

New Frontiers in Translation Studies

Riccardo Moratto
Martin Woesler *Editors*

Diverse Voices in Chinese Translation and Interpreting

Theory and Practice

 Springer

New Frontiers in Translation Studies

Series Editor

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Preface I

A Plurality of Voices

This volume presents a thoughtful and thorough account of diverse studies on Chinese translation and interpreting (TI). It introduces readers to a plurality of scholarly voices focusing on different aspects of Chinese TI from an interdisciplinary and international perspective.

The volume brings together eighteen essays by scholars at different stages of their careers with different relationships to translation and interpreting studies. In five sections and 18 chapters, readers will approach studies focusing on Chinese TI from different standpoints, namely sociohistorical, literary, interpreting, policy-related, and contemporary translation practice.

Given its focus, the book will benefit researchers and students who are interested in a global scholarly approach to Chinese TI. The book offers a unique window on topical issues in Chinese TI theory and practice.

It is hoped that this book will encourage a multilateral, dynamic, and international approach in a scholarly discussion where, more often than not, approaches tend to be dichotomized. This book aims at bringing together international leading scholars with the same passion, that is, delving into the theoretical and practical issues of Chinese TI.

Prior to presenting the reader with a general summary of the chapters, I would like to say a few words about the title of this volume. In August (2020), I engaged in numerous and fruitful conversations with Prof. Defeng Li from the University of Macau who is also the series editor of *New Frontiers in Translation Studies* at Springer. I would like to thank him for his keen and sharp-eyed insights.

Most academic works on translation and/or interpreting are somehow inevitably followed by the word “studies.” Translation and Interpreting Studies (TIS) is now considered as an independent discipline characterized by an evident interdisciplinarity in its research methodologies. Over the past decade, interdisciplinarity has enjoyed a boom in Western academic research, especially in TIS; researchers have availed themselves of concepts and theories developed in other disciplines, such as psychology, the cognitive sciences, journalism, and literary studies, to examine their

object of study. Numerous Western monographs demonstrate that translation and interpreting process research borrows heavily from other disciplines.

Therefore, it seems opportune and timely to analyze the status quo concerning the most relevant questions on TIS in the Greater Chinese Area by using a wise mix of Western and Chinese approaches. This volume sets out to explore interdisciplinarity issues in Chinese TIS research. An international, dynamic, and interdisciplinary exploration of matters related to Chinese TIS will provide valuable insights for anyone who wishes to have a better understanding of the new frontiers in Chinese translation and interpreting research.

So, why did we not include the word studies in the title? The reason is simple, yet maybe not of immediate understanding for Western readers. The expression Chinese Translation Studies and Chinese Interpreting Studies might have a twofold interpretation: the first is research studies focusing on translating and interpreting Chinese, while the second is more socioculturally loaded, meaning translation and interpreting studies with specific Chinese characteristics. In other words, Chinese TIS could be intended as the way a specific disciplinary field developed in China over the last few decades. We wanted to avoid this possible dual interpretation or other hermeneutic misunderstandings; therefore, thanks to Professor Li's advice, we decided to eliminate the word studies from the title, thus focusing rather on the plurality and diversity of voices involved in such a field.

As previously mentioned, this book is divided into five sections, namely socio-historical Studies, Literary Studies, Interpreting Studies, Policy-Related Studies, and Contemporary Translation Practice. In Section I, several areas of research are covered, ranging from the Manchu translation of the "Five Classics" in the context of Confucianism to the vicissitudes of supply chain translation in the Chinese version of Kumāralāta's *Garland of Examples* attributed to Kumārajīva. More specifically, in Chapter "Translating Concepts in Chinese: A Case Study Based on *The Wealth of Nations*", He argues that the modern history of China is entwined with the publicity, adaptation, and acceptance of western sociological and philosophical ideas, the initial stage of which was pervasively mediated by translation. Owing to the prominent role that concepts play in constructing ideological frameworks, the translation of concepts weighs heavily in this knowledge communication process. Set in this context, Chapter "Translating Concepts in Chinese: A Case Study Based on *The Wealth of Nations*" examines the translation history of five concepts selected from *The Wealth of Nations*, based on six Chinese versions published during 1901 to 2001. By tracing and comparing different translations in a chronological order inspired by *Begriffsgeschichte* (Conceptual History), the aim is to provide a comparative insight into the translation of chosen concepts as well as the changing meanings that they convey in a descriptive manner. This is perceived as a useful tool to contextualize translation products in their contemporary contexts and observe translation shifts over time.

