A Systematic Literature Review on the Translator's Voice

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Abstract

The translator's voice, although ubiquitous in translation, is not clearly determined when it is applied to translation practices because translator's voice and translation practices are not conceptually connected. This systematic review focuses on the body of literature regarding the translator's voice. In this study, academic articles from 1996 to 2023 are surveyed by a criteria pre-set; in addition, a qualitative synthesis of the findings is conducted. Through description and analysis of the titles, abstracts, keywords, and full papers of the selected 50 academic articles based on a PRISMA flow (2020), this research systematically assesses the studies on translator's voice from the past 27 years. It systematically searched all the related studies in two databases: the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) and Scopus (which are both accessible). It reveals: (1) more conceptual studies, more of which are unrelated to translation practices, are found; and (2) topics related to narratology are the most studied research objectives of the entire body of the studies covering the translator's voice. Therefore, empirical studies and the translator's voice in translated texts which are close related to translation techniques can both be highlighted in future research efforts. Future studies relating the translator's voice to translation practices are needed so that translator's voice can clearly present a translator's creativity.

Keywords: research objectives, research types, systematic literature review, translation practices, translator's voice

1. Introduction

A translator of a literary work cannot disappear from their translation. One method to detect the translator in the translation is to identify the translator's voice; this method, which is the subject of this review, is "translator's discursive presence" (Herman, 1996, p. 26). The translator's voice embodies the translator's creativity (Millán-Varela, 2004). The translator's creativity refers to a creative strategy that "helps the translator to overcome the problem represented by a particular source text (ST) element for which no automatic target language solution is provided" (Palumbo, 2009, p. 29). Specifically, the more precisely the translator's voice is determined, the more clearly the translator's creativity can be understood.

Contrasting with Hermans, Greenall (2015) proposes a practical method to identify the translator's voice. She suggests that the translator's voice can be identified from shifts in translation. There are two types of shifts: the "non-manifest" voice, which is unnoticeable to the reader of translation, and "manifest" voice which can be noticeable at least to some readers of translation (Greenall, 2015, p. 47). Prior studies on translator's voice fail to meet the needs of translation practices if the studies are confined to identifying translator's voice by the two types of shifts. Translation practices refer to the "act by a translator where a text in one language represents or stands for a text in another language" (Palumbo, 2009, p. 122). During the act, a translator decides to produce their translation (Fang, 2011, p. 16). More studies are required. For instance, translator's voice can possibly be related to translation practice so that various types of translator's voice could be clearly identified.

It is hardly possible to relate the translator's voice to translation practices because the representing act from one language to another is too intricate. Fang (2011, p. 16) points out that translation techniques can be found after a translator presents their translation. In this study, the way the translator's voice is related to translation practices is how the translator's voice is related to translation techniques. Translation techniques are specific activities relating to "the translator's problem-solving and decision-making" (Jääskeläinen, 1993, p. 116). This indicates how translators manage translation practices, namely, translating from the source text to the target one. A study by Guo et al. (2020) has demonstrated that different translation techniques show different types of translator's voice. Therefore, translation techniques can show numerous classifications of translator's creativity through various types of translator's voice.

This review shows how translator's voice is related to translation practices by analyzing the research types and objectives of previous studies that cover translator's voice. Research types focus on "what logical system research subscribes to" (Saldanha & O'Brien, 2014, p. 29), which is too broad to follow. According to Williams and Chesterman (2002), there are two types of translation studies: empirical and conceptual. In conceptual research, new concepts are introduced to "allow a better understanding" (Williams & Chesterman, 2002, p. 58)

of a theory. Therefore, this review focuses on how the translator's voice relates to translation practices specifically, translation techniques. Research objectives embodied by the frequency of the keywords in all the previous studies can demonstrate whether the most discussed topics on translator's voice are related to translation practice.

Hence, it would be beneficial to conduct a systematic literature review (SLR) of the literature regarding the translator's voice. The research questions addressed in this review are as follows: (1) What are the research types in the previous studies regarding translator's voice? (2) What are the research objectives of these studies?

2. Translator's Voice

In order to gain a basic understanding of the translator's voice, this section focuses on five aspects that were discussed in previous studies. In the beginning of this section, we will deal with the genesis of the translator's voice. Subsequently, it is necessary to present a deeper perception of translator's voice namely, the methods of identifying the translator's voice. The implied translator, which is most likely the hottest-debated issue on translator's voice, is also discussed. The classification is introduced because it is the basis of volume of translator's voice. Most importantly, the volume of translator's voice which relates a translator's voice to translation techniques is also elaborated on.

