarly, their rendering of "like a boy or a girl even, these alternations of mood" as "却还像个少男少女，易于情绪波动" ("yet still like a young boy and girl, prone to mood swings") maintains gender balance. By referencing both "boys" and "girls", they preserve the original's nuance, presenting emotional fluctuation as a youthful trait rather than a gendered one, thus reinforcing a more inclusive portrayal of emotions. In contrast, Jiang Huifeng's 2014 translation either mistranslated or downplayed Woolf's narrative irony. He renders "This susceptibility to impressions had been his undoing" as "风景能如此感染他正是他的致命弱点" ("it was his fatal weakness that the scenery could infect him in this way"). This version reduces the original's abstract concept of general emotional vulnerability to a specific reaction to scenery, shifting from a sensitivity that negatively impacts Peter's life to a literal interaction with landscapes or environments. Consequently, it weakens the broader psychological implications and diminishes the ironic tone of the original. Furthermore, Jiang's translation of "like a boy or a girl even..." as "却依旧像个小伙子似的，情绪反复无常" ("still like a young man, his emotions are capricious") omits the reference to "girls" entirely. These re-genders the emotional experience, aligning it solely with masculinity and thus removing the original's gender-fluid implication. As a result, Jiang's version simplifies the character's emotional complexity and underplays Woolf's critique of gendered expectations. The earlier

translation more faithfully preserves and even amplifies Woolf's feminist critique, while the later version diminishes its ironical strength, thus challenging the prevailing scholarly view that early Chinese translations of Woolf's works are more conservative and tend to obscure her feminist discourse.

Evidence also appears in translations of *Orlando*. Wei and Min's 1994 translation expands Woolf's description of the crinoline skirt into “有衬架支撑的女裙的重量向下拖着” (“dragged down by the weight of the skirt supported by a lined frame”), clarifying the garment's unfamiliar structure for Chinese readers while reinforcing its oppressive weight. They intensify Woolf's adjectives (“heavier,” “drab”) into three—“沉重” (“heavy”), “单调” (“monotonous”), and “缺乏生气” (“lifeless”)—and replace “mournfully” and “submissively” with “悲哀地” (“in grief”) and “温顺地” (“gently submissively”), heightening the sense of emotional resignation. These additions and lexical shifts deepen the feminist critique by emphasising the physical and psychological burdens imposed on women. In contrast, Hou Yiling's 2021 version—“她已经顺应时代潮流，拖曳起沉重的裙撑” (“she had gone with the trend of the times and dragged up her heavy pannier”)—preserves the core meaning but lessens the impact. The choice of “拖曳起” (“drag up”) weakens the original's “dragged down,” removing the sense of involuntary submission and replacing it with a more neutral upward movement. Syntactically, Hou places “顺应时代潮流” (“gone with the trend of the times”) in the middle of the sentence, thereby softening the abrupt, final emphasis of Woolf's “...which she had submissively adopted.” The result is a depiction of the skirt as an inconvenience rather than a powerful symbol of the burdens women bear. The earlier translation more fully preserves and amplifies Woolf's critique, while the later version softens its ideological impact, challenging the idea that newer translations are always more progressive in their feminist stance.

In *A Room of One's Own*, the initial translation, Wang Huan's 1947, is notable for its fidelity and nuanced portrayal of Woolf's feminist critique, especially given the limited exposure to foreign intellectual currents in China at the time. Her translation introduced Chinese readers to the systemic nature of women's oppression, capturing both the rhetorical irony and the collective perspective which are key to Woolf's argument. For instance, in translating “we burst out in scorn at the reprehensible poverty of our sex” as “我们实在不得不对我们女人的不可恕的穷苦加以轻蔑” (“we really cannot help but feel contempt for the unpardonable poverty of our

women”), Wang translates the collective “我们女人” (“our women”), preserving a sense of solidarity while maintaining the ironic tension between unity and implicit blame. The phrasing reflects Woolf’s subtle irony, pointing critique not at women as individuals but at the patriarchal structures which make their poverty unavoidable. Wang’s sensitivity to irony is also clear in her translation of Pericles’ quote—“(the chief glory of a woman is not to be talked of, said Pericles, himself a much-talked-about man)” —as “伯里克利说一个女人最高的荣誉就是不被人谈论, 可是他自己是最受人谈论的男人” (“Pericles said that the highest honour for a woman was not to be talked about, but he was the most talked about man”). The added “可是” (“but”) sharpens the contrast and makes the hypocrisy clear, heightening Woolf’s sarcasm for the target audience. This blend of faithfulness, strategic addition and interpretative clarity shows that, even in the 1940s, translators could preserve and, in some ways, intensify Woolf’s feminist voice.

While several early translations in the corpus examined in this study demonstrate fidelity to Woolf’s text and, in some cases, even amplify her feminist critique, there are also significant exceptions that show the narrative of “early equals conservative”. A notable example is Xie Qingyao’s 1946 translation of *To the Lighthouse*, which diverges considerably from the source text and incorporates the translator’s own interpretations, understandings, and biases. Xie entirely replaces the source text “and so have to meet a serious stare from eyes of unparalleled depth, and confront Mrs. Ramsay’s simple certainty (and she was childlike now) that her dear Lily, her little Brisk, was a fool” with “她觉得雷姆赛夫人相当的专横 (她想到雷姆赛夫人对待同性的手腕, 无其是待她---一个年青而没地位的女子---的高傲态度)” (“She thought Mrs. Ramsay is rather domineering [she thought of Mrs. Ramsay’s tactics in dealing with the same sex, especially her - a young and unimportant woman - with an arrogant attitude]”). This substitution shifts Woolf’s free indirect discourse from an externalised observation of Mrs. Ramsay’s demeanour, filtered through Lily’s perception, into an explicit judgment highlighting Mrs. Ramsay’s “专横” (“domineering”) and “高傲态度” (“arrogant attitude”). In doing so, Xie collapses narrative ambiguity into a one-dimensional critique, removing the subtle interplay of distance, irony, and complexity characteristic of Woolf’s prose. The outcome is a flattening of characterisation, reducing Mrs. Ramsay to a domineering figure, while Lily’s nuanced perception is erased. This shift from free indirect discourse to reported thought signifies both stylistic and ideological intervention. The socio-historical context further clarifies these choices. Xie translated *To the Lighthouse* in 1946, before the founding of the People’s Republic of China, when Western feminist ideas were scarcely known and translation practices were

driven more by pragmatic than theoretical considerations. In his preface, Xie acknowledges his limited ability to fully render Woolf's stylistic subtleties and the unfamiliarity among Chinese readers with such works. He admits to omitting or rewriting sections beyond his linguistic reach, a strategy that inevitably reflects his judgments and biases.

Taken together, Xie's interventions emphasise the importance of translator background, including gender and ideological stance, in shaping textual outcomes. Unlike the other early translator Wang Huan, whose 1947 version of *A Room of One's Own* displayed notable fidelity to Woolf's feminist voice, Xie's translation reveals a markedly different approach, one that distances the text from feminist critique. This contrast suggests that early translations cannot be categorised simply as "conservative." Instead, they demonstrate a variety of approaches influenced by translator agency, strategy, and positionality. Ultimately, this case highlights a key finding of the study that the ideological stance of a translation cannot be deduced solely from its historical period. While socio-political conditions clearly influenced the broader environment, individual translators exercised significant discretion in their interpretive choices, even during times often described as ideologically restrictive. The interaction of historical context, translator background, and translation strategy is therefore vital to understanding how Woolf's feminist discourse was mediated in China.

7.1.2 Interpretative Analysis

Compared to the prevailing scholarly consensus expressed by Yang (2022), Jin (2009), Zhang (2021), Yu (2014), and Mai and Hsiung (2017), this study reveals a notable divergence. Despite utilising diverse methodological approaches, these scholars generally agree that feminist elements in Chinese translations of Woolf's works became more prominent only after the 1990s. Yang and Jin, through macro-historical and contextual analysis, divide the reception of Woolf into two key phases: an early phase—covering the Republican era and early post-reform decades, characterised by ideological caution and subdued feminist engagement—and a later phase—emerging after the 1990s, where translations increasingly reflect feminist discourse. Zhang (2021), Yu (2014), and Mai and Hsiung (2017), while conducting more targeted comparative analyses of two translations per work, similarly reinforce this dominant scholarly consensus. By contrasting earlier versions, often perceived as ideologically conservative, with later editions shaped by feminist theory, their findings generally support a linear, progressive view of feminist translation history.

In contrast, this study challenges that linear-progressive framework by employing a broader and more systematic comparative approach. Specifically, it examines three or four Chinese translations of each of Woolf's four major works, including *Mrs. Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse*, *Orlando*, and *A Room of One's Own*, across a diachronic span. This expanded corpus enables a more detailed examination of translational choices, demonstrating that feminist-aligned translations can and do appear in earlier versions, albeit through contextual methods. These findings support Tymoczko's (2010) argument that ideological resistance in translation is not always explicit but can be embedded indirectly, such as through syntactic structure, metaphorical intensification, and culturally specific reframing.

Several interconnected factors may explain this unexpected boldness in early translations. First, some translators might have held personal commitments to gender equality, even if they did not explicitly endorse feminist ideology. These underlying convictions probably influenced their interpretative approach and lexical choices, especially when rendering Woolf's critiques of patriarchy and domestic ideology. For example, Wang Huan's 1947 translation of *A Room of One's Own* was produced during a period when feminist discourse was hardly visible in China, yet Wang's version nonetheless demonstrates remarkable fidelity to Woolf's arguments, maintaining both her satirical critique of patriarchy and her call for women's intellectual and economic independence. This suggests that Wang's interpretive choices were guided by an implicit commitment to gender equality, even if not explicitly expressed in feminist language. Secondly, Woolf's modernist style, characterised by narrative indirection and stream of consciousness, offered translators the flexibility to navigate politically sensitive content without explicit confrontation, enabling critique to be expressed implicitly and allowing critical perspectives to be retained beneath the surface of aesthetic fidelity. In this way, formal imitation served as a mechanism for ideological preservation. Thirdly, translators employed various translation strategies such as metaphorical intensification, lexical modulation and syntactic fidelity, which integrated feminist critique while maintaining surface-level fidelity with the target language norms.

Overall, these insights indicate that the ideological stance of a translation is not solely determined by the external political climate or the historical period in which it was produced. Instead, it arises from the dynamic interplay between translator agency, translation strategy, and the opportunities offered by the institutional and literary environment. Therefore, early Chinese translations of Woolf's works deserve renewed scholarly attention not only for what they conceal or omit but also for how they support, reflect, or even strengthen feminist critique. This study highlights the importance of combining diachronic corpus analysis with micro-

textual comparison to reassess long-held assumptions in feminist translation history and to reveal often overlooked forms of resistance embedded in early translation practices.

7.1.3 Implications for Theory and Practice

This renewed scholarly attention has significant implications for feminist translation historiography and translation studies more broadly. It challenges the linear-progress narrative, which depicts translation history as a gradual movement from ideological constraints to political liberation. Instead, the evidence presented here supports a non-linear, agent-centred model in which bold ideological choices arise not only in response to, but also from within, shifting historical conditions—through the interaction of translator intention, stylistic possibilities and institutional opportunities. This study demonstrates that moments of resistance and ideological clarity can occur even in seemingly conservative eras if the textual, institutional, and personal conditions permit them. Methodologically, the study underscores the importance of detailed, comparative analysis across multiple translations of the same source text. While single-case comparisons or period-based generalisations might overlook variability within a specific era, a corpus-informed, diachronic approach reveals subtle shifts in tone, metaphor, and voice that better reflect the ideological dynamics at play. For scholars of Woolf in translation, this approach promotes a renewed focus on early versions, viewing them not just as restrictive but as potential spaces for interpretative agency and feminist intervention. In feminist translation theory, it suggests that ideological engagement in translation is shaped not only by external historical forces but also by micro-decisions made by translators at the level of sentences, phrases and words.

In summary, this study reinterprets early Chinese translations of Virginia Woolf not as passive reflections of their era, but as complex texts shaped by competing influences and inventive strategies. It advocates for a reassessment of the link between historical periods and ideological positions in translation, highlighting the potential of early translations, which have often been overlooked, to make significant contributions to feminist literary history in China. Having established that some early translations display an unexpected level of ideological engagement, the discussion now shifts to a related but distinct phenomenon observed across the corpus: the prominence of a fidelity-oriented approach in co-translated works. The following section explores how, in contrast to both openly feminist and conservative approaches, many co-translators adopt a deliberately neutral stance to preserve fidelity, sometimes even amplifying feminist critique when dealing with ideologically sensitive material, especially feminist content. This pattern raises important questions about the influence of

collaboration, institutional norms, and target audience expectations in shaping the ideological tone of literary translations.

7.2 Co-Translations vs Gendered Intervention in Individual Translations

7.2.1 Deviation from Existing Studies

A second key finding of this study concerns the relationship between translator identity, collaboration, and ideological framing. The analysis reveals that co-translated works generally prioritise fidelity to the source text, sometimes even amplifying Virginia Woolf's feminist ideas through clarifying additions or structural emphasis. However, their interventions remain largely cautious and mediated by institutional norms. In contrast, individual female translators demonstrate a more interpretive and interventionist approach, often deliberately foregrounding gender critique. Their renderings are characterised by substitution, addition, reordering, and rhetorical intensification that highlight the critical implications of Woolf's texts. By comparison, male translators tend to adopt more neutral or domesticated strategies, frequently softening, rephrasing or downplaying feminist elements. The translators' gender has been made explicit in the table 7.1. This gendered pattern suggests the influence of what Bourdieuan theorists might call "a gendered translator habitus"—a system of internalised dispositions shaped by social, cultural, and institutional experiences—that influences how translators engage with ideologically charged material, particularly in relation to questions of gender and power (Wolf, 2012). When applied to gender, a gendered translator habitus suggests that male and female translators may employ different strategies based on their embodied experiences of gender norms and ideological positioning (Sela-Sheffy, 2005). Consequently, this finding illustrates that translator identity, particularly gender and collaborative structure, plays a pivotal role in shaping how Woolf's feminist discourse is interpreted and negotiated in Chinese translation. It broadens and complicates existing assumptions in feminist translation studies by emphasising the importance of collaborative dynamics and translator gender as factors that influence the transmission of feminist ideas.

Recent studies have examined the impact of translator gender and ideological stance on translation strategies, providing a basis for comparison with current findings. Leonardi and Taronna (2011), in *"Male- vs. Female-Translator Strategies: Ethical and Ideological Challenges,"* examine the connection between translator identity and ideological meaning in

translation through two case studies, one of which considers Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*. They compare two Italian translations of this work, one by a female translator (Alessandra Scalero) and the other by a male translator (Alberto Rossatti), to investigate how gendered viewpoints influence translation choices. They demonstrate that key lexical choices, particularly around gendered terms such as "he-man," "female," "change," and "fashion," reflect distinct ideological perspectives. The study argues that translation is not a neutral act but a gendered and culturally embedded process, where the translator's identity shapes how meaning is conveyed and reshaped.