In Chapter "The Manchu Translation of the *Five Classics* in the Context of Confucianism" Song argues that many Confucian classics represented by the "Five Classics" and "Four Books" have been translated or compiled, and their translations have been used not only for imperial examinations, but also for textbooks

in the Eight Banners Official Schools. For the ruling class, translation of the “Five Classics” was particularly meaningful in poetics, politics, and culture. Translation of the “Five Classics” was an important way for the Eight Banners to learn the mainstream academic system and traditional moral standards of the Han nationality; second, reading of the translations has shortened the cultural and psychological gap between the Manchu and Han ethnics, eased their tensions, enhanced their exchanges, and consolidated the foundation of governance. Therefore, it seems necessary to reflect upon such issues from a sociohistorical point of view.

In Chapter “[The Vicissitudes of Supply Chain Translation: The Chinese Version of Kumāralāta’s *Garland of Examples* Attributed to Kumārajīva](#)” Loukota proposes an analysis of the translational technique of Kumāralāta’s *Garland of Examples* to highlight how, whereas the ornate literary idiom of the original was lost in translation, the translational simplifications can act as explanatory glosses of sorts to support the interpretation of the fragmentary Sanskrit text. Moreover, the article considers the problem of the translator of the work, suggesting a new attribution and providing an insight into the difficulties inherent to assessing Chinese Buddhist translation.

Section II presents three Chinese Literary Studies. In Chapter “[Retranslation and Culturemes: Searching for a “Dialogic Translation” of a Modern Chinese Classic](#)” Pesaro analyzes the role of “culturemes,” as both a hindrance and an asset in translating modern Chinese literature, through the case study of her recent retranslation of Lu Xun’s fiction and a brief comparison with some previous renditions into both Italian and other European languages. Pesaro claims that the translator can accommodate the contradiction between meeting the readership as well as the publisher’s expectations and producing a piece of “dialogic translation.” The translated text should enhance cultural differences while respecting the linguistic norms of the receiving culture and being readable for the average contemporary reader.

Chapter “[Publishing Chinese Literary Works During 1965–2018 Romania: An in-Depth Study in the Sociology of Literature](#)” presents an analysis of published Chinese literary works during 1965–2018 Romania. In order to obtain a clear picture, as accurate as possible of the literary relations between Romania and China during two completely opposite political regimes, Giță carried out an extended study; mapping not only the number of works, but also the topics addressed by writers along the two periods of the political life of Romania. The author focused on the specific sociological questions on the interest and functions of translation, the agents and institutions included, on the space in which it is located, but also on the political and economic constraints that surround them.

In the last part of Section II, namely Chapter “[A Corpus-Based Cognitive Study of the “Rustic Literariness” of Translated Chinese Fiction](#)”, with a corpus-based cognitive study of Anglo-American sinologists’ English translation of Chinese fiction during the last four decades, Tan argues that animal and plant concepts are not simply indexes of the rustic environment, but are essential in the construction of the literariness of translated Chinese fiction. Therefore, any criticism that neglects or denies the “rustic literariness” of Chinese Fiction and its translation is partial. According to Tan, the study has implications for introducing new theoretical models and empirical methods into literary translation studies.

In Section III, we present three Interpreting Studies. In Chapter “[Pause in Sight Translation: A Longitudinal Study Focusing on Training Effect](#)”, Fang and Zhang aim to gain insights into the training impact on trainee interpreters, in particular, on their pauses during sight translation. The essay reports the findings of a longitudinal study over a period of two semesters, comparing the salient pauses (2 seconds or longer) during sight translation by a group of interpreting students with that of a control group. Participants were asked to sight translate texts containing nominal groups of varying complexity, which have been identified as a challenge in translation from English into Chinese, while their voice data were recorded and later assessed by independent markers.