2.1 The Genesis of Translator's Voice

Schiavi (1996) and Hermans (1996) contributed significantly to the genesis of the translator's voice. They both posited their investigations of the translator's voice from a narratological perspective. Hermans (1996) held that the translator's voice refers to the "translator's discursive presence." Similarly, Schiavi (1996) theoretically demonstrated that the translator's voice is related to the implied translator. She first put an implied translator in her model (Figure 1). She defines the "implied translator" as "a set of translational presuppositions embedded" in a translation (Schiavi, 1996, p. 15). Figure 1 indicates that she places the "implied translator" between the real translator and the translation.

R.A...|.I.A. | -Nr-Ne-I.R./real translator- | implied translator-Nr-Ne-I.R. of translation..|..R.R.

R.A. = real author   Ne = narrate

I. A. = implied translator   I.R. = implied reader

Nr   = narrator   R.R. = real reader

Figure 1. The model for implied translator proposed by Schiavi (1996, p. 14)

The translator's discursive presence proposed by Hermans is accepted by many scholars (Boyden, 2013; Chen & Wen, 2015; Guo et al., 2020; Jiang, 2012; Wang, 2023, among others). Hermans admits that the translator's voice can be considered as the "second voice" (1996, p. 27) in translation, which is supported by the studies of Bosseaux (2004) and Mclaughlin (2008) from the corpus's perspective. Some scholars differ from Hermans in regards to voice, however. For instance, Taivalkoski-Shilov (2015, p. 60) provides a definition of voice as the collection of textual cues that portray a subjective or collective identity within a text. Taivalkoski-Shilov actually deals with voices in translation because voices can come from narrators and characters in the ST, the translator(s), and even the editors or publishers (Alvstad et al., 2017, p. 5).

2.2 Method to Identifying Translator's Voice

The method for identifying the translator's voice revoles around the shifts in translation. Shifts are "changes" or "departures" (Hatim & Munday, 2010, p. 26, 146) between ST and target text (TT). More specifically, they refer to "non-variant that the translator has chosen for stylistic or other reasons," and "indicate specific choices made by the translator in a specific translation situation" (Hatim & Munday, 2010, p. 242). Both Pekkanen (2013) and Greenall (2015) stress that shifts bring about the translator's voice in translation. There are also differences between the shifts. Greenall's shifts are judged by readers of translation. More precisely, shifts are related to whether the readers know the translator's source language. Namely, Greenall considers readers of the TT; this can be difficult to identify shifts because different readers, or even readers of different ages, might have read the ST differently. By contrast, Pekkanen's shifts come from the option of a translator (through what translation techniques a translator adopts) in the translation.

2.3 Implied Translator

The implied translator is probably one of the most intensely debated topics that is discussed by scholars interested in translator's voice. For the purpose of having a clear understanding of the controversial construct of the "implied translator," one needs to revisit Schiavi (1996); she considered the "implied author" in relation to translated narrative, and argued that the translator's voice represents the translator's interpretation of the ST. Furthermore, she (1996, p. 14) clearly stated that

"[a] reader of translation will receive a sort of split message coming from two different addressers, both original although in two different senses: one originating from the author which is elaborated and mediated by the translator, and one (the language of the translation itself)

originating directly from the translator."

The implied translator proposed by Schiavi (1996) received criticisms from scholars (Alvstad, 2014; Boyden, 2014; O'Sullivan, 2003) with the exception of de Gato (2018), who held similar views. The criticisms most likely stem from the fact that Schavi introduced the implied translator into translation, which other scholars have clearly different views about. Unlike Schiavi, O'Sullivan (2003) offered her model (see Figure 2) in which the real author is not included in the narrated text. The exclusion of the real author not only enables the communication between the real author of the ST and the real reader of the translation (O'Sullivan, 2003, p. 202), but is also indicative of translator's voice (Zhang, 2017, p. 116). In this model, the word "real" means "flesh-and-blood" (Booth, 1983, p. 415, 420).
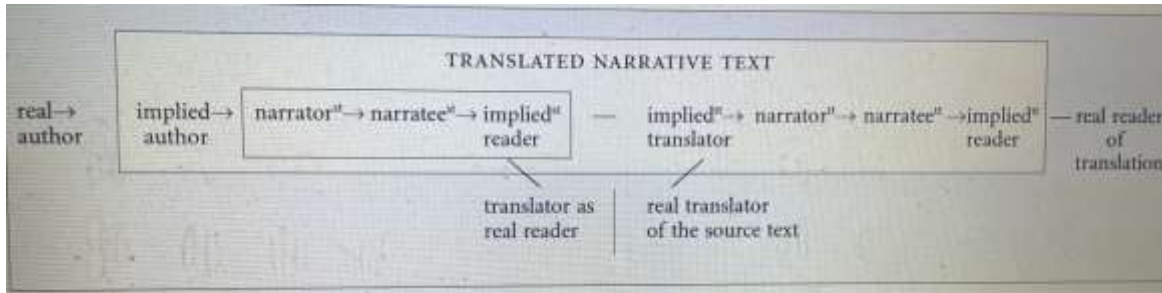
Figure 2. Communicative model of the translated narrative text (st: source text, tt: target text) (O'Sullivan, 2003, p. 201)

Munday (2008) improved Schiavi's (1996) conceptualization of the implied translator. He divided the latter's model into two parallel narratological lines (see Figure 3), which are connected by the identification of the ST reader via "the flesh-and-blood (real) translator" (Munday, 2008, p. 12). According to Boyden (2014, p. 259), the implied translator is "no longer regarded as a privileged reader, paradoxically situated both inside [as in the model by O'Sullivan] and outside [as in the model by Schiavi] the text."

