

Development of Translation Research Areas: Bibliometric Analysis of a Leading Translatology Journal

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Abstract

In order to promote China's internationalization of translation research and help more Chinese scholars publish their translation research articles in SSCI and A&HCI journals of translatology, this paper selects *Translation Studies*, one of the leading translatology journals, and makes bibliometric analysis of its published articles about translation research areas in the past ten years from 2014 to 2023. It finds out the following 14 translation research areas: neural machine translation, translation ethics, multimodal translation, CAT tools, political translation, literary translation, AI and translation, cross-cultural translation, technical translation, machine translation, translation memory, legal translation, professional translation, and translation research trends, which have great difference with Williams and Chesterman's 12 translation research areas in 2002. This paper discusses the development of translation research areas, it's hoped to help scholars know the current translation research areas and encourage them to make research innovation. It also aims to help teachers and translation professionals make achievements in their fields.

Keywords

Translation Research Areas; Bibliometric Analysis; SSCI and A&HCI Journal.

1. Introduction

Every country needs the translation [1], including China. Translation research is an interdisciplinary area of study, covering linguistics, literature, cultural studies, computer science and other disciplines. Since China translation research community established in 1987, Chinese translation researchers have been committed to relevant translation research at home and abroad, and some achievements have been made. In China, eleven categories of Chinese journals are considered as the core journals of foreign language according to the CSSCI (Chinese Social Sciences Citation Index), excluding extended edition. From 2011 to 2020, a total of 3,195 articles related to translation research have been published in the translation research column of those Chinese core journals of foreign language, and over 300 articles have been published annually [2]. The article publication of translation research in China has shown a fluctuating upward trend.

Ning Wang (2012) pointed out that discussing translation research in China in a globalized context should focus on the internationalization of this discipline [3]. Chunshen Zhu (2000) believes that the long development of Chinese translation research asks for the internationalization and the active interaction with the international translatology system [4]. Yu Hou and Jindan Yang (2016) proposed that the internationalization of Chinese translation research is beneficial for enhancing the international influence of Chinese translation research and the international discourse power of China translation research community. It is also an inevitable requirement for the development of Chinese translation research [5].

In order to accelerate China's internationalization process of translation research as well as assist Chinese translation researchers in mastering the cutting-edged translation research and propose some suggestions on the article publication of translation research in SSCI and A&HCI journals of translatology, this study tries to discover recent ten years' translation research areas in a leading SSCI and A&HCI journal *Translation Studies* according to bibliometric analysis. *Translation Studies* is an internationally renowned academic journal from the scientific citation database WOS. It is focusing on the latest research and development in translation. This journal is published by the well-known academic publishing house Routledge. It has been committed to promoting theoretical innovation and practical application in the discipline of translation since its inception. The article authors of *Translation Studies* are from different countries around the world, which can reflect the diversity of international translation research and cover a wide range of translation research areas, including translation theory, translation practice, translation technology, translation ethics, cross-cultural exchanges, and translation education. By reading this journal, readers can learn about the latest developments in translation research areas and obtain cutting-edge research results as well as theoretical insights.

By realizing and knowing the development of translation research areas, it will be helpful for Chinese translation researchers to submit articles to SSCI and A&HCI journals of translatology, which can be served as an efficient way to solve the problem between the publishing needs and the limited number of the core foreign language journals in China. Moreover, the publication of translation research articles can not only help promote exchanges between scholars at home and abroad, but also help translation educators introduce the latest research results and technological advances, so as to cultivate translation talents that meet the needs of the times.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Historical Development of Translation Research

In China, the discipline of translation was proposed and compiled earlier than the West. Yizhen Jiang's *General Theory of Translation* was published in 1927, as a textbook for St. John's University in Shanghai. It's the first book directly named with translation in the world. And Yizhen Jiang is the first person to define the meaning of translation: Use the language or words of country B to describe the language or words of country A; Transfer the subtle ideas of Country A to the intellectual world of Country B, without increasing or decreasing their original appearance; Compare and study the academic achievements of two or more countries; Seeking the fusion of civilizations of two or more systems. This is called translation [6]. In the article *New Breakthroughs in Translation Studies*, Wenguo Pan (2023) pointed out that Qiusi Dong proposed to establish the discipline of translation in 1951. Holmes's *The Name and Nature of Translation Studies* published in 1972, marking the beginning of modern translation research. Holmes advocated the establishment of the discipline of translation research and proposed the name of the new discipline as translation research, while exploring the nature and scope of the discipline. In 1988, Long Huang wrote a book in English named *Translatology*. In 1978, Lefevere proposed that translation research should be the official name of the discipline of translation. In 1980, Susan Bassnett published his book named *Translation Studies* [6].