This trend is also evident in Yang's (2021) study of two Chinese translations of *Mrs. Dalloway*—Sun Liang and Su Mei's 1988 version and Wang Jiaxiang's 2001 version. Using feminist translation theory as a framework, Yang examines strategies such as hijacking and supplementation, demonstrating how these reflect the translator's ideological position. Yang concludes that the translator's identity, including gender and political views, significantly influences the expression of feminist themes. Her findings support this study's observation that, even within the same historical period, the translator's orientation impacts ideological outcomes. A more explicitly gender-oriented study is conducted by Yu Bingxi (2013), who compares *To the Lighthouse* in two Chinese versions: one by male translator Qu Shijing (1988) and the other by female translator Ma Ainong (2003). Yu's analysis focuses on lexical choices and stylistic tendencies, revealing that the gender awareness of the translators plays a vital role in their translation strategies. Ma's version places a clearer emphasis on female agency and psychological complexity, while Qu's translation tends to portray Mrs. Ramsay as passively maternal. These results echo the current study's own findings: female translators generally retain Woolf's gender-critical perspective more assertively, whereas male translators often smooth over or downplay ideological dissonance. Similarly, Wang Haiqing's (2021) study of *A Room of One's Own* examines Jia Huifeng's Chinese translation through feminist translation theory. Wang highlights how feminist strategies, especially hijacking, emphasis on female imagery, and showcasing women's literary tradition, are used to emphasise Woolf's political critique. Notably, the study attributes these choices to the translator's personal feminist agenda, illustrating that feminist translations are more than just linguistic acts; they are ideologically motivated acts of cultural renewal. This supports the current research by indicating that individual translator positioning often plays a crucial role in how feminist ideas are translated and reinterpreted.

Together, these studies offer a clear context for understanding this work's findings: co-translated works tend to prioritise fidelity to the source text, sometimes enhancing Virginia Woolf's feminist ideas through clarifying additions or structural emphasis. In contrast, shaped

by what can be understood as a gendered translator habitus, individual female translators often take a more interpretive and interventionist approach, deliberately highlighting gender critique and amplifying feminist subtext. Individual male translators are more likely to adopt neutral or domesticating strategies, often softening or reducing the visibility of feminist elements in the target text. An analysis of the corpus reveals that many co-translated versions of Woolf's works often display a balanced and sometimes heightened ideological stance, characterised by formal fidelity to the source text and engagement with feminist undertones. These translations often emphasise accuracy, fluency and narrative cohesion, especially when dealing with ideologically charged or gender-sensitive content. This translation strategy may stem from collaborative processes, editorial pressures or a common dedication to accuracy and balance. This section presents representative examples from each of the four core texts examined in this study.

In *Mrs Dalloway*, the 1988 co-translation by Sun Liang and Su Mei adopts a primarily faithful and textually conservative approach. Their translation of the emotionally charged sentence, "How he scolded her! How they argued!" as "他把她骂得多厉害啊! 他俩争论得多激烈!" ("How badly he scolded her! How fiercely they argued!"), maintains the emotional tone of the original, while slightly amplifying the affective register through the addition of emphatic adverbs such as "多厉害" ("how badly") and "多激烈" ("how fiercely"). The translation retains the interpersonal dynamics and emotional turbulence of the original scene, demonstrating a commitment to textual fidelity, which is typical of co-translated works across the corpus. Similarly, in *To the Lighthouse*, the 2017 co-translation by Li Xiaoyan, Tian Zezhong, and Meng Yuanning employs a faithful approach, subtly incorporating explanatory elements. Their translation of the phrase "she was not made for that" as "她天生就不该结婚" ("She was not born to get married") adds an explicit clarification—"结婚" ("get married")—not present in the original English, which implicitly refers to societal expectations surrounding women's marital roles. While this addition clarifies the social norm Lily is resisting, it functions more as contextualisation rather than interpretation, making Woolf's critique of domestic ideology more accessible to a Chinese readership unfamiliar with the nuances of British gender norms. The choice reflects a moderate level of ideological engagement, potentially influenced by synthesising institutional constraints, collaborative dynamics, and the gendered habitus of translators, as it aligns with the feminist subtext of the original but avoids overt politicisation of the translation, thus illustrating how co-translators can employ subtle adjustments to maintain fidelity while ensuring contextual clarity.

In *Orlando*, Wei and Min's 1994 collaborative translation also demonstrates a cautious yet strategic engagement with feminist imagery. To translate Woolf's metaphor about Victorian fashion and gender restrictions, they render the line describing Orlando's crinoline skirt as “有衬架支撑的女裙的重量向下拖着” (“dragged down by the weight of the skirt supported by a lined frame”). This paraphrastic approach employs addition and compensation to create structure shifts which explain culturally unfamiliar material—specifically, the crinoline skirt—and simultaneously underlines the physical burden as a metaphor for societal gender restrictions. By enhancing the metaphor's descriptive detail, the translation transmits the oppressive symbolism embedded in women's dress codes. In *A Room of One's Own*, the co-translators Dai and Zhou's interpretation reflects a faithful approach while subtly integrating feminist elements. Their rendering of Woolf's sentence “we burst out in scorn at the reprehensible poverty of our sex” as “忍不住发作起来，对我们这个女性群体，予以强烈的鄙视与谴责” (“I can't help but burst out in anger and strongly condemn our group of women”) exemplifies a translation strategy which both preserves Woolf's ironic tone and communicates her emotional intensity. The strong verbs “发作起来” (“burst out in anger”) and “强烈的鄙视与谴责” (“strongly condemn”) evoke the internalised frustration and rhetorical irony of Woolf's voice.

Throughout these co-translated works, a consistent pattern emerges that translators often preserve the thematic and emotional core of Woolf's writing, while carefully avoiding overt ideological influence. Rather than distorting or diminishing the feminist elements of the text, these translations usually present them in a balanced and neutral way to ensure fidelity. In each instance, the translation choices reflect a strategy that maintains fidelity to Woolf's modernist style and tone while avoiding interpretative excess or ideological bias. By doing so, co-translators position themselves as mediators, prioritising textual integrity over explicit political stance.

Across the corpus, female translators consistently show a higher level of ideological engagement, employing translation strategies to amplify Woolf's feminist critique while ensuring cultural resonance for Chinese readers. In *Mrs Dalloway*, Wang Jiaxiang (2001) preserves the literal meaning of the source text while adding gendered nuance; her translation of “the makings of the perfect hostess” as “具有成为完美的女主人的一切内在素质” (“had all the intrinsic qualities to be a perfect female master”) highlights the societal expectations placed on women. The focus on “内在素质” (intrinsic qualities) not only aligns with Woolf's irony but

also reinforces the normative pressures which women internalise, reflecting a heightened sensitivity to the ideological undertones of the text. In *To the Lighthouse*, Ma Ainong's (2003) translation of "she would urge her own exemption from the universal law" as "强调自己不受常规的制约" ("emphasising that she was not bound by conventions") restructures the source syntax to emphasise Lily's active resistance rather than tentative aspiration. This syntactic shift strengthens the portrayal of Lily's agency and presents her defiance as a firmly held stance, strengthening the feminist tone of the narrative.

Similarly, in *Orlando*, Lin (2003) employs addition and metaphorical intensification to depict both historical and modern gender struggles. Her phrase "直不起腰来" ("unable to stand upright") expresses the crushing physical and symbolic burden of societal expectations, echoing Woolf's critique of restrictive norms and subtly referencing China's persistent double burden on working women. Ren's (2014) version emphasises this by translating "dragged down by the weight of the crinoline" as "被裙撑的重量坠得她直不起腰" ("the weight of the hoop petticoat felt so great that she could not stand upright"), highlighting the dress's weight as a metaphor for gender conformity and employing structure to emphasise the loss of autonomy. In *A Room of One's Own*, Wang Huan (1947) introduces a strategically ironic addition, translating "experts on women" as "自命...专家" ("self-proclaimed experts") to expose the presumptuous authority of male commentators on women's lives. Her translation amplifies the satirical tone of the original and integrates Woolf's feminist critique into a distinctly Chinese context, addressing institutionalised sexism with sharp rhetorical precision. Collectively, these examples demonstrate how female translators use strategies such as syntactic restructuring, metaphorical enhancement and ironic amplification to make Woolf's feminist vision clearer, more culturally comprehensible and more ideologically impactful.

Unlike the more ideologically committed interpretations by female translators, male translators in the corpus tend to take a more restrained, or even reductive, approach to Woolf's feminist critique, often softening her irony and diluting her social commentary. As mentioned before, in *Mrs Dalloway*, Jiang Huifeng's (2014) translation of "This susceptibility to impressions had been his undoing" as "风景能如此感染他正是他的致命弱点" ("it was his fatal weakness that the scenery could infect him in this way") significantly narrows the meaning of the original. By shifting from an abstract notion of emotional vulnerability to a concrete response to external scenery, the translation diminishes the psychological complexity of the source text. Similarly, Jiang's rendering of "like a boy or a girl even..." as

“却依旧像个小伙子似的，情绪反复无常” (“still like a young man, his emotions are capricious”) omits the explicit reference to “girls”. This alteration reduces the gender fluidity implied in Woolf’s depiction and results in a more narrowly gendered representation of Peter’s emotional character.

In *To the Lighthouse*, Xie Qingyao’s (1946) rendering of a complex passage describing Mrs. Ramsay’s “simple certainty” as “相当的专横... 高傲态度” (“rather domineering... arrogant attitude”) replaces layered psychological perception with overt character judgment, thereby simplifying the moral complexity and narrative voice. Similarly, Qu Shijing’s (1988) translation of the same scene reinterprets “confront Mrs. Ramsay’s simple certainty” as “聆听...坦率的教诲” (“listen to her frank teachings”), replacing irony with reverence. The phrase “teachings” suggests didactic wisdom rather than ideological imposition, repositioning Mrs. Ramsay as a moral guide and Lily as a passive recipient, thus neutralising the feminist resistance embedded in the source.

In *Orlando*, Hou Yiling (2021) translates “dragged down by the weight of the skirt” as “拖曳起沉重的裙撑” (“dragged up the heavy pannier”), replacing the metaphor of oppressive weight with a gesture of compliant fashion. This substitution weakens the critique of societal constraints by suggesting voluntary conformity. In *A Room of One’s Own*, Jia Huifeng (2003) describes the male “experts” using terms such as “有教养的” (“educated”) and “学问渊博” (“well-read”), further employing “谙熟” (“well-versed”) to characterise their knowledge. These choices reframe the satirical portrayal of the self-proclaimed male authorities as credible intellectuals, thus softening Woolf’s critical stance and erasing the intended irony. Together, these translations show a tendency to downplay feminist irony or soften critique, which often leads to less ideological sharpness and shallower interpretation. In other words, the observed patterns suggest that male translators in the corpus tend to adopt conservative translation approaches, which limit the expression of Woolf’s feminist voice.

7.2.2 Interpretative Analysis

The differing patterns observed across the corpus indicate that co-translated works usually adopt a fidelity-oriented approach and sometimes emphasise feminist ideas in the

source text, while female individual translators tend to engage with feminist content more interpretively. In contrast, male translators often smooth out or diminish ideological inconsistencies. These trends are not merely coincidental; rather, they reflect deeper structural and subjective factors that influence how translators position themselves ideologically during the translation process. A comprehensive understanding of these patterns can be achieved by synthesising institutional constraints, collaborative dynamics, and the gendered habitus of translators.

Institutional pressures significantly influence the neutral tone observed in collaborative translations, helping to uphold fidelity. Co-translated texts are typically created under the auspices of academic or commercial publishers, where editorial oversight is rigorous regarding the ideological acceptability of the content (Prieto Ramos, 2015). As noted by Leonardi and Taronna (2011), translation is not only ideological but also culturally situated, often shaped by external norms, particularly those imposed by publishing institutions. As a result, co-translations generally adopt a neutral stance which aligns with institutional expectations, striving to maintain fidelity and avert potential controversy.

Secondly, the collaborative nature of co-translation necessitates ongoing negotiation among translators, often resulting in consensus-driven and conservative solutions (Diao, 2022). Within these collaborative frameworks, interpretative interventions—especially those which may emphasise a feminist critique—are frequently kept orientated toward fidelity, in order to maintain team cohesion and ensure editorial approval. This trend aligns with Yang's (2021) findings, which highlight the impact of translator identity, including ideological stance, on the treatment of feminist content. In collaborative settings where translators may hold differing ideological viewpoints, adopting a fidelity-focused approach often serves as a practical compromise to prevent interpersonal conflict or institutional rejection.

The concept of gendered translator habitus sheds light on the consistently stronger feminist perspectives evident in translations by female translators. Studies by Yu Bingxi (2013) and Wang Haiqing (2021) illustrate that female translators often employ feminist strategies, such as supplementation and hijacking, to foreground women's experiences and challenge patriarchal structures. This suggests that female translators may exhibit a heightened awareness of gender dynamics within the source text, resulting in more deliberate interventions. These findings reinforce the notion that female translators, especially those operating independently, are more inclined to view their role as culturally transformative and ideologically accountable.

7.2.3 Implications for Theory and Practice

The patterns identified in this study highlight the prevalence of a fidelity-focused approach in co-translations, the more assertive feminist interventions by female translators, and the generally restrained tone adopted by male translators. These findings emphasise the need to move beyond the period as the primary explanatory model for ideological positioning in translated texts. While previous scholarship has effectively mapped the diachronic trajectory of Woolf's reception in China (e.g., Yang, 2022; Jin, 2009), the current study illustrates that translator configuration—whether collaborative or solo—and translator identity, particularly gender, are equally crucial in shaping how feminist ideologies are reframed across diverse cultural and linguistic contexts.

The findings presented align with the assertions made by scholars such as Leonardi and Taronna (2011), who contend that translation is not a neutral act; rather, it is an ideologically embedded process influenced by the translator's subjectivity. Their comparative study of *Orlando* in Italian reveals how gendered positionality leads to divergent interpretations of the same text. Similarly, Yang's (2021) feminist analysis of *Mrs. Dalloway* supports the idea that awareness of gender and ideology affects the extent to which a translator adheres to the feminist ethos of the original work. Additionally, Yu Bingxi (2013) and Wang Haiqing (2021) illustrate that female translators are more inclined to adopt interventionist strategies, such as hijacking or supplementation, to enhance feminist critique. Collectively, these studies, along with the current corpus-based analysis, affirm that translator agency, identity and collaborative dynamics play crucial roles in influencing the ideological outcomes of translation, often transcending historical contexts alone.

While diachronic trends continue to be significant, the evidence presented here indicates that ideological orientation is often influenced by factors such as translator subjectivity, gender identity and the mode of translation. Co-translated texts, despite being produced in more open ideological environments, frequently adhere to semantic fidelity and stylistic neutrality. In contrast, female translators, regardless of the historical context, are more likely to make Woolf's feminist critiques visible, assertive and culturally resonant. This tendency complicates traditional concepts of translator invisibility (Venuti, 2017). These findings support the feminist translation theoretical perspective that translation is fundamentally ideological (Grant et al., 2017)) and assert that the positionality of the translator must be a central consideration when evaluating translational ethics and interpretative outcomes.

From a methodological perspective, this study highlights the importance of integrating diachronic corpus analysis with qualitative, multi-textual comparisons which take into account translator metadata—such as gender, institutional context and co-authorship. In contrast to previous comparative studies (e.g., Yin Yu, 2014; Zhang, 2021), which typically examine only two translations of a single work, this project's broader scope allows for a more comprehensive understanding of trends across time, identity and translation modality. The findings suggest that surface-level fidelity can obscure significant ideological asymmetries, indicating that textual analysis should be accompanied by paratextual examination and biographical insights into the translator's ideological orientation and working conditions.

The findings have important practical implications for translators, editors and educators. They remind translators that neutrality does not equate to a lack of feminist ideology; rather, it is a strategic stance influenced by various institutional, collaborative or sociocultural pressures. Co-translators and editors should be mindful of how the dynamics of shared authorship can result in ideological dilution and should explore ways to foster interpretative depth, especially when translating feminist or politically charged literature.

For publishers and editors, particularly those involved in creating canonical or educational translations, this study indicates that collaborative models might benefit from additional framing. This could include translator's notes or reflective commentaries, which not only promote transparency in the decision-making process of translators but which also provide an opportunity for diverse voices to be represented within collaborative projects. Such an approach could ultimately result in more enriching and engaging translations. This study provides educators with a framework for approaching translation as more than merely a linguistic or technical task; it positions translation as a critical, ethical and ideological endeavour. It is vital to train students to understand how identity, power dynamics and institutional influences shape translation outcomes, as this awareness fosters a more reflective and politically conscious approach to translation practice.