For ST

author—implied author—narrator—narrattee—implied reader—ST reader

For TT

ST reader/

real translator—implied translator—TT narrator—TT narratee—ST reader

Figure 3. Narratological representation of the ST and the TT (Munday, 2008, p. 12)

Boyden (2014) challenged the implied translator proposed by Schiavi because the narrator and implied author are not distinguished in Schiavi's model. All translations send out a "split message" that does not automatically justify the inclusion of the implied translator as a separate enunciator (Boyden, 2014, p. 258-259). Therefore, Boyden points out that translational shifts that are used to identify the translator's voice is more closely related to how translation is done or whether it is done or not than to who performed the translation (2014, p. 268). Although scholars (Munday, 2008; O'Sullivan, 2003; Schiavi, 1996, among others) have introduced an implied translator into their three models (see Figures 1, 2, and 3 respectively) to explicate the translator's voice, Alvstad (2014, p. 274-275) argued against the introduction of "an implied translator into a narrative scheme."

Alvstad's solution is to propose "the translation pact," referring to "a rhetorical construction through which readers are invited to read translated texts as if they were original texts written solely by the original author" (p. 271). The pact "is prompted by paratexts, and it proposes to the reader to read the translated text in a specific way" (p. 272). This explains the reason that readers consider translations as originals composed solely by the author. Due to the pact, readers of translation recognize the translator's voice within the text. They likely perceive this voice as helpful rather than distorting, and therefore employ it in reconstructing the implied author (Alvstad, 2014, p. 283).

However, de Gato (2018, p. 335-336) challenged the translation pact proposed by Alvstad in terms of an implied translator. She holds the view that the translator's voice is attributed to the implied translator. It is a "complementary one which strives to be unisonous with the author's voice" (de Gato, 2018, p. 337), but it is a "narratological category that makes translation a different genre" (de Gato, 2018, p. 336). However, the pact by Alvstad does help readers to perceive the TT as the ST.

An implied translator is an entity that Schiavi (1996) imposed in a translated narrative diagram (see Figure 1). The imposition has to withstand various scholars' criticisms. Therefore, it remains a debate among scholars interested in translator's voice on whether translator's voice should be attributed to an implied translator or not. Currently, it is certain that a translator does leave their discursive presence in translation; Bosseaux (2004) and Mclaughlin (2008) have proven that there is a translator's voice found within translation.

2.4 Classification of Translator's Voice

Scholars like Millán-Varela (2004), for instance, contribute to the classification of translator's voice. She has identified three types: the "translator's visible presence" (referring to the translator's voice), the "translator's audible presence," and the "translator's invisible

presence." The translator's visible voice is apparent "in the information provided on one of the preliminary page," and it can be found in the footnotes. The translator's audible voice "becomes identifiable to the educated target reader because of what she considers to be "noises" in the code, namely the presence of grammatical mistakes." The translator's invisible voice can be traced to "foreignness" and "textual strangeness." Foreignness is "the treatment of otherness in translation, the overall presence of elements belonging to other cultures, and embodies the foreignizing tendency." Meanwhile, strangeness can be a feeling of "strange familiarity" (Millán-Varela, 2004, p. 42-46).

2.5 Volume of the Translator's Voice

Two prominent studies (Chen & Wen, 2015; Guo et al., 2020) examine the volume of the translator's voice. The volume of translator's voice refers to the degree of visibility of the translator's discursive presence in the TT. According to Hermans (1996), translation strategies reflect the discursive presence. Visibility is related to translation strategies (Shuttleworth & Cowie, 2014), and it is adopted to "describe the translator's role in preparing a target text" (Shuttleworth & Cowie, 2014, p. 44). Different translation strategies are realised by the translation techniques used. Mclaughlin (2008, p. 61) indeed points out that the voice of a translator "does have volume." However, the concept of volume remained unexplored until Chen and Wen's (2015) study.