2.2. Translation Research Achievements

In China, Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press (2023) introduced four books of the New Trends in Translation Research Series from Peter Lang Publishing House, namely *Audiovisual Translation and Subtitle Translation: Theory and Practice*, *Translation Technology Research*, *Mutual Feedback Between Laboratories and Classrooms: Reflections on Translation and Interpreting Training*, *Subtitle Problem: A New Perspective on Subtitle Translation and Foreign*

Language Learning. The four books aim to reflect new trends in translation research areas and promote interdisciplinary research from theory to practice, and from application to teaching. It focuses on translation research in the current multimedia environment.

Linxin Liang and Yingbin Sun (2021) collected all research articles from *The Journal of Specialized Translation* as the data source, and utilized visualized tools, like Excel and VOS viewer to make an insightful observation on the frontiers and trends of global specialized translation research from four aspects: publications of countries, institutions and authors; high-cited authors and articles; topics of special issues; analysis of specialized translation research hotspots and frontiers. It's found that audiovisual translation, machine translation, translation quality and legal translation are the main four research hotspots. It is hoped to provide references for the further development of specialized translation research in China [7].

Kaili Lu (2021) found out the top ten key words of audiovisual translation, literary translation, subtitling, translator training, ideology, interpreting, competence, machine translation, dubbing and censorship from fourteen categories of SSCI and A&HCI journals of translatology, which indicate the hot topics are concerned in specialized purpose translation, literary translation, interpretation research, translator training, translation evaluation and computer-aided translation. The translation skills and training for translators are paid more emphasis probably due to the international journal of Interpreter and Translator Trainer. Kaili Lu (2021) pointed out that the specialized purpose translation and computer-aided translation have developed rapidly, and the emergence of new keywords such as "sociology" showing the interdisciplinary trend in international translation research is also becoming increasingly evident [2].

3. Methodology

First, this paper takes a reference of Williams and Chesterman's (2002) Twelve Areas in Translation Research (see Table 1 in details), which are text analysis and translation, translation quality assessment, genre translation, multimedia translation, translation and technology, translation history, translation ethics, terminology and glossaries, interpreting, the translation process, translator training, the translation profession. These 12 translation research areas, classified by Williams and Chesterman in 2002, presented an overview of various translation research areas long time ago. In ten translation research areas, there are some topics or key words showing up, which can be greatly helpful for the scholars to have a clear research mind and content to do the related translation research.

Second, this paper takes the function of the SSCI and A&HCI databases and selects one of the leading translatology journals *Translation Studies* to make bibliometric analysis of its published articles. In order to know the recent ten years' development of translation research areas after Williams and Chesterman's Twelve Areas in Translation Research in 2002, the title of "translation research areas in Translation Studies Journal (2014-2023)" were searched, and the time frame was set from 2014 to 2023. As the related articles from *Translation Studies* showed up, the bibliometric analysis is applied to collect, record and analyze, so as to see how many articles have the connection with the translation research areas.

Bibliometric analysis is a research method that uses statistical and mathematical methods to quantify a large number of documents. Bibliometric analysis is widely used in many fields, including revealing the development trend of disciplines, identifying emerging research areas and hot issues. In recent years, bibliometric analysis has been widely used in translation research. Bibliometric analysis can overcome the shortcomings of researchers' subjective evaluation of the progress of their research area, truly and objectively reflect the development of the area [9]. Through systematic bibliometric analysis, scholars can have a comprehensive

understanding of the development of translation research areas, identify important research results, and provide valuable references for future research.