In summary, the findings discussed in this chapter emphasise the complexity of translating feminist literature across linguistic, cultural and ideological boundaries. The two main patterns—unexpected ideological assertiveness in early translations and the contrast between co-translations and intervention in gendered individual translations—highlight the interplay between translator agency, institutional context and socio-political framing. By situating these findings within existing scholarship and feminist translation theory, the discussion shows that translation is not merely a textual transfer, but also an ideologically driven act shaped by multiple mediating forces. These insights contribute to a more nuanced and multi-dimensional understanding of translation practice within the Chinese context,

especially regarding Virginia Woolf's feminist legacy. The final chapter now turns to a broader reflection on the contributions, limitations and future directions of this study, consolidating its theoretical, methodological and practical implications for the field of translation studies.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

8.1 Objective Revisited and Main Findings

This thesis examines how Virginia Woolf's feminist ideas—especially her emphasis on women's independence, gender fluidity, androgynous identities, societal expectations and gender binaries—have been modified, adapted and reinterpreted within the Chinese socio-cultural context over time. Woolf's feminist concepts are deeply intertwined with her writing style, which is recognised for its stream-of-consciousness technique, interior monologue and innovative narrative strategies. These stylistic features challenge traditional narrative structures and serve as powerful tools for feminist critique of patriarchy, identity and gender relations. Translating such complex textual and ideological ideas into another language, particularly within a distinctive cultural and historical setting like China, entails considerable linguistic and ideological challenges.

To explore these dynamics, the study conducted a comparative analysis of three or four Chinese translations of four Woolf works: *Mrs Dalloway* (1925), *To the Lighthouse* (1927), *Orlando* (1928), and *A Room of One's Own* (1929). These texts were selected for their rich feminist themes, diverse literary techniques, and their availability in multiple Chinese translations across different decades. Each work offers a unique contribution to feminist discourse: *Mrs Dalloway* examines internalised oppression and societal expectations imposed on women in post-war British society; *To the Lighthouse* explores gender binaries and the marginalisation of women within both familial and intellectual spheres; *Orlando* questions binary gender roles through a protagonist who changes gender; and *A Room of One's Own* presents Woolf's clear feminist arguments.

The main focus of this thesis is how Woolf's feminist ideology—especially her representation of gender fluidity, female intellectual agency and gender performativity—is transformed, retained or reduced in Chinese translations which have been created across different political and historical contexts. The translations, dating from the mid-20th century to the early 21st century, are examined within the framework of shifting ideological climates in China, from the Republican era and early post-reform period to the digital feminist revival of the 2010s. Therefore, based on Catford's theory of translation shifts and Toury's concept of optional shifts, the study has adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining diachronic Chinese corpus analysis with close textual comparison, using software tools such as NVivo

and WordSmith 6 for both qualitative and quantitative analysis. This research has yielded a number of key findings.

An important conclusion is that this thesis challenges the commonly held assumption that early Chinese translations of Woolf were uniformly conservative, due to the socio-political constraints of the Republican and early post-reform periods. While many earlier studies (e.g., Yang, 2022; Jin, 2009; Zhang, 2021) have described a linear progression from restrained to feminist-aligned translation strategies, this research reveals that some early translators not only adhered closely to Woolf's feminist insights but, in some instances, enhanced and emphasised her ideological nuances to provide cultural and interpretative clarity for Chinese audiences, which is contrary to the belief that earlier translations tend to be more conservative or restrained.

Several early translators—especially women—engaged with Woolf's feminist critique in nuanced, contextually adaptive and sometimes even subversive ways. For instance, in the initial Chinese translation of *Mrs Dalloway*, Sun Liang and Su Mei adopted a faithful, formal and academically nuanced approach, in order to preserve the narrative integrity of Woolf's modernist style while thoughtfully engaging with the feminist subtext. In their interpretation of the phrase "stand at the top of a staircase," they employ an additive strategy, translating it as “站在楼梯顶上迎接宾客” ("stand at the top of the stairs to greet guests"). This translation extends beyond simple literal translation: it enriches the cultural and situational context, illustrating the performative social expectations placed on women in upper-class domestic settings. The added phrase “迎接宾客” (“to greet guests”) subtly emphasises the gendered symbolism of women as social hostesses, reinforcing Woolf's critique of the societal roles assigned to women, while ensuring that the reference remains culturally pertinent to Chinese readers. In the first Chinese translation of *Orlando* by Wei and Min (1994), the translators use addition and compensation techniques to bridge the cultural gap between Woolf's English text and Chinese audiences. A notable example is their translation of the crinoline skirt—a symbol of Victorian fashion which is largely unfamiliar to Chinese readers—as “有衬架支撑的女裙的重量向下拖着” ("dragged down by the weight of the skirt supported by a lined frame"). This expanded paraphrase highlights and contextualises the physical and symbolic weight of restrictive Victorian clothing, a metaphor which Woolf employs to critique gendered constraints. The translators' approach preserves the descriptive richness and the core feminist critique, making the text more accessible while maintaining its ideological strength.

In *A Room of One's Own*, Wang's (1947) translation effectively amplifies Woolf's feminist message. Instead of adhering to a strictly literal approach, Wang seeks to heighten the impact of Woolf's irony and critique within the Chinese cultural and historical context. For example, Wang translates a phrase criticising male academic authority by adding the term “自命...专家” (“self-proclaimed expert”), thereby strengthening the tone of ironic scepticism in the original narrative. This lexical choice clarifies the satirical aspect of Woolf's prose, ensuring that the critique of institutionalised male dominance remains clear and more explicit for the target readership. Wang's translation reveals a translator sensitive to both the ideological nuances of the source text and the cultural expectations of the intended audience. These examples show that translator agency and cultural mediation were already active in earlier decades, even without an explicit feminist discourse or theoretical frameworks.

Another important finding shows that the analysis of translator identity reveals a consistent difference in how feminist content is handled: co-translated works generally prioritise semantic accuracy and fidelity, while individual female translators are more likely to use interventionist strategies which highlight gender critique. Male translators, by contrast, tend to downplay or simplify feminist nuances. This finding indicates that translator gender and collaborative structure significantly shape interpretative choices and ideological positions, in ways which are not always evident through diachronic periodisation alone. For example, the collaborative translations by Dai and Zhou in 2016 tend to adhere closely to the original text to preserve fidelity, establishing a balanced tone which does not overtly highlight feminist critiques. In their translation of *A Room of One's Own*, Dai and Zhou faithfully preserve Woolf's original critical tone while staying true to the source material. In one notable example, they effectively employ connecting words such as “尽管” (“despite”) and “但是” (“but”) to emphasise the contradictions and futility in the claims made by male scholars. This nuanced grammatical choice enhances Woolf's satirical critique of male academic power, illustrating how superficial their understanding of women's experiences can be, without explicitly amplifying the feminist message. Thus, Dai and Zhou's technique shows how translators can retain the ideological tension of the original text by using a neutral tone. The finding strengthens the main claim of feminist translation theory: that all translation is contextual, subjective and ethically influenced.

8.2 Contributions to Scholarship

This thesis makes several original contributions to the fields of translation studies, feminist literary criticism, corpus linguistics and Woolf scholarship in China. First, it provides

one of the most extensive comparative corpora to date on Chinese translations of Woolf's major works, including both early and contemporary versions by various translators. Secondly, it highlights translator identity—particularly gender and collaboration—by offering empirical evidence of how these factors shape ideological framing. Thirdly, it broadens feminist translation theory by demonstrating how ideology appears not only across different periods, but also through varying translator roles. The integration of translation-shift theory (Catford, 1965; Toury, 1995) with corpus-assisted methods enhances the analytical depth of feminist translation studies, providing empirical support for the idea that translators act as ideological agents. It also shows that corpus tools—when used alongside qualitative coding—can offer both breadth and nuance in tracking the diachronic development of translated feminist discourse. Finally, it presents a new perspective on Woolf's transnational legacy by illustrating how her feminist voice has been preserved, suppressed or amplified within Chinese literary culture.

8.3 Limitations

Although this research offers valuable insights, some limitations persist. First, the corpus was restricted to published translations of four selected works. While these are arguably Woolf's most influential texts, the inclusion of a wider range of works, such as less-canonised writings or more recent translations, could enhance the analysis. Secondly, this study did not incorporate paratextual materials like prefaces and footnotes, which might shed further light on translators' ideological motivations or constraints. Another limitation concerns the inherent subjectivity involved in identifying and categorising feminist ideas across different languages and cultures. Although rigorous coding protocols were used and theoretical frameworks guided the interpretation, the process of thematically tagging feminist content still depended on interpretative judgement. Additionally, software tools like NVivo and WordSmith improved structural clarity but could not fully capture subtleties such as irony, emotional tone or symbolic nuance without human insight. Finally, due to constraints on time and scope, this study did not include audience reception data or interviews with translators, which could have enriched understanding of decision-making processes and reception dynamics. These limitations present valuable opportunities for future research and do not undermine the core contribution of the study: a diachronic, context-aware analysis of feminist translation in practice.

8.4 Future Directions

Building on these findings, future research could explore several promising areas. A larger corpus, potentially including digital or reader-generated translations, could test the robustness of the gendered and collaborative patterns identified here. Translator interviews or reception studies would provide valuable insights into the intentions behind translation choices and how readers interpret ideological nuance. Comparative studies with translations of other feminist or modernist authors, such as Katherine Mansfield, could help determine whether the patterns identified in this thesis are unique to Woolf or more broadly evident across feminist literature in translation. Comparing other feminist writers or languages could also evaluate whether similar patterns of ideological rewriting occur in different geopolitical contexts. Additionally, further research might incorporate queer, intersectional or postcolonial frameworks to examine how other aspects of identity and ideology intersect with translation practice. Audience-reception studies could explore how Chinese readers engage with feminist translations of Woolf, particularly in digital spaces. Furthermore, analysing paratextual materials—such as prefaces, footnotes and translators' notes—could reveal how translators and publishers actively shape feminist discourse for their audiences. By combining translation studies with gender theory, media studies and sociology, such interdisciplinary approaches could deepen our understanding of how feminist literature circulates and evolves across cultures.

8.5 Final Reflections

This thesis contends that translating Virginia Woolf into Chinese is more than just a linguistic task; it is an ideologically complex act shaped by gendered agency, institutional influences and historical circumstances. While Woolf's feminist critique originated in early 20th-century England, its reinterpretation in China has been influenced by markedly different cultural, political and historical conditions. As the findings show, the role of the translator is not merely that of a linguistic intermediary but also a cultural negotiator—sometimes neutral, at times resistant, and occasionally boldly transformative. By analysing these translational shifts, this study offers a deeper understanding of Woolf's evolving reception in China, alongside broader insights into how feminist voices travel, adapt and endure across borders.

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Appendix

Appendix A. The feminist sentences examples selected by Nvivo from three Chinese translations of *Mrs. Dalloway*

Appendix A.1 Women's Familial Roles in *Mrs. Dalloway*

Source text	So for the world only into one centre, one diamond, one woman who sat in her drawing-room and made a meeting point, a radiancy no doubt in some dull lives, a refuge for the lonely to come to, perhaps; she had helped young people, who were grateful to her;		
Translator	Sun and Su (1988)	Wang Jiaxian(2001)	Jiang Xiangming (2014)
translation	以致世界只有一个中心，一颗钻石，一个坐在客厅里的女人，并且形成一个凝聚点，无疑它将给生活枯燥的人们带来光辉，兴许能为孤独的人提供庇荫所；她曾经帮助青年，他们感激她；	她只是为了外部世界才这样把自己组合成一个中心、一粒钻石、一个坐在自己的客厅里给大家提供聚会场所的女人，无疑是某些生活枯燥沉闷的人生活中的一点光辉，也许是孤独者寻求的一个庇护所；她曾帮助过年轻人，他们感激她；	这个世界成为了一个中心，一枚钻石。一个坐在梳妆台前给大家提供了聚会场所的女人，对于一些麻木的生命来说，这无疑是一种光辉，也许还是一个孤独者所追求的避风港。她帮助了年轻人，他们对她心怀感激。
Literal translation	...so that the world had only one centre, a cobalt stone, a woman sitting in the	...she only for the external world thus assembled herself into a centre, a	...this world became a centre, a piece of diamond. A woman sitting

	drawing room, and it formed a point of cohesion; without doubt it would bring radiance to people whose lives are dull, perhaps could provide shelter for the lonely; she had once helped young people; they were grateful to her; ...	grain of diamond, a woman sitting in her own drawing-room providing a place for people to gather; undoubtedly a bit of radiance in the lives of some dull, stifling people, perhaps a shelter sought by the lonely; she had helped young people; they were grateful to her; ...	before the dressing table who provided a gathering place for everyone—this was, for some numbed lives, without doubt a radiance, and perhaps also a haven sought by a solitary person. She helped young people; they felt grateful to her; ...
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Appendix A.1. 1 Women's Familial Roles in *Mrs. Dalloway*

Source text	Here she is mending her dress; mending her dress as usual, he thought; here she's been sitting all the time I've been in India; mending her dress; playing about; going to parties; running to the House and back and all that, he thought, growing more and more irritated, more and more agitated, for there's nothing in the world so bad for some women as marriage, he thought; and politics; and having a Conservative husband, like the admirable Richard.		
Translator	Sun and Su (1988)	Wang Jiaxian(2001)	Jiang Xiangming (2014)
translation	她正在补裙子，和往常一样补裙子，他思忖；我在印度的全部时光，她就这么坐着，缝补裙子；四处逛荡，参加宴会；或是急急忙忙赶到议会旁	这儿她正在补衣服；和往常一样补衣服，他暗想；我在印度的所有时间里她就坐在这里；补她的衣服；四处闲晃；参加聚会；跑到下议院去再回	她正在补这条裙子，像平时一样补她的裙子，他思忖。我在印度的时候，她整天都坐在这里，补她的裙子；玩一会儿，去参加派对；跑去议

	听，又匆匆回家，等等；他想到如此种种，心情越来越烦躁，激动；他认为，对于某些女子来说，世上最糟糕的事莫过于结婚，参与政治，嫁给一个保守党人，就象那位可敬的理查德。	来等等，他想到此处，变得越来越恼火，越来越激动不安，因为对于某些女人来说，世界上再没有比婚姻更糟糕的事了，他想；还有涉足政治；还有嫁了个保守党人丈夫，像那位可敬的理查德。	会，再跑回来，诸如此类。他想到如此种种，他越来越烦躁，越来越激动。他认为，对有些女人来说，这个世界上没有比结婚更糟糕的事了，参与政治，嫁给一个保守党的老公，就比如可亲可敬的理查德。
Literal translation	She is mending her dress, mending her dress as usual, he thought; all the time that I was in India she just sat like this, mending her dress; strolling about, attending banquets; or hurrying to Parliament to listen and then hurrying home, and so on; thinking of all this, he grew more and more irritable, excited; he thought that for certain women the worst thing in the world was to marry, to	Here she is mending clothes; mending clothes as usual, he thought to himself; for all the time I was in India she just sat here; mending her clothes; idling about; attending parties; running to the House of Commons and back and so on. At this he became more and more annoyed, more and more agitated, because for certain women there is nothing in the world worse than	She is mending this skirt, mending her skirt as usual, he pondered. When I was in India, she sat here all day, mending her skirt; playing a while, going to parties; running to Parliament, then running back, and the like. Thinking of all this, he grew more and more irritable, more and more excited. He thought that for some women there is nothing in this world worse than marriage, taking

	take part in politics, to marry a Conservative, like the respectable Richard.	marriage, he thought; and getting involved in politics; and marrying a Conservative husband, like the respectable Richard.	part in politics, and marrying a Conservative husband, such as the amiable and respectable Richard.
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Appendix A.1. 2 Women's Familial Roles in *Mrs. Dalloway*