Chen and Wen (2015) argue that the volume for translator's voice can be classified into three types: high, moderate, and low. Their elaboration of the three types is as follows. The high volume can be seen in the clear choice of the ST. The paratext information which includes footnotes, endnotes, and the preface, among others evidently shows the translation purpose, strategies, and translation techniques of the translator's own. Hence, the differences between the TT and the ST are obvious. Although moderate volume is more covert than high volume making it difficult to identify it can be located via analyzing and comparing between the ST and the TT. Meanwhile, low volume is embodied by "the absence of the translator's voice or the similarity with the ST features" (Chen & Wen, 2015, p. 95). The analysis can be applied to the paratext of the TT; furthermore, a comparison between the ST and the TT is adopted to the translation techniques used for the TT.

Based on Millán-Varela's (2004) classification of the translator's voice and the different volume of translator's voice proposed by Chen and Wen (2015), Guo et al. (2020) have clarified the relation between translation techniques and translator's voice. Moreover, the translator's voice is revealed through their choice of translation strategies (Hermans, 1996). The translator's visible voice is reflected by amplification, which renders a high volume of translator's voice. Meanwhile, the translator's audible voice is embodied by different translation techniques that can be omission, substitution, and conversion showing a moderate volume of the translator's voice. The translator's invisible voice is shown by literal translation and transliteration, which conveys a low volume of the translator's voice (Guo et al., 2020, p. 86-88).

3. Methodology

This study adopted the systematic literature review method, which is a comprehensive overview of the literature and provides the synthesis for the findings (Wang et al., 2020). Therefore, the methodology of this review puts more priority to data and study selection. Furthermore, both the validity and reliability of this review are also discussed in *3.3* and *3.4* respectively.

This systematic literature review first searched studies through the titles, keywords, abstracts, or contents in different databases including Scopus and the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI). Then, the authors screened the papers by following The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 (Page et al., 2021). PRISMA 2020 is based on PRISMA 2009. Its statement is a guideline for reporting systematic reviews. Primarily, the statement is supposed to help the systematic reviewer report transparently why the review was conducted, what the authors did and what they found (Page et al., 2021, p. 1). This review was conducted on research types and objectives of studies on translator's voice from 1996 to March, 2023.
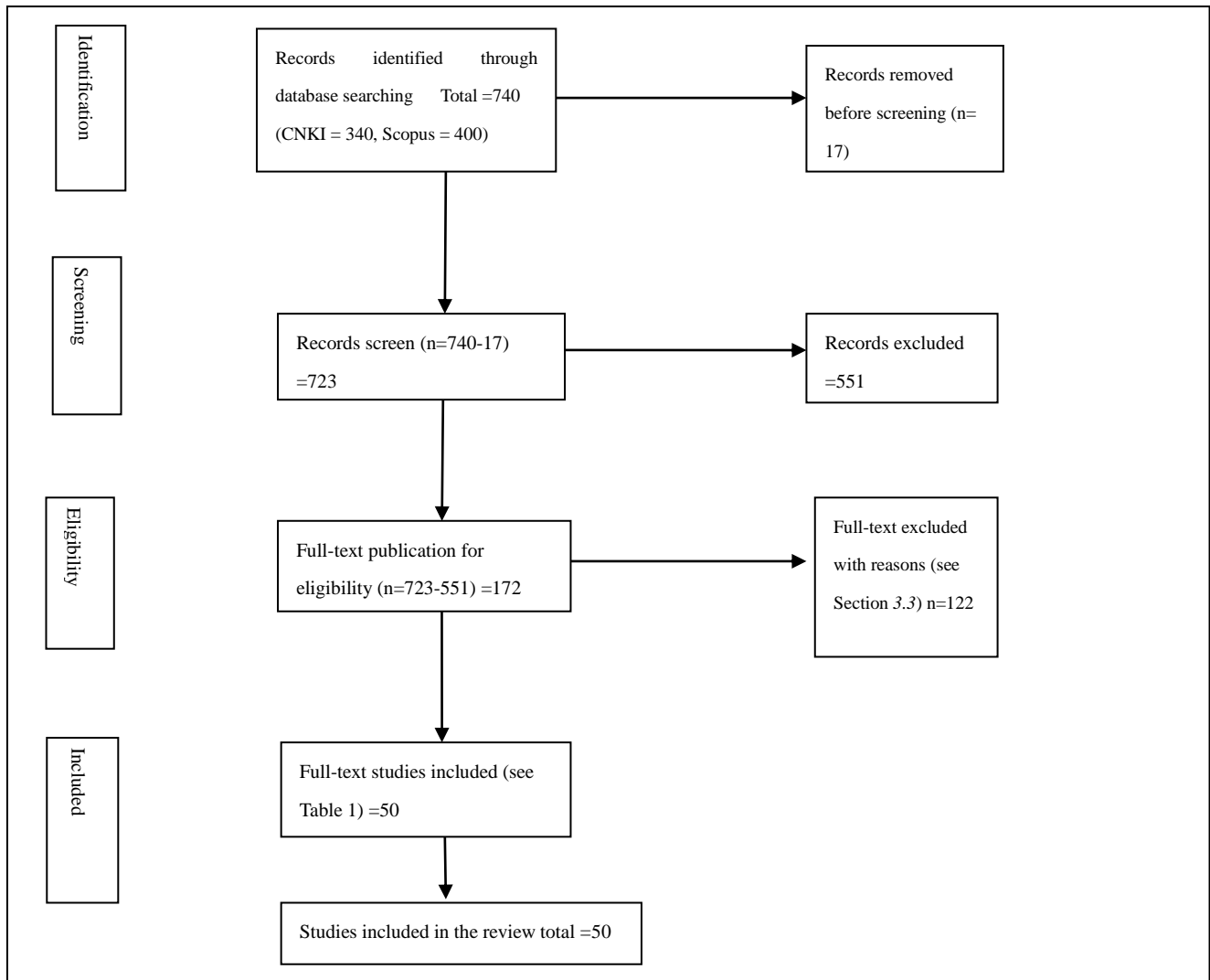
Figure 4. PRISMA flow diagram (Page et al., 2021)