Table 1. Twelve Areas in Translation Research

1.Text Analysis and Translation	·Source Text Analysis ·Comparison of Translations and Their Source Text ·Comparison of Translations and Non-translated Source Text ·Translation with Commentary
2.Translation Assessment	Quality
3.Genre Translation	·Drama ·Poetry ·Prose Fiction ·Religious Texts ·Children's Literature ·Tourism Texts ·Technical Texts ·Legal Texts
4.Multimedia Translation	·Revoicing ·Sur-/subtitling
5.Translation and Technology	·Evaluating Software ·Software Localization ·Effects of Technology ·Website Translation ·The Place of Technology in Translator Training
6.Translation History	·Who? (focusing on translators themselves) ·What? (investigate texts which are translated or not translated in particular culture at particular times) ·Why? (why particular texts are translated at particular times) ·How? (link the micro and macro aspects of translation history)
7.Translation Ethics	·Different Kinds of Ethics ·Cultural and Ideological Factors ·Codes of Practice ·Personal vs. Professional Ethics
8.Terminologies and Glossaries	
9.Interpreting	·Cognitive Studies ·Behavior at Studies ·Linguistic Studies ·Sociological Studies, Ethics, History ·Interpreter Training ·Quality Assessment ·Special Kinds of Interpreting
10.The Translation Process	·Workplace Studies ·Protocol Studies
11.Translator Training	·Curriculum Design ·Implementation ·Typical Problem Areas ·Profession Dimension
12. The Translation Procession	

Source: Compiled from Williams and Chesterman's (2002) Research Areas in *Translation Studies* [8].

Third, this paper compares the recent ten years' translation research areas with Williams and Chesterman's Twelve Areas in *Translation Studies* in 2002. It tries to figure out what are the

new translation research areas and how many different translation research areas have developed in the past ten years from 2014 to 2023, so that the development of translation research areas can be found and this paper can make its research significance happened.

4. Results and Discussion

According to the bibliometric analysis of the published articles with the search of “translation research areas in *Translation Studies* Journal (2014-2023)” in *Translation Studies* in the past ten years from 2014 to 2023, the search results can be recorded in the following table showing the years and the number of articles in different translation research areas.

Table 2. Number of Articles in Different Translation Research Areas

Year	Neural Machine Translation	Translation Ethics	Multimodal Translation	CAT Tools	Political Translation	Literary Translation	AI and Translation	Cross-Cultural Translation	Technical Translation	Machine Translation	Translation Memory	Legal Translation	Professional Translation	Translation Research Trends
2014	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2015	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2016	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2017	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
2018	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
2019	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
2020	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2021	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
2022	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
2023	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

With the help of bibliometric analysis, the number of articles focusing on different translation research areas from 2014 to 2023 is clearly seen in Table 2. For ten years' time, 14 translation research areas appeared in the SSCI and A&HCI journal *Translation Studies*. These translation research areas are neural machine translation, translation ethics, multimodal translation, CAT tools, political translation, literary translation, AI and translation, cross-cultural translation, technical translation, machine translation, translation memory, legal translation, professional translation, and translation research trends. Comparing with Williams and Chesterman's 12 translation research areas in *Translation Studies* published in 2002 (text analysis and translation, translation quality assessment, genre translation, multimedia translation, translation and technology, translation history, translation ethics, terminology and glossaries, interpreting, the translation process, translator training, the translation profession), it is clear that they are not the same with Williams and Chesterman's 12 translation research areas, and only the translation research area of translation ethics keeps the same, still developing, and the other 13 translation research areas are newly appeared in *Translation Studies* in the ten years from 2014 to 2023, which can indicate the current research trends of translation research areas. Among ten years' time, more than 10 translation research areas are discussed in the SSCI and A&HCI journal *Translation Studies*, it means that one translation research area is created every year on average. It can also tell that the scholars keep making efforts on the articles of translation research areas all the time. Due to the research practice, the development of translation research areas is working and becoming true, and the new research trends of translation research areas help provide enlightenment for all the scholars to do some further researches or make their researches innovative.