Source text	There she would sit at the head of the table taking infinite pains with some old buffer who might be useful to Dalloway—they knew the most appalling bores in Europe—or in came Elizabeth and everything must give way to her.		
Translator	Sun and Su (1988)	Wang Jiaxian(2001)	Jiang Xiangming (2014)
translation	她会坐在餐桌的首席，煞费心机应酬一个可能对达洛卫有用的家伙——他们对欧洲最无聊的琐事都了如指掌或者，伊丽莎白走了进来，一切又得围绕她转。	她会坐在餐桌的主席上，费尽心机地 和一个可能对达洛维有用的老朽周旋——他们认识全欧洲最令人 生厌的人物——或者伊丽莎白走了进来，一切就都得围着她转。	她会坐在桌子的首席，跟某个也许对达洛维有用的老家伙苦苦纠缠——他们认识全欧洲所有最令人讨厌的角色——或者伊丽莎白正好走 进来，那么一切都必须为她让路了。
Literal translation	She would sit at the head of the table, rack her brains dealing with some fellow who might be useful to Dalloway—they	She would sit at the host's seat at the table, exhaust her efforts to parry with some old man who might be useful to Dalloway—they	She would sit at the head of the table, entangled with some old fellow who might be useful to Dalloway—they knew all the most

	knew Europe's dullest trifles—or else Elizabeth came in, and everything again had to revolve around her.	knew the most detestable people in all Europe—or Elizabeth came in, and then everything must revolve around her.	detestable figures in Europe—or if Elizabeth happened to come in, then everything must make way for her.
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Appendix A.1. 3 Women's Familial Roles in *Mrs. Dalloway*

Appendix A.2 Gender-Specific Social Qualities in *Mrs. Dalloway*

Source text	It was an extraordinary beauty of the kind she most admired, dark, large-eyed, with that quality which, since she hadn't got it herself, she always envied—a sort of abandonment, as if she could say anything, do anything; a quality much commoner in foreigners than in Englishwomen.		
Translator	Sun and Su (1988)	Wang Jiaxian(2001)	Jiang Xiangming (2014)
translation	她具有克拉丽莎最爱慕的那种独特的美：黝黑的皮肤，大大的眼睛，还有一种近乎放浪的性格，好象她无论说什么、做什么都毫无顾忌，这种性格正是克拉丽莎缺乏的，因而一直羡慕；这种性格多半外国人有，在英国妇女身上却不寻常。	但是整个晚上她两只眼睛都离不开莎利。那是一种她最爱慕的特别的美，微黑的皮肤，大大的眼睛，还有她那种无拘无束的特性，仿佛她什么都能说，什么都能做，比起英国女人来，这个特点在外国女人身上要普遍得多；由于她自己缺乏这个特点，她	那是她最为爱慕的超凡脱俗的美，黝黑的肤色，大大的眼睛，她总是羡慕那种气质，因为她自己身上没有——那种放纵的气质，就好像什么都能说，什么都能做。这样的气质在外国人身 上很常见，但在英国女人身上却很稀罕。

		总是非常羡慕莎利。	
Literal translation	She had the sort of unique beauty that Clarissa most admired: dark skin, big eyes, and a kind of almost dissolute character, as if whatever she said or did she had no scruples. This character was exactly what Clarissa lacked and therefore always envied; this character most foreigners have, but among English women it is not usual.	But the whole evening her two eyes could not leave Sally. It was a kind of special beauty she most admired: slightly dark skin, big eyes, and that sort of unrestrained trait of hers, as if she could say anything, could do anything. Compared with English women, this trait is much more common in foreign women; because she herself lacked this trait, she always very much envied Sally.	That was the otherworldly beauty she most adored: dark skin, big eyes. She always envied that kind of air, because she herself did not have it— that sort of unrestrained air, as if one could say anything, do anything. Such an air is very common in foreigners, but among English women it is rare.

Appendix A.2. 1 Gender-Specific Social Qualities in *Mrs. Dalloway*

Source text	She would have been, in the first place, dark like Lady Bexborough, with a skin of crumpled leather and beautiful eyes. She would have been, like Lady Bexborough, slow and stately; rather large; interested in politics like a man; with a country house; very dignified, very sincere.		
Translator	Sun and Su (1988)	Wang Jiaxian(2001)	Jiang Xiangming (2014)

translation	也许，她原本会像贝克斯伯罗女士一般黝黑，有如皱皮一般的肌肤，还有双美丽的眼睛。也许，她会像贝克斯伯罗女士一样，举止庄重沉稳，一副人高马大的样子，像男人一样对政治感兴趣，在乡下有幢府邸，很尊贵，也很诚恳。	首先她会像贝克斯伯罗夫人那样肤色微黑，有着像起皱的皮子般的皮肤和美丽的眼睛。她会像贝克斯伯罗夫人那样动作缓慢庄重；个头大；像男人那样对政治感兴趣；拥有一幢乡间宅邸；非常高贵，非常真诚。	首先，她会长得象贝克斯巴勒夫人，有一双美丽的眼睛，黑皮肤，犹如皱折的皮革。她会象贝克斯巴勒夫人一样慢条斯理，举止庄重，身材高大，象男人一般对政治有兴趣，在乡下有一幢邸宅；极其高贵，极其真诚。
Literal translation	First, she would look like Lady Bexborough, have a pair of beautiful eyes, dark skin, like wrinkled leather. She would, like Lady Bexborough, be unhurried, stately in bearing, tall in figure, be interested in politics like a man, have a residence in the countryside; extremely dignified, extremely sincere.	First she would be like Lady Bexborough, complexion slightly dark, with skin like wrinkled hide and beautiful eyes. She would, like Lady Bexborough, move slowly and with solemnity; be large in size; be interested in politics like a man; possess a country residence; very dignified, very sincere.	Perhaps she would originally have been dark like Lady Bexborough, with skin like wrinkled leather, and two beautiful eyes. Perhaps she would, like Lady Bexborough, have stately and steady manners, a tall and big build, be interested in politics like a man, have a mansion in the countryside, be very dignified, and very sincere.

Appendix A.2. 2 Gender-Specific Social Qualities in *Mrs. Dalloway*

Source text	She had tried to be the same always, never showing a sign of all the other sides of her—faults, jealousies, vanities, suspicions, like this of Lady Bruton not asking her to lunch; which, she thought (combing her hair finally), is utterly base! Now, where was her dress?		
Translator	Sun and Su (1988)	Wang Jiaxian(2001)	Jiang Xiangming (2014)
translation	她总想要保持一贯的形象，从来不会把她身上的其他方面显露出来——吹毛求疵、爱嫉妒、爱虚荣、爱猜疑，就比如布鲁顿女士不请她吃午饭这件事。	她一直努力保持一贯，从不表现出一丝一毫她的其余方面——她的毛病、妒忌、猜疑，比如像布鲁顿夫人没有请她吃午饭的事；	她曾试图始终如一，永不显露她的其他方面——错误、妒忌、虚荣和猜疑，例如对于布鲁顿夫人不请她赴宴的不满；
Literal translation	She always wanted to maintain a consistent image, never would reveal the other aspects in her—fault-finding, prone to jealousy, fond of vanity, inclined to suspicion—just like the matter of Lady Bruton not inviting her to lunch.	She always wanted to maintain a consistent image, never would reveal the other aspects in her—fault-finding, prone to jealousy, fond of vanity, inclined to suspicion—just like the matter of Lady Bruton not inviting her to lunch.	She always wanted to maintain a consistent image, never would reveal the other aspects in her—fault-finding, prone to jealousy, fond of vanity, inclined to suspicion—just like the matter of Lady Bruton not inviting her to lunch.

Appendix A.2. 3 Gender-Specific Social Qualities in *Mrs. Dalloway*

Appendix A.3 Inevitability of Marriage in *Mrs. Dalloway*

Source text	But often now this body she wore (she stopped to look at a Dutch picture), this body, with all its capacities, seemed nothing—nothing at all. She had the oddest sense of being herself invisible; unseen; unknown; there being no more marrying, no more having of children now, but only this astonishing and rather solemn progress with the rest of them, up Bond Street, this being Mrs. Dalloway; not even Clarissa any more; this being Mrs. Richard Dalloway.		
Translator	Sun and Su (1988)	Wang Jiaxian(2001)	Jiang Xiangming (2014)
translation	她有一种极为荒诞的感觉，感到自己能隐身，不被人看见，不为人所知；现在再也没有婚姻，也不再生儿育女，剩下的只是与人群一起，令人惊异而相当庄严地向邦德街行进。如今她是达洛卫夫人，甚至不再是克拉丽莎，而是理查德·达洛卫夫人。	她有最奇怪的感觉，感到自己是个隐身人，无人能见；无人能知；现在不再有结婚，不再有生儿育女，有的只是和街上的人群一起，令人惊异地、相当庄严地沿邦德街行进，自己作为达洛维夫人；甚至也不再是克拉丽莎；这种是理查德·达洛维夫人的感觉。	她有古怪异样的感觉，感觉自己成了个隐形人，没人看得见她，没人认识她。再也不会会有结婚生子这种事情了，剩下的唯有随着滚滚人潮奇怪而庄严地往前迈步，迈步走入邦德街。剩下的唯有达洛维夫人自己，甚至连克拉丽莎都不存在了，只剩下理查德·达洛维夫人。
Literal translation	She had a most absurd feeling, that she could be invisible, not seen, not known; now	She had the strangest feeling, that she was an invisible person, seen by no one;	She had a strange, odd feeling, felt she had become an invisible person—no one could see

	there was no longer marriage, nor bearing sons and daughters; what remained was only to advance with the crowd, astonishingly and rather solemnly, toward Bond Street. Now she was Mrs Dalloway, not even Clarissa any more, but Mrs Richard Dalloway.	known by no one; now there would be no marrying, no bearing children; there was only, with the people in the street, this astonishing, rather solemn marching along Bond Street, herself as Mrs Dalloway; not even Clarissa; this was the feeling of being Mrs Richard Dalloway.	her, no one knew her. There would be no such thing as marrying and having children any more; what remained was only to step forward with the surging crowd, strangely and solemnly, into Bond Street. What remained was only Mrs Dalloway herself; even Clarissa no longer existed—only Mrs Richard Dalloway.
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Appendix A.3. 1 Inevitability of Marriage in *Mrs. Dalloway*

Source text	She had had a hard time of it, and couldn't help smiling at a girl like that. 'You'll get married, for you're pretty enough,' thought Mrs. Dempster. 'Get married,' she thought, 'and then you'll know.'		
Translator	Sun and Su (1988)	Wang Jiaxian(2001)	Jiang Xiangming (2014)
translation	她在生活中吃了不少苦，如今看到象这样的一位姑娘，她不由得微笑起来。你会嫁人的，因为你长得够漂亮，登普斯特太太心里想。去嫁人	她很不容易熬了过来，因此看到这样一个女孩子就情不自禁微笑起来。你会结婚的，因为你够漂亮的，邓普斯特太太想。结婚吧，她想到，那时你就明白了。	她曾经有过一段艰难的生活，看见这样的一个人女孩子，禁不住要笑。你会嫁人的，因为你很漂亮，丹普斯特太太想。结婚后，她想，你就会明白了。

	吧，那时你就会明白喽。		
Literal translation	She had eaten much bitterness in life; now seeing such a girl, she couldn't help but smile. You will marry, because you are pretty enough, thought Mrs Dempster. Go marry; then you will understand.	She had gotten through with great difficulty, so seeing such a girl she involuntarily smiled. You will marry, because you are pretty enough, thought Mrs Dempster. Marry, she thought, and then you will understand.	She had had a difficult period of life; seeing such a girl, she could not help but smile. You will get married, because you are very pretty, thought Mrs Dempster. After marrying, she thought, you will understand.

Appendix A.3. 2 Inevitability of Marriage in *Mrs. Dalloway*

Source text	And Clarissa remembered having to persuade her not to denounce him at family prayers—which she was capable of doing with her daring, her recklessness, her melodramatic love of being the centre of everything and creating scenes, and it was bound, Clarissa used to think, to end in some awful tragedy; her death; her martyrdom; instead of which she had married, quite unexpectedly, a bald man with a large buttonhole who owned, it was said, cotton mills at Manchester. And she had five boys!		
Translator	Sun and Su (1988)	Wang Jiaxian(2001)	Jiang Xiangming (2014)
translation	克拉丽莎还记得，那时不得不规劝她：不要在全家祷告的时候贬斥他；因为她很可能做得出的，那么肆无忌惮	拉丽莎记得她不得不说服莎利不要在家庭祈祷时指责休——她是会做得出来的，她卤莽大胆，肆无忌惮，追	克拉丽莎还记得，当时不得不劝说她，别在家庭祈祷仪式上公开地指责他——她做得出来的，她是个大胆莽

	惮，喜欢闹 剧式的场面，嬉笑谑浪，一心要成为大家瞩目的中心；克拉丽莎 向来认为，她这样横冲直撞必然会有可怕的、悲惨的结局——横 死，或者殉难；不料她却嫁了一个秃头：衣着讲究，外套上镶着大纽孔；据说，他是曼彻斯特一家纺织厂的老板哩。而且，她生了五个娃娃!	求成为 一切轰动的中心，喜欢制造引人注意的场面，克拉丽莎那时常想，一切肯定会以可怕的悲剧结束；她会死去；她会遭受磨难；但结果 是她结婚了，出乎意料地嫁给了一个秃顶、纽孔里别一朵大花的男人，据说他在曼彻斯特有好几家棉纺厂。而且她生了五个儿子!	撞、爱出风头、爱生事端 的人。克拉丽莎过去常这么想，像她这么风风火火的人肯定会 以可怕的悲剧收场的——离奇的死亡，或者殉难。但没想到的是，她非但没有发生悲剧，而且还成了家，嫁给了一个衣冠楚楚、纽孔巨大的光头，据说此人在曼彻斯特拥有多家棉纺厂。而且，她还生了五个小子呢!
Literal translation	Clarissa still remembered that at that time she had to urge her: do not run him down during the family prayers; ... unexpectedly she married a bald man, well-dressed, with a big buttonhole on his coat; it was said he was the owner of a textile factory in Manchester. And she bore five babies!	Clarissa she remembered she had had to persuade Sally not to accuse Hugh during family prayers ... but the result was that she married—unexpectedly—a bald man, with a big flower stuck in his buttonhole; it was said he had several cotton mills in Manchester. And she had five sons!	Clarissa still remembered that at the time she had to persuade her not to publicly denounce him at the family prayer ceremony ... but unexpectedly, far from any tragedy, she even settled down, marrying a well-dressed, bald man with an enormous buttonhole; it was said this person owned many cotton

			mills in Manchester. And she even had five lads!
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Appendix A.3. 3 Inevitability of Marriage in *Mrs. Dalloway*

Appendix B. The feminist sentences examples selected by Nvivo from four Chinese translations of *Orlando: A Biography*