3.1 Database Selection

An SLR was conducted using the following two electronic databases: Scopus and CNKI. Scopus was included because it is "the largest abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed literature" (Wang et al., 2020, p. 6). Most scholars, like Liu (2022) and Liu et al. (2022), use Scopus as a database in their SLRs. As a result, a thorough search of peer-reviewed literature on the chosen topic can be guaranteed. According to Li (2020), many scholars adopt CNKI as an SLR. CNKI is described as "the most comprehensive gateway of knowledge of China" (Wang et al., 2020, p. 13). Notably, Chinese is spoken by one-fifth of the world population and Chinese-speaking scholars (including experts in translation studies), are making an increasingly significant presence within global academia. CNKI is employed because all the studies regarding translator's voice created by Chinese scholars and are published in Chinese are also included in this study. It is also important to clearly state that this SLR focuses on research in English and Chinese. There are also other databases available, like Web of Science; however, Web of Science was not selected in this study due to its relatively small size when compared to Scopus. The latter basically includes all the literature on translator's voice indexed in Web of Science. When the search string (ALL ("translator's voice" OR "voice of the translator") AND ALL ("translation")), in Section *3.2* is applied to Web of Science, there are only 41 studies (retrieved on Mar 10, 2023) located in the database. This figure is far fewer than those were identified in Scopus (400 studies) or CNKI (340 studies).

3.2 Study Selection

In order to address the research questions stated in the introduction, a query of particular key terms are chosen in this review. It focused on previous studies on translator's voice in Scopus and CNKI from 1996 to 2023. The year 1996 was selected as the starting point because the translator's voice was initially defined by Hermans in 1996 under the influence of the study of Folkart (Herman, 1996, p. 45). Hence, the studies on translator's voice in the two databases are included in this research. The advanced search technique is adopted in the

database to retrieve the related literature on the translator's voice.

The word "all" in the search string referred to "all fields" because there were fewer studies located in Scopus or CNKI when TITLE-ABS-KEY (ABS refers to abstract, and KEY refers to keyword) was employed.

The search string in Scopus is as follows: (ALL ("translator's voice" OR "voice of the translator") AND ALL ("translation")).

The search string in CNKI is the following: (All ("译者的声音") AND All ("翻译")).

In the research string for CNKI, 译者的声音 *yi zhe de sheng yin* is the literal translation of the translator's voice (or voice of the translator) in Chinese. 翻译 *fan yi* can be literally translated as "translation."

A total of 740 (400 from CNKI and 340 from Scopus) studies were retrieved in the identification phase. The selected literature consisted of 723 articles after the removal of 17 duplicates. Duplication in this review refers to the same studies indexed in both Scopus and CNKI. Identification of duplications was conducted manually. All the titles of the 740 studies were stored in two Word documents, respectively. A total of 551 studies were excluded after their titles and abstracts were screened. Studies were excluded when the translator's voice was not in the study's title or abstract. The reason is that "all fields" is adopted in the search string. The next step was to determine the eligibility of the 172 articles by assessing the full articles. A total of 122 articles were excluded because translator's voice is not adopted as a methodology in the articles. Finally, 50 studies were included and reviewed in this research.

Although 50 is not a large amount, this review attempted to include all the studies on translator's voice. When the search string of TITLE-ABS-KEY was used in Scopus, there were 38 studies while there were only 22 in CNKI. Both were retrieved on March 10, 2023. To avoid missing any study related to the translator's voice, "all fields," instead of "TITLE-ABS-KEY," were used in the search string. To ensure a thorough inclusion of different scholars' views on translator's voice, the view on translator's voice from a different perspective in the book on translation studies by a scholar who is also interested in the translator's voice is also discussed. For instance, Figure 3 in section *2.3* is from Munday's (2008) book. For the purpose of including studies relevant to translator's voice in translation studies, the studies belonging to the research areas such as computer science and psychology are excluded; however, the translator's voice is still present in these studies.