In Chapter “[Modern Interpreting with Digital and Technical Aids: Challenges for Interpreting in the Twenty-First Century](#)” Woesler claims that translation and interpreting theory needs to adapt to the age of artificial intelligence, the focus, which has moved with the functional approaches to the translator, now moves to the target text audience. According to the author, the new way of interpreting is a human, but digital-technically determined hybrid form of human–machine interactive interpreting, with due respect for the human participation expressed in the form of professional remuneration.

Chapter “[A Multi-Hatted Expert: Exploring Possible Roles of the Interpreter in Business Negotiations with Specifics of Sino-German Negotiations](#)”, the last part of Section III, attempts to explore possible roles of the interpreter in business negotiations from the perspective of negotiation theories, setting out first the two fundamentally distinct approaches to negotiation—positional bargaining and the principled approach—and then defining areas where clients would need and appreciate contribution from interpreters beyond “just” interpreting and what actions interpreters can take to contribute. Positional bargaining, often known as haggling, is often perceived as the predominant form of negotiation in business. However, it carries its own perils both for clients and interpreters. The principled approach seeks to transform the negotiation game from win/lose to win/win. Upheld by four interlocking elements here described in detail, this approach makes negotiation a joint endeavor for both parties to identify ways to realize one’s “enlightened self-interest.” As this approach opens up much space for elaboration on emotions, perceptions, interests and options, with clients’ approval, interpreters can also serve as an active participant in a principled negotiation: asking targeted question as well as providing elaborated advice as a consultant in the pre-negotiation phase; applying facilitation skills in the “action” phase; and in the review phase, assisting the client with questions and comments once again as a consultant. Taking China and Germany as a case for how culture-specific negotiation advice often contradicts each other, Zhao cautions against distributing off-the-shelf advice without deep reflection. Facing the prevailing doubts about interpreters, Zhao argues that interpreters should take the initiative to equip themselves with the required awareness and expertise and prove themselves to be trustworthy.

Section IV presents three Policy-Related Studies. In Chapter “[Gestation of State Translation Program Embedded in Liang Qichao’s “On Translation of Books” \(*Lùn Yì Shū* 論譯書\)](#)” translation is regarded as an act of State. In the Chinese context, this kind of translation activity not only provides governors and officials with a primary

agent of state governance, but also offers Chinese intellectuals imported paradigms of thinking and knowledge of modern science and technologies. Focusing on translation thoughts embedded in the article “On Translation of Books,” which was written by the leading Chinese reformer Liang Qichao in 1897, Gao investigates Liang’s critical comments on the previous translation projects carried out by the national translating institutions and the new translation norms he set forth to guide the future translation activities to save the nation from extinction.

Chapter “[Translating China’s Power: The Collaborative Work Practice of Translating *The Governance of China*](#)” approaches institutional translation as a multilayered and multistage process and gives an account of the “collective dimension” of political translation in China. Translating political speeches is not a solitary undertaking, but a collaborative work practice that can be deeply affected by interactional dynamics. Zappone seeks to reveal these dynamics in different stages of the translation process by taking the Italian version of *The governance of China I* as a case study. This chapter is deemed to contribute to the development of a common conceptual and empirical framework in the domain of political translation, that takes into due account the role of the specific factors that determine the institutional mode of translation, factors which to date have remained largely understudied by scholars in the field of translation studies.

In Chapter “[Translation and The Public Realm](#)”, Prof. Kubin introduces several translation projects within the framework of the initiative “Go Global,” that is, the not-for-sale German version of the literature review magazine Pathlight, a retranslation project of eight volumes of Chinese literature from English into German by Austrian authors without knowledge of Chinese and without the permission to check the Chinese original. Kubin argues against the Chinese criticism of foreign translations.