For the teachers and scholars, it is important and necessary to get to know the development of translation research areas. Those new theories, methods and technologies can provide the teachers and scholars with new research thoughts, and help them make academic innovation and progress. The translation research areas such as multimodal translation and neural

translation models involve computer science, cognitive science and cultural studies, which are conducive to expanding research perspectives and research methods. The development of translation research areas keeps the pace of the era, which can provide a large number of new cases and research objects, such as specialized translation projects in specific fields and examples of cross-cultural exchanges, proved to be great helpful providing teachers with rich teaching materials to enrich the content of the curriculum. By studying the development of translation research areas and knowing the professional translation, machine translation, AI and other translation tools, it can provide theoretical and technical support for the development of the translation industry as well as improve the efficiency and quality of translation practice. The current translation research areas such as translation in cross-cultural exchanges and professional translation, which can help teachers and scholars turn to attract more academic attention and stimulate them to have academic improvement.

Besides, more information can be found in Table 2. Except the 14 translation research areas are presented, 21 articles in total about translation research areas are calculated from 2014 to 2023. For ten years' time, 21 articles published are not many. But, making the publication happened in the SSCI and A&HCI journal *Translation Studies* can be seen as some kind of academic development and achievement. Though not many articles concerning to all the 14 translation research areas, the development of translation research areas exists. According to the development of translation research areas, it can be seen from Table 2 that neural machine translation and multimodal translation are respectively mentioned in 3 articles. AI and translation, translation ethics and translation research trends, these three translation research areas are discussed respectively in 2 articles. CAT tools, political translation, literary translation, cross-cultural translation, technical translation, machine translation, translation memory, legal translation, professional translation, the nine translation research areas are respectively concerned in 1 article. Through the above 14 translation research areas and their articles published in *Translation Studies* during ten years' time from 2014 to 2023, it is proved that translation research areas never disappear in the SSCI and A&HCI journal *Translation Studies*, and the scholars never stop to make their researches on translation research areas. While the development of translation research areas showed in the SSCI and A&HCI journal *Translation Studies* in the past ten years, all the scholars can still have opportunities to submit their articles about translation research areas and make their researches published not only in the SSCI and A&HCI journal *Translation Studies*, but also other SSCI and A&HCI journals of translatology, like *Across Languages and Cultures*, *Interpreting*, *Translation Studies*, *Translator*, *Journal of Specialized Translation*, *Interpreter and Translator Trainer*, *Perspectives*, *Target*, *Babel*, *Translation and Interpreting Studies*, *Linguistica Antverpiensia New Series-Themes in Translation Studies (LANS-TTS)*, *Meta*, *Translation Review*, *Translation and Literature*.

5. Conclusion

This paper makes a bibliometric analysis of the articles about translation research areas published in the SSCI and A&HCI journal *Translation Studies* in the past ten years from 2014 to 2023. After collecting, recording and calculating, 14 translation research areas and their published articles are presented. By comparing the 14 translation research areas with Williams and Chesterman's 12 translation research areas published in *Translation Studies* in 2002, it is found that only one translation research area, that is translation ethics keeps the same in these years, and the other 13 translation research areas are new, reflecting the changes and development of translation research areas in the past decade. In addition, considering the number of published articles in *Translation Studies*, although not many, it can still indicate that every year has the article about translation research area published in the high-level and leading SSCI and A&HCI journal of translatology *Translation Studies*, which shows that the study

of translation research areas is not the outdated research content. The articles of translation research areas have been published all the time, which shows that translation research areas have the development and research values. By knowing the development of translation research areas and being familiar with these translation research areas, it can provide reference and inspiration for scholars to conduct translation-related research, and effectively help scholars publish articles related to translation research areas in the SSCI and A&HCI journals of translatology. It can also bring new ideas to teachers, help them adopt new research results and cases to enrich classroom teaching content, and enlighten them to carry out academic innovation and scientific research writing. For the translation industry, to grasp the development of translation research areas is to conform to the development of the times and the translation industry, as well as seek to participate in, change and break through the needs of translation practice, so as to make more and better contributions to the development of translation in all respects.

In this paper, only one SSCI and A&HCI journal of translatology is selected to make the bibliometric analysis, which makes the study lack of comprehensive vision, may fail to present all translation research areas to indicate the real development. However, the limitations of this study can give hints for the future research. If all SSCI and A&HCI journals of translatology are considered to carry out the bibliometric analysis, the final data and results might be different, and the study work will be heavy. The significance and value of the research described above may not successfully be able to fully integrate theory with practice, but the research findings and research suggestions put forward in this paper are indeed beneficial to scholars, teachers and translation professionals.

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