Appendix B.1 Challenging Fixed Gender Through Dress Performance

Source text	She remembered — how, as a young man, she had insisted that women must be obedient, chaste, scented, and exquisitely apparelled. ‘Now I shall have to pay in my own person for those desires,’ she thought; ‘for women are not (judging from my short experience of the sex) obedient, chaste, scented, and exquisitely apparelled by nature. They can only attain these graces ... by the most tedious discipline; without which they may enjoy none of the common pleasures of life.			
Translators	Wei and Min (1994)	Lin yan (2003)	Ren yiming (2014)	Hou Yiling (2021)
Translation	她想起，作为一个年青人，她是怎样坚持女人一定要驯服、贞洁、洒香水，而且要服饰高雅。“现在我必须得用我自己的身体去偿付这些愿望，”她思索	她记起自己当年身为青年男子时，坚持认为女性必须顺从、贞洁，浑身散发香气、衣着优雅。“现在，我自己不得不为这些欲望付出代价了，”她想。“因	她记得，当她还身为年轻男子时，坚持认为女性必须顺从，贞洁，体味幽香，衣饰精美。“如今，我自己不得不为这些要求付出代价了，”她想，“可是，以	她记得自己身为男人的时候，曾经认为女人必须顺从，保持贞洁，身上要熏香，衣着打扮要精致优雅。“现在，轮到我自己为这些要求付出代价

	着，“因为女人天生就不(根据我自己短暂的这种性别的经验判断)驯服、贞洁和服饰高雅。她们只能通过最枯燥乏味的纪律来获得这些优雅品质，没有它们她们也许享受不到任何生活的乐趣。	为女人并非(凭我亲身作女人的短暂经历)天生顺从、贞洁，浑身散发香气、衣着优雅。她们只能通过最单调乏味的磨练，才能获得这些魅力，而没有这些魅力，她们就无法享受生活的乐趣。	我短暂的女性经历来看，女人并非一定生来就得顺从，贞洁，体味幽香，衣饰精美，这些优雅魅力都是她们经过后天努力而获得的，不然，按照陈规旧俗的说法，她们的一生将毫无快乐可言。	了，”她反思道，“女人（从我自己短暂的女性体验来说）并非天生就顺从、贞洁、体有馨香、衣着优雅，她们只有通过单调乏味的训练才能获得这种迷人风度，而没有这种风度她们就无法享受生活的乐趣。
Literal translation	She remembered that, as a young man, she had insisted women must be submissive, chaste, perfumed, and elegantly dressed. ‘Now I must pay with my own body for these desires,’ she thought. ‘For	She remembered that when she was a young man, she insisted women must be obedient, chaste, exude fragrance, and be elegantly dressed. ‘Now I myself have to pay the price for these desires,’ she thought.	She remembered that, when still a young man, she insisted a woman must be obedient, chaste, have a faint fragrance, and refined attire. ‘Now I myself must pay the price for these demands,’ she thought, ‘for, from my brief	She remembered that when she was a man, she once thought women must be obedient, keep chastity, be scented, and dress with refined elegance. ‘Now it’s my turn to pay for these requirements,’ she reflected.

	women (judging from my brief experience of this sex) are not by nature submissive, chaste, and elegantly dressed. They can only obtain these graceful qualities through the most tedious discipline; without them they perhaps cannot enjoy any pleasures of life.	'Because women are not (by my brief personal experience as a woman) born obedient, chaste, fragrant, and elegantly dressed. Only through the most monotonous drill can they gain these charms; without them they cannot enjoy life's pleasures.	female experience, women are not born to be obedient, chaste, faintly fragrant, and finely dressed; these elegant charms are acquired through later effort, otherwise—by conventional saying—their life will have no joy.	'Women (from my brief female experience) are not born obedient, chaste, fragrant, and elegant in dress; only through dull training can they gain such a charming manner, and without it they cannot enjoy life's pleasures.
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Appendix B.1. 1 Challenging Fixed Gender Through Dress Performance

Source text	She had, it seems, no difficulty in sustaining the different parts ... nor can there be any doubt that she reaped a twofold harvest by this device; the pleasures of life were increased and its experiences multiplied. For the probity of breeches she exchanged the seductiveness of petticoats and enjoyed the love of both sexes equally.			
Translators	Wei and Min (1994)	Lin yan (2003)	Ren yiming (2014)	Hou Yiling (2021)

Translation	看起来，她似乎根本没有任何困难地扮演了那些不同的角色。因为她的性别的变化极其频繁，远远超出了那些只穿一套服装的人能够想象的范围；无须怀疑她用这种计策收获了双倍的成果的可能；生活的乐趣增加了，而且经验也在成倍地积累。她将石榴裙的诱惑力转换为马裤的正直笃实，并且同等地享受了两种性别的爱情。	维持不同的角色对她来说似乎轻而易举，因为她的性别变化之频繁，是那些只穿一类服装的人所无法想象的。毫无疑问，她用这种方法获得了双重收获。生活的乐趣增加了，生活的阅历扩大了。她用衬裙的性感来换马裤的诚实，轮番享受两性的爱。	她似乎在两种性别的转换上游刃有余，她性别变换之频繁，是那些每天只穿一套衣服的人难以想象的。而且，毫无疑问，她在此过程中左右逢源。生活变得有滋有味，人生的阅历也更加丰富。她在马裤的诚实与衬裙的诱惑之间换来换去，同时享受两种性别的优越。	维持不同的角色对她来说似乎轻而易举，因为她的性别变化之频繁，是那些只穿一类服装的人所无法想象的。毫无疑问，她用这种方法获得了双重收获。生活的乐趣增加了，生活的阅历扩大了。她用衬裙的性感来换马裤的诚实，轮番享受两性的爱。
Literal translation	Keeping different roles seemed easy for her, because her sex changed so often that those who	She seemed adept in switching between two sexes; her changes were so frequent that people	Maintaining different roles was easy; her sex changed so frequently that those who wear just one set of clothes	Maintaining different roles seemed effortless for her, because the frequency of her changes in gender was

	wear only one sort of clothes cannot imagine. Without doubt she used this method to gain a double harvest. Life's pleasures increased; life's experience expanded. She traded the sensuality of petticoats for the honesty of breeches and in turns enjoyed the love of both sexes.	who wear only one set of clothes cannot imagine. And, without doubt, she made gains from both sides in the process. Life became flavourful; her experience richer. She kept switching between the honesty of breeches and the allure of petticoats, enjoying the advantages of both sexes.	can hardly imagine. Without doubt she benefited both ways. Life became tasty; life experience more abundant. She alternated between the honesty of breeches and the temptation of petticoats, while enjoying the superiority of both sexes.	something unimaginable to those who only ever wore one kind of clothing. Without a doubt, she gained a double reward by this means. The pleasures of life increased, and the scope of her experience broadened. She exchanged the sensuality of petticoats for the honesty of breeches, and in turn enjoyed the love of both sexes.
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Appendix B.1. 2 Challenging Fixed Gender Through Dress Performance

Source text	The change of clothes had, some philosophers will say, much to do with it. Vain trifles as they seem, clothes have, they say, more important offices than merely to keep us warm. They change our view of the world and the world's view of us.			
Translators	Wei and Min (1994)	Lin yan (2003)	Ren yiming (2014)	Hou Yiling (2021)

Translation	服饰的变化，有些哲学家会说，与这有很大关系。尽管它们好象是无足轻重的小事，他们说，服饰不仅仅为了保暖，它们具有更重要的职责。它们改变了我们对世界的看法和世界对我们的看法。	一些哲学家会说，换装与此有很大干系。他们说，看似无关紧要，其实衣服的功能绝不仅仅是御寒。衣服能改变我们对世界的看法，也改变世界对我们的看法。	有的哲学家会说，她的易装也与此有关。他们认为，服装看似无关紧要，却有着比御寒更为重要的作用。服装可以改变我们对世界的看法，也可以让世界改变对我们的看法。	有的哲学家会说，这跟换装有很大关系。他们说，衣服看似无足轻重，其实它们不仅仅能御寒，还有更重要的作用。它们会改变我们对世界的看法，也会改变世界对我们的看法。
Literal translation	Some philosophers would say, the change of dress has much to do with it. Though seemingly trifles, clothes are by no means only for warmth. Clothes can change our view of the world, and change the	Some philosophers will say, changing clothes has much to do with it. They think, although clothing looks unimportant, its function is definitely not merely to ward off cold. Clothing can change our view of the world and	Some philosophers will say her cross-dressing is related. They think clothing seems trivial, yet has a role far beyond keeping out the cold. Clothing can change our view of the world and also make the world change its view of us.	Some philosophers would say this has much to do with changing clothes. They say, clothes seem insignificant, but they not only keep us warm — they have more important work. They change how we see the world, and how

	world's view of us.	change the world's view of us.		the world sees us.
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Appendix B.1. 3 Challenging Fixed Gender Through Dress Performance

Appendix B.2 Challenging Gendered Perceptions of Creativity and Literary Value Through the Shifting Reception of Orlando's Poetry

Source text	..the intellect, divine as it is, and all-worshipful, has a habit of lodging in the most seedy of carcasses, and often, alas, acts the cannibal among the other faculties, so that often, where the Mind is biggest, the Heart, the Senses, Magnanimity, Charity, Tolerance, Kindliness, and the rest of them scarcely have room to breathe.			
Translators	Wei and Min (1994)	Lin yan (2003)	Ren yiming (2014)	Hou Yiling (2021)
Translation	知识分子尽管很神圣，而且各方面都会令人尊敬，但他却有居住在最肮脏的房子里的习惯，而且经常，哎呀，在其它领域的人当中扮演吃人兽的角色，以致经常发生这样的情形，	才智尽管很神圣、很值得崇拜，却有栖身于最肮脏躯壳之内的习惯，而且往往嗜食其他官能，因此头脑太大，心胸、感觉就给挤得透不过气来，宽宏、慈悲、包容、	其次，才智虽然神圣，虽然值得崇拜，但却栖身于肮脏丑陋的躯壳里，而且，唉，它常常吞噬其他器官。所以，凡是头脑发达的人，心灵、情感、宽厚、仁慈、包容、友善，	其次，才智这东西，尽管神圣而令人崇拜，却习惯寄宿于最丑陋的身体，而且，我的天，它还经常戕害其他官能。因而，在头脑发达的身体里，情感、感觉、慷慨、慈悲、宽

	即在那个心智占有最重要位置的地方，心灵、感觉、宽洪大量、慈善、忍让、友谊、以及其它种种，几乎都没有了存在的空间。	体贴等等也就无从谈起。	就没有容身之地。	容、善良，凡此种种，几乎没有呼吸的空间。
Literal translation	Though the intellectual is very sacred and admirable in all respects, he has the habit of living in the dirtiest house, and often—alas—plays the man-eater among the other domains; so that where the mind occupies the chief place, the heart, feeling, magnanimity, charity, forbearance, friendship, and so on, have	Though intellect is sacred and worthy of worship, it has the habit of lodging in the filthiest body, and often devours the other faculties; therefore where the head is too large, the heart and feelings can scarcely breathe—generosity, mercy, tolerance, consideration, and so forth are out of the question.	Secondly, although intellect is sacred and worthy of worship, it lodges in a filthy, ugly carcass, and—alas—often eats up other organs; so in those with a developed brain, spirit, feeling, generosity, kindness, tolerance, friendliness have no place to dwell.	Secondly, this thing called intellect, though sacred and revered, habitually lodges in the ugliest body, and—good heavens—often injures other faculties; thus, in a body with a developed brain, emotion, feeling, generosity, compassion, tolerance, goodness have scarcely any breathing-space.

	almost no room to exist.			
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Appendix B.2. 1 Challenging Gendered Perceptions of Creativity and Literary Value Through the Shifting Reception of Orlando's Poetry

Source text	Then the high opinion poets have of themselves; then the low one they have of others; then the enmities, injuries, envies, and repartees... then the volubility... then the rapacity with which they demand sympathy... all this... makes pouring out tea a more precarious and, indeed, arduous occupation than is generally allowed.			
Translators	Wei and Min (1994)	Lin yan (2003)	Ren yiming (2014)	Hou Yiling (2021)
Translation	继之而来的是诗人们的自视甚高；再继之而来的是他们对别人的贬低；然后他们便不断地投身于敌意，伤害，嫉妒和巧辩；接着他们就用伶牙利齿将它们传达出来。然后，他们再贪婪地为它们寻求同	于是诗人自视甚高，于是他们鄙视别人，于是产生种种不和、伤害、嫉妒；于是他们巧舌如簧，口若悬河，强求别人的同情。所有这些，弄得倒水斟茶成为更危险、更艰苦的行当，超出一	所以诗人们自恃清高，鄙视他人，不断滋生敌意、伤害、嫉妒和争辩；他们口若悬河，强迫别人同情他们。所有这一切，都令看似平常的斟茶沏水成了一件必须小心翼翼完成的事。这话我们得悄悄说，免	因而，诗人自命不凡，对他人轻蔑不屑，他们的敌意、伤害、嫉妒，他们惯用的巧辩，他们的口若悬河，他们对同情的贪求——所有这些，都让斟茶这个平常的动作成为一件如履薄冰、极费心机的事。

	情；所有这一切 (人们可能会悄声低语，唯恐那些天才会听到)使得倒茶水这件事 变得更加理由不充分。	围，而我们只能悄悄说出，免得那些才子无意中听到。	得那些文人才子们听到。	这种话我们只能悄悄地说，免得让那些绝顶聪明的人听到。
Literal translation	Then comes poets' high self-regard; then their disparagement of others; then they plunge into enmity, harm, jealousy and sophistry; then with slick tongues convey it; then greedily seek sympathy; all this (one may whisper it) makes the act of pouring tea even less justified.	So the poets think highly of themselves; they despise others; discord, injury, jealousy arise; they chatter volubly and force others' sympathy. All this turns pouring tea into a more dangerous, arduous trade than people can bear—these words we must whisper, lest the wits overhear.	Therefore poets, self-important, despise others, constantly breed hostility, hurt, jealousy and argument; they talk on endlessly, forcing others' sympathy. All this makes the seemingly ordinary tea-pouring a thing to be done with great care. We must say it quietly, lest the men of letters hear.	Hence poets deem themselves exceptional and scorn others—their hostilities, injuries, envies; their habitual sophistry; their torrent of words; their greed for sympathy—make the commonplace act of pouring tea a thing of walking on thin ice, of great contrivance. Such words we can only whisper, lest the clever ones hear.

Appendix B.2. 2 Challenging Gendered Perceptions of Creativity and Literary Value Through the Shifting Reception of Orlando's Poetry

Source text	Added to which... there is a little secret which men share among them... 'Women are but children of a larger growth...' ...so that the whole ceremony of pouring out tea is a curious one. A woman knows very well that, though a wit sends her his poems... and drinks her tea, this by no means signifies... he will refuse, though the rapier is denied him, to run her through the body with his pen.			
Translators	Wei and Min (1994)	Lin yan (2003)	Ren yiming (2014)	Hou Yiling (2021)
Translation	因此，这个秘密无论如何终究要泄露，由此倒茶这个仪式就成了一件没有道理的事情。一个女人非常明白，尽管一位天才人物会赠送她诗歌，称赞她的判断，征求她的评论，并且喝她倒的茶水，但这无论如何也不意味着他尊重她的意见，敬佩她的理解，或者不会(尽管不允许他使用短剑)	于是，斟茶倒水的整个仪式就成了一个打探机密的过程。女人很清楚，才子虽然送诗来请她过目，称赞她的判断力，征求她的意见，喝她的茶，但这绝不表示他尊重她的意见，欣赏她的理解，也绝不表示虽不能用剑，他就会拒绝用笔刺穿她的身体。	于是，整个斟茶沏水的过程就变成了一个试探的过程。女人心里明白，虽然文人才子将诗歌呈献给她，赞美她的鉴赏力，请求她提出批评，并品尝她的茶，但并不意味着他尊重她的观点，欣赏她的解读，也绝不意味着拙于剑术的他们不会用笔刺穿她的身体。	于是，斟茶这个仪式就成了一个试探的过程。女人很清楚，虽然诗人会向她献诗，称赞她的鉴赏力，请她批评指正，还喝她的茶，但这绝不代表他尊重她的意见，钦佩她的理解力，不会用他的笔刺穿她的身体（反正剑他是使不了）。

	用他的笔刺穿 她的躯体。			
Literal translation	Thus the secret must leak, hence the tea- pouring ceremony becomes a thing without reason. A woman knows well that although a wit gives her poems, praises her judgment, asks her comments, and drinks her tea, it by no means means he respects her opinions, admires her understanding, or will refrain (though swords are forbidden) from running her body through with his pen.	Thus the whole tea-pouring becomes a process of probing a secret. A woman knows clearly that though a man of wit sends poems to her, praises her judgment, seeks her opinion, drinks her tea, this absolutely does not mean he respects her views, appreciates her understanding; nor does it mean that, though unable to use a sword, he will refuse to pierce her body with his pen.	Thus the entire tea-making becomes a testing process. A woman knows that though the men of letters present poems, praise her discernment, ask her critique, and taste her tea, it does not mean he respects her views or appreciates her reading, nor does it mean that, though clumsy with a sword, they will not run her through with the pen.	Thus the tea- pouring ritual becomes a test. A woman knows well that although a poet offers her poems, praises her taste, asks her critique, and drinks her tea, this by no means means he respects her opinion, admires her understanding, or will not pierce her body with his pen (since he cannot use a sword anyway).