Section V is the most heterogenous one where disparate studies are arbitrarily grouped together under the umbrella of Contemporary Translation Practice. Chapter “[Revising the Chinese Translation of Verdi’s Opera “La Traviata” Linguistic and Methodological Issues](#)” deals with the methodological and linguistic aspects of the translation into Chinese of the original 1853 libretto of Verdi’s *La Traviata* by Francesco Maria Piave. Chapter “[The PRC’s Go-Global Cultural Policy and Theater Surtitling: The Case of the Italian Tour of Meng Jinghui’s *Rhinoceros in Love*](#)” focuses on the question of theater surtitling for Chinese theater performances touring abroad and for Chinese/international theater performances staged at International Festivals in the PRC. In Chapter “[An Investigation of Norms in Legal Translation: A Corpus-Based Study of Conditional Connectives in Company Law](#)” Liu and Zhu conduct an investigation of norms in legal translation: based on a comparable corpus comprised of texts collected from different versions of company law from the United Kingdom, Chinese mainland, and Hong Kong at different periods, they examine the similarities and differences between these versions using the conditional connectives commonly found in legal texts as indicators. Chapter “[Translation Quality in the Current Loosely Standardized Chinese Translation Market](#)” presents the *status quo* of translation quality assessment in the Chinese translation market. Chapter “[Post-editing Neural Machine Translation Versus Human Translation for Chinese Essays: A Pilot Study](#)” is a study on post-editing neural

machine translation versus human translation for Chinese essays. Chapter “[Blending Language Learning with Translation Teaching: A New Perspective on the Teachability of Chinese Translation](#)” argues that translation as an activity represents resistance against normalization and simplification. Thorough language proficiency training prior to translation training being costly, if not out of the question, Cheung argues that incorporating the defining characteristics of the Chinese language in an E–C translation textbook or course syllabus may enhance, if not maximize, the effectiveness of the teaching of E–C translation.

I would like to underline that each classification and taxonomy is always the result of personal, subjective, and arbitrary choices. The book could have been classified in many different ways. Therefore, the present volume by no means aims at being an exhaustive presentation of such a broad, dynamic, and interdisciplinary research field. At the same time, it is not in contrast or in opposition with other commendable and praiseworthy volumes on the same topic. Here, we would like to mention *Chinese Translation Studies in the 21st Century: Current Trends and Emerging Perspectives*, edited by Robert Vald on, which presents a selection of some of the best articles published in the journal *Perspectives* in a five-year period (2012–2017), highlighting the vitality of Translation Studies as a profession and as a field of enquiry in China.

Our aim was to provide a platform for scholars both in China and outside of China to present their research on Chinese Translation and Interpreting. We grouped the chapters for the reader’s convenience into five sections, but many of the chapters speak to more than a single aspect of theory and practice.

We would like to extend our most heartfelt gratitude to Professor Defeng Li and to all the editors at Springer, in particular Ms. Carolyn Zhang and Ms. Rebecca Zhu. Thank you for your support and invaluable guidance.

Last, but not least, we are truly indebted to all the contributors to this volume, who provided the erudition and wisdom of each chapter. Thank you for enduring with patience my editorial queries and suggestions. Working with you has been a pleasure and, notwithstanding the name(s) on the spine of the book, this volume is really yours.

Taipei, Taiwan
September 2020

Riccardo Moratto
莫冉 (韋佳德)

Preface II

Appropriateness as the Least Common Denominator of Translation and Interpreting

Interpreting theories and interpreting studies are as old as human languages. Interpreting practice is exercised as soon as two individuals meet, with verbal and nonverbal languages both being an individual and a shared thing. Every person has his or her personal language and therefore is used to processing input by interpreting. When the person modifies its output according to the recipient, this is also interpreting from the personal language into one which he or she believes is better to be understood by the recipient. Similarly, a grandmother and her grandchild communicate in the (supposed) language of the grandchild, the grandmother constantly interpreting complex language into a simpler one. This concept of interpreting, also called polyphony, is still valid when it comes to different (“national”) languages. Depending on personal language abilities, the Anglophone grandmother would also choose simple French to explain things to her francophone grandchild. And in the case of any lack of respective language abilities, she would simplify things in nonverbal communication.