3.3 Eligibility Criteria

All studies that have met the following criteria are included because this review focuses on the translator's voice. The criteria have been adopted by many scholars (Wang et al., 2020; Zhu et al., 2022, among others) in their SLRs on translation studies. Except for (2) where Chinese is added for CNKI as the database chosen in this review (1), (3), and (4) were used according to the translator's voice which was the focus of this study. The criteria to which identified studies were required are as follows: (1) the studies were journal articles that are academically peer-reviewed. Consequently, conference proceedings, dissertations, book reviews, and book chapters were excluded. The non-peer-reviewed and unpublished theses were not included either. This was motivated by two taken-for-granted facts. Firstly, articles from peer-reviewed academic journals are generally surmised to be of higher quality; secondly, the articles are generated more consistently than other sources such as conference proceedings and book chapters. (2) As explained previously, the studies were published in English or Chinese; therefore, those not mediated in either English or Chinese were excluded. (3) The full texts of the studies are available. (4) The studies specifically focus on the translator's voice in translation studies.

3.4 Inter-rater Reliability

Two coders, who are both academic researchers, independently examined the studies included in this study by titles, abstracts, and keywords when Scopus and CNKI were searched. They examined full texts to exclude studies that did not meet the eligibility criteria (see Section *3.3*). In this study, Cohen's Kappa was adopted to test the inter-rater reliability between the choices made by the two independent coders in selecting studies. The obtained inter-rater reliability value reached 0.76, which indicated an acceptable agreement between the two coders (Landis & Koch, 1977). Disagreements were reconsidered by the first two authors of this review until a consensus was reached. They were settled when the full text of the paper was read, and the two authors made a consensus.

4. Results

An overview of the previous studies on translator's voice is, at first, represented by the studies included in the current research. More importantly, the findings from the research types and objectives are presented to address the two research questions raised in the introduction.

The studies regarding the translator's voice appealed to many more scholars before 2014. In Table 1, the first column (from left to right) is the year in which the studies were published in Scopus and CNKI. The second and the third columns are the number of studies from the said databases, respectively. As shown in Table 1, more studies were published in recent years (in particular, six publications in 2015, 2020, and 2021 respectively). The studies on translator's voice in China, as illustrated in Table 1, are nearly 20 years later (18=2014-1996) than the earliest studies on the translator's voice by Hermans (1996) and Schiavi (1996). Most studies (39, 78%) were published since 2014, which witnessed a significant development of studies on translator's voice.

Table 1. Yearly distribution of the studies

Years	Scopus	CNKI	Scopus + CNKI
2023	1		1
2022		2	2
2021	5	3	8
2020	6	1	7
2019	3	2	5
2018	1	2	3
2017	2		2
2015	5	1	6
2014	4	1	5
2013	2		2
2012	1		1
2011	1		1
2009	1		1
2008	1		1
2004	2		2
2003	1		1
1996	2		2
Total	38	12	50

The years 2016 and 2017 are worth mentioning. They witnessed a fluctuation in publication since 2014; furthermore, the year 2016 is particularly striking, for no single study was published in that year. The reason for this is probably because special issues (2014 in *Language and Literature*, a journal on literature closely related to narratology and 2015 in *Target*, a top journal of translation studies) of the studies on the translator's voice were published. Therefore, new studies were hardly published until five new studies were all published in 2019.

4.1 Research Types in Studies on the Translator's Voice

According to Williams and Chesterman (2002), translation research can be classified into empirical and conceptual research. Empirical research "seeks new data, new information derived from the observation of data and from experimental work; it seeks evidence which supports or dis-confirms hypotheses, or generates new ones." Meanwhile, conceptual research "aims to define and clarify concepts, to interpret or reinterpret new ideas, to relate concepts into larger systems, to introduce new concepts or frameworks that allow a better understanding of the object of research" (Williams & Chesterman, 2002, p. 58).

Empirical research in translation studies can also be divided into four types: "the texts that are the product of translation, the translation process, the participants involved in that process, and the context in which translations are produced and received" (Saldanha & O'Brien, 2014, p. 19). The participants (also known as "agents") involved in the process of translations are translators, trainers, students, commissioners, and agents (Saldanha & O'Brien, 2014, p. 22). In this review, the participants refer to translators only for their focus on the translator's voice. The context can refer to "state censorship on translation" (Saldanha & O'Brien, 2014, p. 238).

This review conducted more conceptual studies compared to empirical studies (see Table 2). For instance, the identification (Pekkanen, 2013), the classification (Greenall, 2015; Millán-Varela, 2004), and the volume of the translator's voice (Chen & Wen, 2015; Guo et al., 2020) are clarified. The conceptual methods were also employed in the studies on an implied translator mentioned above in Section *2.3*, as well as the translator's assumption (Ngai, 2020). In Jiang's (2012) study, translator's voice is also explored from the perspective of speech act theory.