Appendix B.2. 3 Challenging Gendered Perceptions of Creativity and Literary Value Through the Shifting Reception of Orlando's Poetry

Appendix B.3 Challenging the Traditional Notions of Gender Identity Through Androgyny and Gender Fluidity

Source text	For as the boy — for, alas, a boy it must be, no woman could skate with such speed and vigour — swept almost the tip of his skates past Orlando's toes, the person was of his own sex, and thus all embraces were out of the question. But the skater came closer. Legs, hands, carriage, were a boy's, but no boy ever had a mouth like that; no boy had those breasts; no boy had eyes which looked as if they had been fished from the bottom of the sea.			
Translators	Wei and Min (1994)	Lin yan (2003)	Ren yiming (2014)	Hou Yiling (2021)
Translation	当这个男孩， 哎呀，因为他 一定是个男孩 ——没有女人 能够如此迅 速，如此充满 活力地滑冰—— 从他身边滑 过去的时候险 些碰到他的脚 尖，那个人竟 与自己同性， 因此，奥兰多 怀着所有拥抱 的希望都已落 空的懊恼，准 备撕扯他的头	那男孩，天 哪，一定是个 男孩，女子绝 不可能如此敏 捷、矫健。那 男孩几乎是踮 着脚尖从他身 边掠过，奥兰 多懊恼万分， 几乎要揪自己 的头发，因为 如果此人与他 同性，那么一 切拥抱就成了 泡影。但那人 又滑近了，双 腿、双手和姿	当那人几乎踮 着脚尖从他身 边一掠而过 时，奥兰多懊 恼得差点揪自 己的头发，天 哪，一定是个 男孩——女孩 滑冰不会如此 敏捷有力。可 如果是同性 别的话，那相 拥而欢岂不成 了无稽之谈。 但那人又滑过 来了。双腿、 双手和姿态都	那个男孩，对 啊，一定是个 男孩，因为没有 哪个女子能 滑冰滑得如此 快，表现出如 此活力。那个 男孩几乎是踮 着脚尖从他身 旁一掠而过， 奥兰多懊恼得 差点儿要揪自 己的头发，因 为这个人如果 跟他同个性 别，他想象中的 拥抱就绝无

	发。但是那个滑冰人靠近了些。腿、手的姿态虽都象是一个男孩似的；但没有一个男孩曾有过那样的嘴巴；没有男孩会有那样的胸脯；没有男孩会有那样一双看起来象是从海底采摘来的眼睛。	态都像男孩，但没有一个男孩会有那样的双唇；没有一个男孩会有那样的胸脯；没有一个男孩会有那样晶莹剔透的碧眼。	像是男孩，但男孩不会有那样的双唇，也不会有那样的胸脯，男孩的眼睛也不会像大海深处的水那样湛蓝。	可能了。但这个滑冰者又向他靠近了。从腿、手和姿态看，这人像是男孩，但没有哪个男孩有那样的嘴和那样的胸脯，也没有哪个男孩有一双像是来自海底的湛蓝眼睛。
Literal translation	As that boy — ah! for he must be a boy — no woman could skate so swiftly, so full of life — swept past him and almost touched the tips of his skates, since the person was the same sex as himself and so all hopes of embrace were dashed, Orlando, in his	That boy — heavens — it must be a boy; a woman could never be so nimble, so agile. The boy almost on tiptoe skimmed past him; Orlando, vexed to the extreme, almost to the point of yanking his own hair, for if this person were the same	When that person almost on tiptoe swept past him, Orlando, so vexed he nearly tugged his own hair — heavens, it must be a boy; girls don't skate so agilely and strongly. But if it was the same sex, then to embrace would be nonsense. But	That boy — yes — it must be a boy, for no woman can skate so fast, show such vitality. That boy, almost tiptoeing, skimmed by his side; Orlando, so vexed he nearly wanted to pull his own hair, for if this person were the same sex as he, the

	annoyance, was ready to tear his hair. But the skater came nearer. Though the posture of legs and hands was like a boy's; yet no boy ever had a mouth like that; no boy would have such a bosom; no boy would have such a pair of eyes that looked as if picked from the sea-bottom.	sex as he, then every embrace came to nothing. But the person glided closer; legs, hands, and bearing were like a boy's, but no boy would have such lips; no boy would have such a chest; no boy would have such crystal-clear blue eyes.	the person slid back nearer. Legs, hands, and bearing were like a boy's, but a boy would not have such lips, nor such a chest, and a boy's eyes would not be as deep-blue as water from the sea's depths.	embrace he imagined was utterly impossible. But the skater drew closer. By legs, hands and bearing it seemed a boy, yet no boy has such a mouth and such a chest, nor such a pair of deep-blue eyes as if from the sea-bottom.
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Appendix B.3. 1 Challenging the traditional notions of gender identity through androgyny and gender fluidity

Source text	The sound of the trumpets died away and Orlando stood stark naked. No human being, since the world began, has ever looked more ravishing. His form combined in one the strength of a man and a woman's grace.			
Translators	Wei and Min (1994)	Lin yan (2003)	Ren yiming (2014)	Hou Yiling (2021)

Translation	自世界诞生以来，没有任何人比他看起来更迷人。他的形体集男人的力量与女人的高雅于一身。	开天辟地，从未有人看上去如此令人销魂。他的形体融合了男子的力量与女子的妩媚。	自开天辟地以来，从未有人如此令人销魂。他的形体结合了男性的力量和女性的柔美。	自天地开创以来，从未有人看上去如此摄人心魄。他的形体结合了男人的力量和女人的柔美。
Literal translation	Since the birth of the world, no one has looked more enchanting. His form gathered into one the strength of a man and the elegance of a woman.	Since the beginning of heaven and earth, never has anyone looked so ravishing. His form fused a man's strength and a woman's charm.	Since the world's beginning, never has anyone been so soul-ravishing. His form combined a male strength and female softness.	Since heaven and earth were founded, never has anyone looked so soul-seizing. His form combined a man's strength and a woman's softness.

Appendix B.3. 2 Challenging the traditional notions of gender identity through androgyny and gender fluidity

Source text	It was not caused, that is to say, simply and solely by the thought of her chastity and how she could preserve it. In normal circumstances a lovely young woman alone would have thought of nothing else; the whole edifice of female government is based on that foundation stone; chastity is their jewel, their centrepiece, which they run mad to protect, and die when ravished of.			
Translators	Wei and Min (1994)	Lin yan (2003)	Ren yiming (2014)	Hou Yiling (2021)

Translation	也就是说，这种惊讶不单单是被她的贞洁和她如何保护贞洁想法引起的。在正常情况下，一个可爱的青年女子单独一个人时不会想到其它任何事情；女性政府的整座大厦正是建立在那块基石之上的；贞洁是她们的珠宝，是她们最珍贵的部分，她们疯狂地去保护它，当它被剥夺时甚至以死相守。	原因并非仅仅在于想到贞洁和如何保持贞洁。正常情况下，年轻美貌的女子孑然一身时，除此不会想到其他。因为女性道德行为的大厦，就建筑在这一基石之上。贞洁是女性的财富、女性最引人注目品行，女性会狂热地捍卫自身的贞洁不遭劫掠，甚至情愿舍身一死。	震惊的原因并非仅仅是因为她想到了贞节，以及如何保持贞节。一般情况下，漂亮可爱的年轻女子孤身一人时，担心的往往惟有贞节。女性行为规范整个架构的基石就是贞节。贞节是女性的珍宝，是她们的命根子，她们会不顾一切地捍卫它，宁死不屈。	就是说，她的惊诧不仅是因为她想起了贞节和如何保护它。一般情形下，年轻美貌的女子孤身一人时，除了贞节不会顾虑别的。贞节，是女性道德大厦的基石，是她们的珍贵之物，是她们最重要的东西，她们会拼命保护它，如果遭到强暴会不惜以死明志。
Literal translation	That is to say, her astonishment was not solely aroused by chastity and thoughts of how to protect it. Under normal	The reason was not only in thinking of chastity and how to keep chastity. In normal circumstances, when a young and beautiful	The reason for the shock was not merely because she thought of chastity and how to keep it. Generally, when a pretty and lovely	That is to say, her amazement was not only because she recalled chastity and how to protect it. In general, when a young

	circumstances, a lovely young woman alone would think of nothing else; the whole great mansion of women's government is built on that cornerstone; chastity is their jewel, their most precious part; they madly protect it and even, when it is stripped away, die keeping it.	woman is all by herself, apart from this she would not think of others; the edifice of women's moral behaviour is built upon this foundation stone. Chastity is women's wealth, women's most conspicuous virtue; women will fervently defend their own chastity from being plundered, even willing to die.	young woman is alone, the worry is often chastity and nothing else. The entire structure of female codes of conduct takes chastity as its foundation. Chastity is women's treasure, their lifeblood; they will defend it at all costs, unyielding unto death.	and beautiful woman is alone, apart from chastity she will not be concerned with other things. Chastity is the cornerstone of the great edifice of women's morality; it is their precious thing, their most important thing; they will struggle desperately to protect it, and if violated will not hesitate to die to prove their resolve.
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Appendix B.3. 3 Challenging the traditional notions of gender identity through androgyny and gender fluidity

Appendix C. The feminist sentences examples selected by Nvivo from four Chinese translations of *To the Lighthouse*

Appendix C.1 Domestic Responsibilities Associated with Gender Roles

Source text	...that her daughters, Prue, Nancy, Rose—could sport with infidel ideas which they had brewed for themselves of a life different from
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	hers; in Paris, perhaps; a wilder life; not always taking care of some man or other; ...			
Translators	Xie Qingyao(1946)	Qu Shijing (1988)	Ma Ainong (2003)	Li, Tian and Meng (2017)
Translation	No translation	她的女儿普鲁、南希、露丝的目光离开了她们的餐盘，抬起头来望着她，她们现在只能默默地玩味着她们的非正统观念，这些观念是她们在和她不同的生活中培养出来的，也许就是在巴黎的生活，一种更为自由奔放的生活；她们认为不必老是关心照料那些男人，	她们——她的女儿普鲁、南希和罗斯——把脑袋从盘子上抬起，却只敢在心里玩味一些叛逆的念头，一些她们酝酿已久的、要过一种与她截然不同的生活的念头；也许，是在巴黎；一种比较奔放的生活；不用总是照料这些或那些男人；	她的女儿们——普鲁，南希，罗斯——才默默地抬起了头，心中盘算着离经叛道的念头，想着自己与母亲不一样的人生：可能会在巴黎，过着无拘无束的生活，不用总是照顾这个或那个男人；
Literal translation	No translation	Her daughters Prue, Nancy, and Rose lifted their eyes from their plates and looked up at her; now they could only	They—her daughters Prue, Nancy, and Rose—raised their heads from their plates, but only dared	Her daughters—Prue, Nancy, Rose—silently raised their heads, plotting heterodox thoughts,

		silently savor their heterodox notions, notions bred in a life different from hers—perhaps in Paris—a freer, more unbridled life; they thought there was no need always to look after this or that man.	inwardly to savor some rebellious thoughts—thoughts long brewed of living a life quite different from hers; perhaps in Paris; a rather freer life; not having to care all the time for this or that man.	thinking of a life unlike their mother's: possibly in Paris, living unrestrained, not always having to look after this or that man.
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Appendix C.1. 1 Domestic Responsibilities Associated with Gender Roles

Source text	Insinuating, too, as she did the greatness of man's intellect, even in poverty; insinuating, too, that all wives, by which she meant herself, must accede to their husband's labours, she did not blame the girl, and believed that their union had been happy—she made him feel better pleased with himself than he had done yet.			
Translators	Xie Qingyao(1946)	Qu Shijing (1988)	Ma Ainong (2003)	Li, Tian and Meng (2017)
Translation	No Translation	拉姆齐夫人独具慧眼，竟然能赏识在穷困潦倒之中的男子的高度才华，并且承认所有当妻子的-她并不责怪那位姑娘，并且	她暗示男人具有高度的睿智——即使穷困潦倒也不逊色，又暗示所有的妻子都应该支持丈夫的事业——她不是责怪那个姑	她还暗示了男人的才智是巨大的，虽然在逐渐衰退，所有的妻子——她倒不是怪哪个姑娘，她相信他们的婚姻曾经还是很幸

		相信他们的结合 曾经是幸福的- 都要顺从地支持她们丈夫的工作。	娘，而且她相信那场婚姻够得上美满。	福的——都要服从于丈夫的事业，她的这番话令他感到从未有过的得意。
Literal translation	No translation	Mrs. Ramsay had keen insight—could appreciate a man's high genius even in destitution—and admitted that all wives—she did not blame that girl, and believed their union had been happy—must obediently support their husbands' work.	She hinted that men possess great wisdom—even in poverty it is not less—and also hinted that all wives ought to support their husbands' careers—she was not blaming that girl, and she believed that marriage counted as happy.	She further hinted that a man's intellect is immense, though waning; all wives—she was not, in fact, blaming any girl; she believed their marriage had been happy—must submit to their husbands' work; these words made him feel a satisfaction he'd never before felt.

Appendix C.1. 2 Domestic Responsibilities Associated with Gender Roles

Source text	They came to her, naturally, since she was a woman, all day long with this and that; one wanting this, another that; the children growing up; and she felt she was nothing but a sponge sopped full of human emotions.
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Translators	Xie Qingyao(1946)	Qu Shijing (1988)	Ma Ainong (2003)	Li, Tian and Meng (2017)
Translation	他们都自然而然地向她要求同情——她是一个女人；每人有每人不同的要求；孩子们现在都长大了；她常想自己只是一个吸满了各种情感的海棉。	既然她是一位女性，自然而然地他们就整天来找她；某人要这个，另一位要那个，孩子们正在成长；她经常感觉到，她不过是一块吸饱了人类各种各样感情的海绵罢了。	他们到她这里来，整天不间断地，带着这样或那样的要求，这很自然，因为她是一个女人；有人要这，有人要那；孩子们在成长；她经常感到自己只是一块浸满人情味的海绵。	他们都会来找她，这是必然的，因为她是一个女人，每天不是这件事儿就是那件事儿；孩子们年纪尚小，她时常感觉自己就像块海绵，浸满了各种情感。
Literal translation	They all naturally asked her for sympathy—for she was a woman; each had his own different demand; the children were now grown; she often thought she was only a sponge soaked full of all sorts of emotions.	Since she was a woman, naturally they came to her all day long; one wanted this, another that; the children were growing; she often felt she was nothing but a sponge soaked with all kinds of human feelings.	They came to her, unceasing all day, with this or that request; this was natural, because she was a woman; some wanted this, some that; the children were growing; she often felt herself only a sponge soaked with human sentiments.	They would all come to her—inevitably, because she was a woman—every day with this matter or that; the children were still young; she often felt she was like a sponge, soaked with various emotions.

