

Face Management in Literary Translation

Dr. Yuan Xiaohui

University of Bristol, UNITED KINGDOM

ABSTRACT

Face constitutes an important interpersonal component via which people manage rapport with each other depending on their interactional goals. Face behaviour throughout the course of an interaction can indicate or manifest an interlocutor's personality, attitude and intentions. This paper focuses on investigating how face is depicted in Jane Austen's novel *Sense and Sensibility* where interpersonal dynamics feature and lead the plot, and how face is represented in the Chinese translation of this novel by Cheng Wei'an (2009). Using three excerpts and their translation as data, it is found that interpersonal face markers are sometimes omitted or toned down in the translation, and bald-on-record face strategies changed into off-record manners or redressed with concerns of hearers' negative or positive face wants. This, I claim, may impact on a reader's interpretation of interlocutors' personality, attitude and intentions. The change of face features in literary translation, however, ought not to communicate a different idea of the personality of the characters in the literary work and of their attitudes towards each other. Therefore, the paper suggests that translators need to develop a sufficient understanding of the representation of face portrayal in literary translation in order to assist readers from target cultures to better appreciate individual characters in the way that writers endeavour to portray and present to their readers. The data analysis also demonstrates evidence of translation leading to less explicit information about facework, presenting salient departures from the explicitation hypothesis in translation studies.

KEYWORDS: Composite Model of Face Management, explicitation, politeness, prefabricated orality, *Sense and Sensibility*