Table 2. The distribution of research types

Empirical research				Conceptual research
Product of translation	The translation process	The participants	The context	
19	1	1	1	
				28

As shown in Table 2, the empirical studies are of the product of translation, the translation process, the translator, and the context of translation. The product-oriented studies of the translator's voice have dominated the empirical studies related to (re)-translation (Boyden, 2013; Koskinen & Paloposki, 2015); paratexts (Hidalgo, 2020; Law & Ng, 2020; Wang, 2023); translation of children's literature, which is a special genre of literary works (Borodo, 2019); and the studies on translator's voice based on corpus (McLaughlin, 2008).

4.2 Research Objectives in Studies on Translator's Voice

The frequency of the keywords shows the research objectives of the studies included in this review. The most studied objectives are topics related to narratology, literary works, and paratexts of translation which draw the attention of many scholars. Topics related to narratology refer to keywords like narratological, narrative, narration, and implied translator.

The translator's voice and (English) translations were not included because they are the basis requirement of this review, and almost all the studies utilize them as keywords. The translator, ST (for example, characters' names in the ST), and TT are also excluded due to various studies focusing on different STs and TTs from which other translators are found. Additionally, the content words (nouns or

nominal phrases in this review) in the titles are adopted as keywords when the article does not provide any. The keywords of one-time frequency hardly show any tendency, and they were also excluded. Consequently, the frequent keywords are identified as shown in Table 3, and they are listed in descending order of frequency.

Table 3. Frequency of keywords from the studies

Keywords	Frequency (times)
Narratology/narrative/narratological, narration (including implied translator, six times)	17
Literary (literature) translation	16
Paratext (s)	8
Re-translation/re-translator	7
Readers	4
Style	4
Ideology	2
Publisher	2
Translation technique/strategy (which is realized by translation techniques)	2

5. Discussion

The findings presented above can indicate the potential future direction of the studies on the translator's voice. In this review, a greater emphasis is placed on conceptual rather than empirical studies. Therefore, further empirical studies can be performed in the future. More importantly, future conceptual studies can relate the translator's voice to translation practices. The keywords identified in this review also confirm that in future research, more attention should be paid to translation techniques that are closely related to translation practices.

5.1 More Conceptual Studies, Less Connected with Translation Techniques

More conceptual studies are found from the perspective of research types; however, studies relating the translator's voice to translation practices are still needed. More conceptual studies show that translator's voice is robustly growing, for many scholars discuss more key conceptions related to translator's voice. The discussion ranges from the topic that the translator's voice does exist (Hermans, 1996), to the implied translator (Alvstad, 2014; Boyden, 2014; de Gato, 2018; O'Sullivan, 2003; Schiavi, 1996). The speech act theory proposed by Jiang (2012, p. 379) can show a better understanding of the implication of the interrelations between the translator's voice and the effect of the language used for the target reader. However, the conceptual studies found above fail to show the relation between the translator's voice and translation techniques.

Translation techniques are closely related to translation strategies. Lörscher (1991, p. 8) contended that translation strategy is a "potentially conscious procedure for solving a problem faced in translating a text or any segment of it." Jääskeläinen (1993) divided translation strategy into two types: global and local. Global strategies are "general principles and modes of action," and local strategies refer to "specific activities" concerning the "translator's problem-solving and decision-making" (Jääskeläinen, 1993, p. 116). Furthermore, Sun (2013, p. 5410) states local strategies are "basically translation techniques."

Nagai (2020) did point out that the translator's voice tends to link to translation by the translator's assumptions, which are related to translation strategies. The translator's voice is the production of the translator's assumption, resulting in various translation strategies from different translators (Ngai, 2020, p. 159). Therefore, further studies are needed to explore how translation techniques are related to translation assumption.

Empirical studies are fewer in number than conceptual studies because the empirical studies are most likely not fully explored in all four aspects: the product, the translator, the process, and the context of translation. Product-oriented studies, dominating the four aspects, are natural because the translator's voice is found in translated text namely, the product. However, the studies related to translator's voice in terms of the translator (the participant), the process, and the context of translation are far fewer than product-oriented studies. Moreover, the studies from the three aspects do play an important role (Saldanha & O'Brien, 2014) in studying the translator's voice.

There is more room for scholars to conduct empirical studies in the future. Although there are 22 empirical studies, the studies on a translator (Kolb, 2017), the process (Kolb, 2011), and the context (Boyden, 2013) are limited. The studies related to the translator and the process will provide an in-depth understanding of the translator's voice because it investigates directly from translators rather than the translation by said translators. The studies related to the context can help understand more factors, such as censorship as social factors imposed on the translators which can also influence the translator's translation.