Appendix C.1. 3 Domestic Responsibilities Associated with Gender Roles

Appendix C.2 Feminist Perspective of Marriage VS. Traditional Perspective of Marriage

Source text	...it was dawn, she could see the sun rising,—half turn back, more intimately, but still always laughing, insist that she must, Minta must, they all must marry... there could be no disputing this: an unmarried woman (She lightly took her hand for a moment), an unmarried woman has missed the best of life.			
Translators	Xie Qingyao(1946)	Qu Shijing (1988)	Ma Ainong (2003)	Li, Tian and Meng (2017)
Translation	No translation	她坚持说，莉丽必须结婚，敏泰也必须结婚，她们都必须结婚，无论她在世界上得到什么荣誉(但她对莉丽的画不屑一顾),或者获得什么胜利(也许拉姆齐夫人曾享有过这种胜利),说到这儿，她神色黯然，回到她的椅子，又接着说，这是不容置疑的：一位不结婚的妇女(她轻轻地把手握了片刻),一位不结婚的妇女错过了人生最美好的部分。	她却依然老那么笑着强调，莉丽必须结婚，明塔必须结婚，她们都必须结婚，因为在这个世界上，无论人们给了她什么荣誉(但是拉姆齐夫人对莉丽的画不屑一顾),或取得什么成功(也许拉姆齐夫人曾经拥有过这些成功),说到这里，她变得忧伤而愁闷，回到自己的椅子上，又接着说，有一点是不容置疑的：	她略微转过身，脸上依然挂着往日的笑容，语气更加亲密地说，她一定得结婚啊，明塔也一定得结婚啊，所有人都必须要结婚啊，因为在这个世界上，无论你获得多少荣誉(拉姆齐夫人并不把她的画放在眼里),取得多少成就(拉姆齐夫人自己很可能也取得过不少成就),说到这儿，她黯然神伤，又回到了

			一个不结婚的女人(她轻轻地 把莉莉的手握住片刻),一个不结婚的女人错过了人生最美好的东西。	椅子上,这是无可争议的: 女人不结婚(她轻轻握了握她的手),女人不结婚就错过了人生中最美好的时光。
Literal translation	-	she slightly turned her body, more intimate yet still smiling as always, and stressed that Lily must marry, Minta must marry, they must all marry, because in this world, no matter what honors people gave her (but Mrs Ramsay looked down on Lily's painting), or what success was achieved (perhaps Mrs Ramsay had once had such success), at this she grew sad and gloomy, returned to her chair, and then added, there is one point beyond dispute: a woman	she still wearing her usual smile, and in a more intimate tone said that she must marry, Minta must marry, everyone must marry, because in this world, no matter how many honors you obtain (Mrs Ramsay does not put her painting in her eyes), how many achievements you obtain (Mrs Ramsay herself very likely also obtained quite	she turned half her body, showed a more intimate expression, still constantly smiling, and insisted that Lily must marry, Minta must marry, they all must marry, no matter what honors she obtains in the world (she doesn't think much of Lily's painting), or what victories she wins (perhaps Mrs Ramsay had enjoyed such victories);

		who does not marry (she lightly held Lily's hand for a moment), a woman who does not marry has missed the best thing of life.	a few), at this she grew dim and sad, returned to her chair; this is indisputable: if a woman does not marry (she lightly squeezed her hand), if a woman does not marry she misses the best time of life.	saying this, she darkened, returned to her chair, and continued: this is indisputable: a woman not marrying (she lightly held her hand a moment), a woman not marrying has missed the most beautiful part of life.
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Appendix C.2. 1 Feminist Perspective of Marriage VS. Traditional Perspective of Marriage

Source text	...she did not like, even for a second, to feel finer than her husband...			
Translators	Xie Qingyao(1946)	Qu Shijing (1988)	Ma Ainong (2003)	Li, Tian and Meng (2017)
Translation	No translation	她不愿意感到自己比丈夫优秀，哪怕是一秒钟也不行；	她不喜欢感到她自己比她的丈夫优越，即使是在一刹那间也不行；	她意识到了这种不快的缘由：她不愿意感到自己比丈夫强，一刻也不想；
Literal translation	No translation	She did not want to feel herself superior to her husband, not	She did not like to feel herself superior to her husband, even for an instant.	She realized the cause of this displeasure: she did not

		even for one second.		want to feel herself stronger than her husband, not for a moment.
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Appendix C.2. 2 Feminist Perspective of Marriage VS. Traditional Perspective of Marriage

Source text	...for then people said he depended on her, when they must know that of the two he was infinitely the more important, and what she gave the world, in comparison with what he gave, negligible.			
Translators	Xie Qingyao(1946)	Qu Shijing (1988)	Ma Ainong (2003)	Li, Tian and Meng (2017)
Translation	她怕旁人觉得他是少不了她的——他的成就非靠她扶持不可（其实她觉得还不如他）。	因为，这样人们就会说他依赖于她，而实际上他们应该懂得：在他们两人之中，他是无可比拟地更为重要的一个；她对于世界的贡献，和他的贡献相比，是微不足道的	其实他们必须知道，在他俩中间，绝对是他更为重要，拿她对世界的贡献和他的贡献相比，简直微不足道。	那样，人们就会说他太依赖于她，但人们一定知道，在他们两人之间，他肯定更重要得多，相比他对世界的贡献而言，她的贡献是微不足道的。
Literal translation	She was afraid others would feel he couldn't do without her—his achievements	Because then people would say he relied on her, whereas actually they	Actually they must know that between the two of them, absolutely he is the more	Then people would say he relied too much on her, but people must know that

	could not be attained without her support (in fact she felt she was not as good as him).	ought to know: of the two, he is incomparably the more important; compared with his contribution to the world, hers is negligible.	important; to take her contribution and compare it with his contribution to the world is simply negligible.	between the two of them he is certainly much more important; compared with his contribution to the world, her contribution is negligible.
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Appendix C.2. 3 Feminist Perspective of Marriage VS. Traditional Perspective of Marriage

Appendix C.3 Intellectual Recognition and Achievements

Source text	The extraordinary irrationality of her remark, the folly of women's minds enraged him.			
Translators	Xie Qingyao(1946)	Qu Shijing (1988)	Ma Ainong (2003)	Li, Tian and Meng (2017)
Translation	女人的不正确观察力激起了他的怒火。简直等于对孩子撒谎！	她说的话极端没道理，那种愚蠢的妇人之见使他勃然大怒。	她的话不可理喻到了极点，这种愚顽的妇人之见激怒了他。	她的话真是不可理喻，女人的想法真是荒唐，简直让他暴跳如雷。
Literal translation	Women's incorrect powers of observation roused his anger. It was simply equivalent to	What she said was extremely unreasonable; that foolish womanly opinion made him flare up in anger.	Her words were utterly beyond reason; this pig-headed womanly view enraged him.	Her words were truly beyond reason; women's ideas are really absurd; it practically

	lying to children!			made him explode with rage.
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Appendix C.3. 1 Intellectual Recognition and Achievements

Source text	Women can't write, women can't paint			
Translators	Xie Qingyao(1946)	Qu Shijing (1988)	Ma Ainong (2003)	Li, Tian and Meng (2017)
Translation	女人绝对不能 绘画，女人绝 对不能写 作.....	女人可不会绘 画，女人也不 能写作.....	女人不能绘 画，女人不能 写作.....	女人不懂画 画，女人不会 写作
Literal translation	Women absolutely cannot paint; women absolutely cannot write...	Women, you know, can't paint; women also can't write	Women can't paint; women can't write...	Women don't understand painting; women can't write...

Appendix C.3. 2 Intellectual Recognition and Achievements

Source text	Lily's picture! Mrs. Ramsay smiled. Nobody would take her painting seriously. She was an independent little creature and Mrs. Ramsay liked her for it.			
Translators	Xie Qingyao(1946)	Qu Shijing (1988)	Ma Ainong (2003)	Li, Tian and Meng (2017)
Translation	丽莲的图画！ 雷姆赛夫人不 禁微笑了一下。 没有人会重视 她的图画。她 长得很难看， 大概永	她的画也不会 有人重视，她 是一个有独立 精神的小人物， 而拉姆齐夫人 就是喜欢她这 一点，	她的画是不能 认真当回事的； 她倒是个很有 主见的小家伙， 为此拉姆齐夫 人很喜欢她；	你也不能太把 她画画这事儿 当真；但她是 个独立性很强 的小家伙，拉 姆齐夫人比较

	远 不 会 出 嫁 了。可是雷姆 赛夫人却很喜 欢她的独立精 神。			喜 欢 她 这 一 点，
Literal translation	Lily's picture! Mrs. Ramsay couldn't help giving a small smile. No one would take her pictures seriously. She looks very plain and will probably never marry. But Mrs. Ramsay really liked her independent spirit.	Her paintings also wouldn't be taken seriously; she is a small person with an independent spirit, and this is exactly what Mrs. Ramsay likes about her.	Her painting can't be taken seriously; she's a very opinionated little thing, and for this Mrs. Ramsay is very fond of her.	You also shouldn't take her painting too seriously; but she's a little creature with very strong independence, and Mrs. Ramsay rather likes this point about her.

Appendix C.3. 3 Intellectual Recognition and Achievements

Appendix D. The Feminist Sentences Examples Selected by NVivo from Three Chinese Translations of *A Room of One's Own*

Appendix D.1 The Male Academic Criticism of Women and Women Writers

The male academic criticism of women and women writers	I found myself walking with extreme rapidity across a grass plot. Instantly a man's figure rose to intercept me. Nor did I at first understand that the gesticulations of a curious-looking object, in a cut-away coat and evening shirt, were aimed at me. His face expressed horror and indignation. Instinct rather than reason
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	came to my help; he was a Beadle; I was a woman. This was the turf; there was the path. Only the Fellows and Scholars are allowed here; the gravel is the place for me. Such thoughts were the work of a moment.		
Translator	T1 Wang huan (1947)	T2 Jia Huifeng (2003)	T3 Dai Hongzhen & Zhou Chun (2016)
Target text	立刻 有一个男人起来阻挡我,在起初我还不明白那个穿着夜礼服衬衫 和常礼服、怪形怪状的人的手势是对我做的呢。他的脸上显着惊 骇愤怒的样子。是本能而不是理智提醒了我,他是教区的警吏,我是女人。这是草皮,小路在那边。只有研究生和优等生可以在这里,碎石小道才是我能走的呢。这些思想不过是一刹那的事	突然, 一个男人的身形出现在我面前, 拦截住我。男人穿了常礼服和笔挺衬衫, 显得很滑稽, 最初, 我甚至没弄 明白, 他比比划划的是冲我而来。他的脸上纯是一副惊恐 而又恼怒的表情。此时, 直觉而不是理性搭救了我, 他是校 役, 我是女人。这里是大学的赛马场, 脚下就是跑道。只有研究员和学者方能来此驻足。我的位置是在沙砾路上。这 些都是瞬间转过的念头。	一个男子的身影冒了出来, 挡住我的去路。这个人穿着燕尾服, 里面配着礼服衬衫, 看上去颇为古怪。起初我也 没明白对方的手势原来是冲着我来, 那人的脸上写满了震惊与愤懑。我并非出于理智, 而是下意识地作出了反应。此 人是学监, 而我是一个女人。这儿是草坪, 而路在那一边。 这块草坪只对学者和研究员开放, 沙土路才是我该走的道。 在那一瞬间, 这些念头一窝蜂地涌入我的脑海中。
Literal translation	Immediately a man rose up to block me; at first I did not understand that the	Suddenly, a man's figure appeared in front of me, blocking me. The	A man's figure emerged, blocking my way. He was wearing a tailcoat

	gestures of that oddly-shaped man, wearing an evening dress shirt and a lounge coat, were directed at me. His face showed horror and anger. Instinct rather than reason reminded me: he was a parish beadle, I was a woman. This is turf, the path is over there. Only graduate students and fellows may be here; the gravel path is the one I can walk on. These thoughts lasted only a moment.	man wore a lounge suit and a stiff shirt, looking rather comical. At first, I did not even realize that his gesturing was directed at me. His face was purely a look of fear and anger. At that moment, instinct rather than reason saved me: he was a porter, I was a woman. This was the university's racecourse, beneath my feet was the track. Only researchers and scholars may stand here. My place was on the gravel path. These thoughts all passed in an instant.	with a dress shirt inside, looking rather strange. At first I did not understand that his gestures were directed at me. His face was full of shock and resentment. It was not out of reason but subconsciously that I reacted: this man was the dean, and I was a woman. This was the lawn, and the path was over there. This lawn was open only to scholars and researchers, the sandy path was the road I ought to walk. In that instant, these thoughts swarmed into my mind.
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Appendix D.1. 1 The male academic criticism of women and women writers

The male academic criticism of women and women writers	Why did Samuel Butler say, 'Wise men never say what they think of women'? Wise men never say what they think of anything. At any rate, sitting here in the shade of the great dome of St Paul's, I became for the moment a single mind, a single thought, and that thought a little uncomfortable. To tell the truth, the
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	unfortunate thing about wise men is that they never agree about women.		
Translator	T1 Wang huan (1947)	T2 Jia Huifeng (2003)	T3 Dai Hongzhen & Zhou Chun (2016)
Target text	为什么 塞缪尔·巴特勒说,“聪明人从来不说他们对女人的意见”?从上面那些题目看来,显然聪明人除了女人从来不说别的。但是,靠着椅子背,看着那个庞大的圆顶,在那下面我是一个思想,不过现在有点窘困住的思想,我继续想,所不幸的是聪明人对妇女的意见从来不雷同。	为什么塞缪尔·巴特勒说:“聪明男人从不说出对女人的想法”?其实,聪明人也从不说出对任何事的想法。我靠在座椅上,凝望巨大的穹顶,穹顶之下,我不过是个孤零零的但现在有些纷乱的意念而已,我接着想,遗憾的是,聪明的男人对女人的想法,从来都不一致。	塞缪尔·巴特勒为什么会说:“智慧的男人绝不会说出他们对女人的看法”?智慧的男人显然只对这个话题感兴趣。我靠在椅背上,凝望着博物馆巨大的穹顶,继续思忖道。我的思想原本就很孤单,现在还平添了几分烦恼。遗憾的是,同样是智慧的男人,他们对女人的看法却有着天壤之别。
Literal translation	Why did Samuel Butler say, 'Clever men never say their opinions of women'? From the above topics, it is clear that clever men never speak of anything except women. But leaning against the back of the chair, looking at that huge dome, underneath it I was	Why did Samuel Butler say: 'Clever men never say what they think of women'? In fact, clever men never say what they think of anything. I leaned against the chair, gazing at the huge dome; beneath the dome I was merely a lonely thought, though	Why would Samuel Butler say: 'Wise men would never express their views about women'? Wise men are clearly interested only in this topic. I leaned on the back of my chair, gazing at the great dome of the museum, continuing to ponder. My thought

	a thought — only a thought that was now a little embarrassed. I continued to think: the unfortunate thing is that clever men's opinions of women are never the same.	now somewhat confused. I continued to think: regrettably, clever men's thoughts about women have never been consistent.	was originally very solitary, and now even more troubled. Regrettably, though they are all wise men, their views of women differ as much as heaven and earth.
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Appendix D.1. 2 The male academic criticism of women and women writers

The male academic criticism of women and women writers	Here, then, was a woman in a book about whom opinions differed. Some said that women had no character at all, others, on the contrary, declared that they were half divine. Napoleon thought them incapable of education. Dr Johnson thought the opposite. Some held that they were incapable of learning, others maintained that they could learn anything, even Greek. Some said they were pure, others said they were corrupt.		
Translator	T1 Wang huan (1947)	T2 Jia Huifeng (2003)	T3 Dai Hongzhen & Zhou Chun (2016)
Target text	这是两个同一个时代的观察锐利的人正相反的意见。女人到底能不能受教育呢? 拿破仑认为她们不能。约翰逊博士的意见却正相反。她们到底有没有灵魂? 有些野蛮的人认为没有。有的,正相反,坚持女人一半是神而因此	两个同时代的明眼人针锋相对。女人能不能接受教育? 拿破仑认为她们不能。约翰逊博士的看法恰恰相反。她们有没有灵魂? 野蛮人说她们没有。另一些人却认定女人的一半为神,并为此崇拜她们。哲人断言她们头脑浅	这两位是同时代的作家,观察都很敏锐,但是他们的女性观却截然相反。女性是否有资格接受教育? 拿破仑认为她们没资格。约翰逊博士却大唱反调。女性是否有灵魂?不少粗鄙之人认为她们没有。其女性是否有灵魂? 不

	崇拜她们。有些哲人说她们的脑子较浅, 别的说她们的意识较深。	薄, 另一些人却说她们有更深刻的知觉。	为她们是半人半神的生灵, 对她们大加膜拜。有些智者认为女性的思维很浅薄, 其他人则认为她们的悟性很高深。
Literal translation	These are two sharp observers of the same age with opposite opinions. Can women be educated? Napoleon thought not. Dr. Johnson's opinion was exactly the opposite. Do they have souls? Some savage people thought not. Others, on the contrary, insisted women were half divine and therefore worshipped them. Some philosophers said their brains were rather shallow; others said their consciousness was deeper.	Two clear-sighted men of the same era were diametrically opposed. Can women receive education? Napoleon thought they could not. Dr. Johnson's view was exactly the opposite. Do they have souls? Savages said they did not. Others maintained women were half divine, and for this worshipped them. Philosophers asserted their minds were shallow, while others said they had deeper perception.	These two were writers of the same time, both keen observers, but their views of women were entirely opposed. Do women have the qualification to be educated? Napoleon thought they did not. Dr. Johnson strongly disagreed. Do women have souls? Many coarse people thought they did not. Others opposed this, saying they were half-human, half-divine beings, and worshipped them greatly. Some wise men thought women's thinking was shallow, others believed their

			insight was profound.
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Appendix D.1. 3 The male academic criticism of women and women writers

Appendix D.2 The Difficulty of Women's Financial Status

Source text	For first, to earn money was impossible for them; and secondly, even had it been possible, the law denied them the right to possess what money they earned. Only for the last forty-eight years has Mrs Seton had a penny of her own; for all the centuries before that it was her husband's property.		
Translator	T1 Wang huan (1947)	T2 Jia Huifeng (2003)	T3 Dai Hongzhen & Zhou Chun (2016)
Target text	因为 第一,她们就根本不可能去赚钱,再说呢,就算可能,法律也不给她们权利去保护她们所赚的钱。只在最近四十八年以来,塞登夫人才有她自己的财产权。在以前这一直都是她丈夫的财产。	首先,赚钱对她们来说就不可能,法律禁止她们拥有自己赚来的钱财。直到晚近,过去四十八年来,西顿太太才有了自己的一点钱。此前的多少世纪里,钱财归她的丈夫。	首先,她们不可能出去挣钱,其次,就算她们挣到了钱,法律也不允许她们将这些钱据为己有。事实上,直到四十八年前,西顿夫人才开始拥有了属于自己的第一文钱。而在这之前的世代里,每一文钱都是属于丈夫的财产。
Literal translation	First, it was simply impossible for them to go and earn money; secondly, even if it were	First, earning money for them was impossible; the law forbade them from owning the	First, they could not go out to earn; second, even if they did earn, the law would not allow

	possible, the law did not give them the right to protect the money they earned. Only in the last forty-eight years has Mrs Seton had property of her own. Before then it was all her husband's property.	money they themselves earned. Only in very recent times—the past forty-eight years—has Mrs Seaton had a little bit of her own money. In the many centuries before, the money belonged to her husband.	them to possess it. In fact, only forty-eight years ago did Mrs Seaton begin to have the first penny that belonged to herself. Before that, every penny was the husband's.
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Appendix D.2. 1 The Difficulty of Women's Financial Status

Source text	But for women... in the first place, to have a room of her own, let alone a quiet room or a sound-proof room, was out of the question, unless her parents were exceptionally rich or very noble, even up to the beginning of the nineteenth century.		
Translator	T1 Wang huan (1947)	T2 Jia Huifeng (2003)	T3 Dai Hongzhen & Zhou Chun (2016)
Target text	但是对女人,我想,一面看看空的书架,这种种困难要更加可畏了。第一,有一间自己的屋子,还不用谈什么安静或是不传音的屋子,就根本做不到,除非她的父母是特别有钱或是特别慷慨。	但对女性,我扫一眼空荡的书架,心中思忖,这一切艰难岂非来得更加可怕。首先,即使到十九世纪初,拥有一间自己的房间,且不说一间安静的房间,隔音的房间,就想也不要去想,除非她生于大富大贵人家。	不过对女人来说,她们的困难远要棘手得多。我看着空荡荡的书架,心想。首先,女性想要一间属于自己的房间,哪怕是在十九世纪初期,也是痴人说梦,更别说一间安静,或者隔音效果良好的房间,除非她们出生

			在大富大贵的家庭里。
Literal translation	But for women, I think, looking at the empty bookshelf, these various difficulties are even more dreadful. First, to have a room of one's own—let alone a quiet or sound-proof room—was simply impossible, unless her parents were particularly rich or particularly generous.	But for women, I glanced at the empty shelves and thought: all these hardships surely come even more fearsomely. First of all, even to the early nineteenth century, to have a room of her own—let alone a quiet room, a sound-proof room—was not to be thought of, unless she was born to great wealth.	Yet for women, their difficulties are far more thorny, I thought, looking at the empty shelves. First, to want a room that belongs to herself—even in the early nineteenth century—was a fool's dream; not to mention a quiet or well-sound-proofed room, unless she was born in a very wealthy family.

Appendix D.2. 2 The Difficulty of Women's Financial Status

Source text	Money dignifies what is frivolous if unpaid for. It might still be well to sneer at 'blue stockings with an itch for scribbling', but it could not be denied that they could put money in their purses.		
Translator	T1 Wang huan (1947)	T2 Jia Huifeng (2003)	T3 Dai Hongzhen & Zhou Chun (2016)
Target text	凡是不能赚钱就成为无价值的东西,只要一能赚钱就立刻身价百倍。大家虽然还可以嘲笑“女文人因为总想滥写而手发痒”,可是大家	一件事情,如果无人付钱,必显得轻薄,而金钱让轻薄变为庄重。当然还会有人耻笑“涂鸦上瘾的蓝袜子才女”,但没人能否认,她	金钱使原本无法挣钱的无聊消遣变得体面起来。人们依然可以讥笑那些“明明是才女,却非要乱写一气”的女性,然而,不可否

	不能否认她们能把钱装到钱袋里去。	们可以往扎林街，伦敦一条街，以其各类新书店和二手书店著称。往自己的钱包里放钱了。	认的是，女性现在有能力 将钱放入自己的钱包里了。
Literal translation	Whatever cannot make money becomes something without value; as soon as it can make money, its worth immediately multiplies a hundredfold. Although everyone can still laugh that 'women of letters itch to scrawl', yet no one can deny they can put money into their money-bags.	A thing, if no one will pay for it, appears frivolous; while money makes frivolity become dignified. Of course people will still mock the 'blue-stocking ladies addicted to doodling', but nobody can deny that now they can put money into their own purses.	Money makes a formerly non-earning pastime become respectable. People still may sneer at those 'clever women who insist on scribbling wildly', yet, undeniably, women now have the ability to put money into their own purses.

Appendix D.2. 3 The Difficulty of Women's Financial Status

Appendix D.3 Women Lacking Authority in Traditional Customs

Source text	'Wife-beating', I read, 'was a recognised right of man, and was practised without shame by high as well as low. ... Similarly,' the historian goes on, 'the daughter who refused to marry the gentleman of her parents' choice was liable to be locked up, beaten and flung about the room, without any shock being inflicted on public opinion. Marriage was not an affair of personal affection, but of family avarice, particularly in the "chivalrous"
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	upper classes. ... Betrothal often took place while one or both of the parties was in the cradle, and marriage when they were scarcely out of the nurses' charge.'		
Translator	T1 Wang huan (1947)	T2 Jia Huifeng (2003)	T3 Dai Hongzhen & Zhou Chun (2016)
Target text	我又翻到索引里的“妇女”，找到“妇女的地位”，于是翻到所指明的那页。我读：“打妻子是大家公认的男人的权利，而且不论上等人或下等人一律如此做而不以为耻。”这位历史家又接着写：“同样，假使女儿拒绝和父母所选定的男人结婚，就会被关起来，被鞭打，在屋里被推得东跌西撞，而大众恬不为怪。婚姻并不是各人情感的事，而是家庭贪婪的工具，特别在所谓‘武士’的上流社会里。	我再度检索“妇女”词条，发现了“妇女地位”一节，翻开相关部分，我读道：“殴打妻子是男人公认的权利，无论是上等人，还是普通百姓，都不以行使这一权利为耻，”这位历史学家又说：“女儿如庭贪婪的工具，特别在所谓丈夫，很可能被关在屋里，遭受拳打脚踢，公众对此也不吃惊。婚姻不问个人情感，它只关乎家庭贪欲，尤其是在‘温情脉脉’的上流社会	我再次查询女性这个条目，找到了“女性的地位”这一条，我便翻到它所指的那几页。“打老婆”，我读道，“被公认为男人应当享有的权利。无论高低贵贱，男人都可以殴打自己的妻子，并且不以此为耻……同样，”历史学家继续写道，“倘若女儿拒绝嫁给父母为她选中的男子，她可能会遭到囚禁、殴打，而舆论对此却无动于衷。婚姻关乎的不是个人感情，而是一个家族的贪婪，在‘崇尚骑士风度的’上层社会尤其如此。
Literal translation	I looked again under 'Women' in the index, found 'position of women', and turned to the	I searched the entry 'Women' again and found the section 'the status of women'; opening	I looked up the entry 'women' once more and found 'the status of women'; I then read: "Beating

	page indicated. I read: 'Beating one's wife is an acknowledged right of men, and both the upper and lower ranks alike do so without shame.' The historian then goes on: 'Likewise, if a daughter refuses to marry the man chosen by her parents, she will be shut up, whipped, and pushed about the room, and the public is not the least surprised. Marriage is not a matter of personal feeling, but an instrument of family greed, particularly in the so-called "chivalrous" upper classes.'	the relevant part, I read: 'Beating one's wife is a right acknowledged for men; whether among the upper ranks or ordinary people, all are unashamed to exercise this right.' The historian also says: 'If a daughter refuses to marry the husband chosen by her parents, she is likely to be confined indoors and subjected to kicks and blows, and the public is not surprised. Marriage does not concern personal feeling; it concerns family greed, especially in the "chivalrous" upper classes.'	one's wife," I read, "is recognized as a right that men ought to enjoy. Regardless of rank or status, men may beat their own wives and are not ashamed of it... Similarly," the historian continues, "if a daughter refuses to marry the man chosen by her parents, she may be imprisoned and beaten, and public opinion remains unmoved. Marriage is not about personal feelings but about a family's greed, especially in the 'chivalry-admiring' upper class."
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Appendix D.3. 1 Women Lacking Authority in Traditional Customs

Source text	The next reference to the position of women is some two hundred years later, in the time of the Stuarts. 'It was still the exception for women of the upper and middle class to choose their own husbands, and when the husband had been assigned, he was lord and master, so far at least as law and custom could make him.'
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Translator	T1 Wang huan (1947)	T2 Jia Huifeng (2003)	T3 Dai Hongzhen & Zhou Chun (2016)
Target text	再提到妇女的地位的时候就是差不多再过二百年,在斯图亚特 朝代的时候了。“上中社会的妇女自己选择丈夫仍然是例外。而且只要一指定做了丈夫,他就是君主,一家之长,至少法律、习俗是这样承认他的。	背景已挪到二百年后的斯图亚特时代。“上、中阶层的妇女,仍然鲜有人能自由择婿,而她的丈夫一经派定,就成了当家的夫君,至少法律和习俗是这样认定的。	下一次提到女性大约是在两百年之后斯图亚特时代。到这时, 中上层阶级的贵族女性依然没有自由择偶的权利。当她们被 许配给指定的丈夫后,对方便摇身一变,成为她的主宰,成为她的“老爷”。这是法律与习俗为丈夫们设置的定位。
Literal translation	The next time the position of women is mentioned is roughly two hundred years later, in the Stuart period. 'For women of the upper and middle society to choose their own husbands was still the exception. And once a husband had been designated, he was the lord, the head of the household, at least so law and custom	The background has shifted to the Stuart era two hundred years later. 'Women of the upper and middle strata still seldom could freely choose a husband, and once her husband had been assigned, he became the ruling husband, at least the law and custom so defined him.	The next mention of women is about two hundred years later in the Stuart era. By then, upper-middle-class women still had no right to choose their spouses freely. Once they were betrothed to an appointed husband, the man instantly became her master, her 'lord'. That is the position that law and custom

	acknowledged him.'		assigned to husbands.
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Appendix D.3. 2 Women Lacking Authority in Traditional Customs

Source text	Indeed, if woman had no existence save in the fiction written by men, one would imagine her a person of the utmost importance; very various; heroic and mean; splendid and sordid; infinitely beautiful and hideous in the extreme; as great as a man, some think even greater. ... In fact, as Professor Trevelyan points out, she was locked up, beaten and flung about the room.		
Translator	T1 Wang huan (1947)	T2 Jia Huifeng (2003)	T3 Dai Hongzhen & Zhou Chun (2016)
Target text	假使妇女除了在男人所写的小说、诗、剧之中就不存在,那我们就可以想她是一个最重要的人。但是这都是小说戏剧中虚构出的女人。实际上,却如特里威廉教授所说的,她被关起来,被鞭打,被人在屋里推得东跌西撞。	女性如果只存在于男人写的小说中,人们会想象她是个极其重要的人物;多姿多彩;崇高或猥琐;明丽或污秽;天姿国色或丑陋无比;像男人一样高贵,有人认为比男人还高贵。但这是小说中的女性。实际上,如特里威廉教授指出的,妇女是被关在屋里,遭受拳打脚踢。	假如女性不是有血有肉的实体,而只是生活在男人笔下的生物,那么,人们定会 将她幻化成绝顶重要的人物。然而,这只是小说中的女性。在现实生活中,正如特里威廉教授所指出的那样,女性遭到囚禁、殴打。
Literal translation	If women existed only in the novels, poems, and plays written by men, then we could imagine her to be a most important	If women existed only in the novels written by men, people would imagine her to be an extremely important figure—	If women were not flesh-and-blood beings but only creatures living in men's writings, people would surely transform her into

	person. But these are women fabricated in fiction and drama. In reality, as Professor Trevelyan says, she was shut up, whipped, and shoved about the room.	variegated; lofty or base; bright or filthy; a paragon of beauty or hideous beyond measure; as noble as a man, some think nobler. But that is the woman in fiction. In reality, as Professor Trevelyan points out, women were shut indoors and subjected to kicks and blows.	an supremely important figure. However, that is only the woman in fiction. In real life, as Professor Trevelyan points out, women suffered imprisonment and beating.
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Appendix D.3. 3 Women Lacking Authority in Traditional Customs