5.2 Most Keywords not Related to Translation Techniques

Regarding the research objectives, the keywords are employed. The frequently used ones include narratology, literature/literary works, style, reader, re-translation/re-translator, publisher, ideology, paratext, and translation/strategies/techniques. As presented in Section *2.1*, the translator's voice originates from narratology; therefore, the most studied objectives are related to it.

Literary works and literature have been another focus of the studies on the translator's voice, resulting from literariness (Xu, 2019). Literariness is chiefly embodied by foregrounding, and it "is constituted when stylistic or narrative variations strikingly defamiliarise conventionally understood referents and prompt re-interpretive transformations of a conventional concept or feeling" (see Miall &

Kuiken, 1999, as cited in Xu, 2019, p. 266). The stylistic or narrative variations from literariness in the source text conveyed to the target one surely causes many more difficulties for translators due to the defamiliarising features. Therefore, a complex picture of the translator's voice is presented, which is likely used for gaining attention from scholars of translation studies.

Style indicates that the translator's voice is closely related to the translator's style (Baker, 2000). Translator's style is defined as "a particular use of language serving given rhetorical or communicative functions, and therefore 'motivated' by these functions as regards such aspects as syntactic formulation, lexical choices, and textual properties" (Palumbo, 2009, p. 110). It has become "part of the target text" (Boase-Beier, 2006, p. 1). Therefore, translator's voice is closely linked with it because the translator's voice is always present in the translation.

Readers and re-translation/re-translator demonstrate that scholars begin to study translator's voice that is not confined to the translated texts (Jiang, 2012; Schiavi, 1996, among others) for instance, the reader's perception (Wang & Humblé, 2020). The views are helpful in understanding the reception and production of re-translation. In re-translation, the first translator's voice "comes to us when we read a retranslated novel" (Koskinen & Paloposki, 2015, p. 26); this stresses that the first translator always presents in a retranslation.

Publisher is a keyword because the studies are on voices in translation where more than the translator's voice is included (Taivalkoski-Shilov, 2015). Ideology is "the conceptual grid that consists of opinions and attitudes deemed acceptable in a certain time, and through which readers and translators approach texts" (Lefevere, 1998, p. 48). According to Palumbo (2009, p. 58), ideology influences the local decisions by the translator. The local decision refers to translation techniques. The translator's voice is related to ideology because they both influence the translation techniques that a translator adopts.

Paratexts were and remain a focus for scholars (Hermans, 1996; O'Sullivan, 2003; Law & Ng, 2020; Wang, 2023). The reason for this could be that "translators' views on their translations" are found within "the paratext of the translations" (Chen & Wen, 2015, p. 95). The translator claimed what translation techniques would be used. However, the question is whether they kept consistent with their claims in their translations. When dealing with the translation of literary works, in particular, a translator deals with all types of words from different cultures. More studies are needed to testify whether a translator does the translation as they state in the paratext.

Scholars also explore translator's voice in translated texts. Guo et al.'s (2020) study, using translation techniques as keywords, devoted to the volume of translator's voice which is realised by translation techniques by a translator. The study on the volume of the translator's voice contributes insights on the relation between translator's voice and translation strategy/techniques. This understanding is beneficial to studying translator's creativity, which is closely related to the translator's voice (Alvstad et al., 2017; Baker, 2000; Millán-Varela, 2004; Munday, 2009). Translator's creativity is closely related to translation strategies (Palumbo, 2009) because a translator makes decisions. Translation strategies are reflected by translation techniques (Sun, 2013). However, more studies on translation techniques are needed to clearly show the creativity of the translator.

6. Conclusion

The previous studies regarding the translator's voice from 1996 to 2023 were reviewed in order to examine the research types and objectives of the studies. The research types indicate that there are more conceptual studies such as existence, implied translator, translator's assumption, and even speech act theory. However, most of the conceptual studies are not related to translation practices. Empirical studies are fewer in number than conceptual ones. The dominant empirical studies explore the translation product. As a result, due attention is not paid to empirical studies, the translator, the process, and the context. The research objectives show the topics that are related to narratology due to the research objectives receiving attention from several scholars. Translator's voice originates from narratology; however, the former is not only related to paratexts, style, and readers, but also to translation techniques that a translator adopts for their actual translation. Therefore, the potential trends of studies covering translator's voice can be explored from studies that are conceptually related to translation practice, to empirical studies, and to translated texts where translation techniques are found.

The translator's voice will be beneficial to translators or scholars of translation studies to understand, for example, the translator's creativity if it is conceptually more related to translation practices and techniques, as is seen in this study. With the empirical studies being conducted from the translator, the process can also be productive in future research delving into translator's voice. More databases can be considered in future reviews to minimise the restrictions of the analysis and interpretations in this review.

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