The earliest evidence of interpreters dates back to 4th millennium BCE Egypt: They were held in high esteem, they were noblemen or priests. Of course translation as opposed to interpreting needs media (text, images, etc.). In general, translation started with the introduction of the written script and the first texts around 3000 BCE in Mesopotamia, with Ancient Egyptian and the Yi language in the area of present-day China. The earliest Chinese texts date around 1500 BCE. Along the trade route which later was called the Silk Road to Europe. Along this Trade Route, archetype stories were transported and transformed into the languages along the Silk Road, so that we find the archetype of the great flood both in the Gilgamesh Epos around 3000–2500 BCE in Mesopotamia, around 1850 BCE in Egypt, around 950 BCE in the Shijing, around 350 BCE in the Shanhaijing, in ancient Indian tales, and in 440 BCE in the Old Testament (of the bible).

Translators had an impact on the historical development of languages. The Roman dramatist Livius Andronicus (c. 285–204 BC) wrote a Latin version of the *Odyssey*

(250 BCE) and a number of plays commissioned for the Roman Games of 240 BCE. His translations of Greek dramas into Latin founded the Roman drama tradition and shaped the Latin language. Already in the second century BC translations from Greek to Latin were so popular that, for the first time in history, two translators (Plautus and Terence) were able to make a living from it.

The German language, for its part, was shaped by a translator, Martin Luther, who translated the Bible, commonly read in Latin at the time, into German.

The prescription to translate “word for word” was raised both in China and in Europe at a very early time: In the fifth century Dao An, Director of the Imperial Translation School, advocated strict literal translation of the Buddhist scriptures into Chinese. His prescription came from the fear to miss something from the original. It is important to mention that he did not know Sanskrit at all.

The Indian Buddhist monk Kumarajiva (350–410) carried out a great reform of the principles and methods for the translation of Sanskrit sutras. He advocated a free translation approach with the aim to transfer the true essence of the Sanskrit Sutras. He was the first person in the history of translation in China to suggest that translators should sign their names to the translated work.

Dao An’s prescription was partly based upon the understanding that the original texts were somehow “sacred.” A similar dogma of literal translations of religious texts was raised in Europe and even determined an ideological battle on free/literal bible translation for centuries. The translator Dolet in 1546 was burned for adding the phrase “Rien du tout. (Nothing.)” to a rhetorical passage about what existed after death.

Cicero in his book *De optimo genere oratum* (On The Best Kind of Orators) opposed word-for-word translation. For the orator, the target text had to be as forceful and convincing as the original text. Horace called translators, who translated word for word, “slavish.” St. Jerome in his book *De optimo genere interpretandi* (The Best Kind of Interpreting) in 395 CE advocated: “Non verbum de verbo sed sensum de senso.” (Not word for word but sense for sense.) However, Apuleius altered Greek dramas beyond recognition. Quintilian understood that translations shape also the target language, which he called “enrichment.” He further developed translation studies by establishing terms like metaphrasis (word-for-word translation) and paraphrasis (sentence-by-sentence translation), later further developed by Dryden (1680). Tytler (1797) advocated instead, that the translation should give a complete transcript of the ideas of the original work, with the same style, manner, and ease.

In Republican times, Lu Xun and Qu Qiubai were among the prominent advocates of a literal translation. Chinese translation studies has embraced the English term “translatology,” while internationally, the research is named “translation and interpreting studies,” which is also the term for the volume at hand.

But the dichotomy of free/literal did not shape the whole discourse in translation studies. Other dichotomies were foreignizing/localizing and imitation/re-creation (Dong Qiusi 1946).

A prominent advocate of foreignizing was Schleiermacher in the nineteenth century, who advocated that the source text should shine through the target text, since thoughts would shape the language. This was further elaborated by Walter

Benjamin and Ortega y Gasset. The Sapir/Whorf hypothesis is the assumption that different languages lead to a different understanding of the world.

Chinese translation studies is not at all referring to a Chinese tradition of translation studies, but to translation studies dealing (also) with Chinese as a language. However, most of the research conducted in this area holds also true for other languages and therefore for interpreting and translation studies in general. It might be questioned if a Chinese tradition of translation theories exists. Students of translation studies often choose the topic “Comparison of Chinese and Western Theories of Translation.” However, they get frustrated because they cannot find elaborated theories coming from China and they end up calling normative prescriptive concepts like “xin, da, ya” (faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance) by Yan Fu “translation theory.” Yan Fu’s three ideals are better called a prescriptive recommendation for practical translation strategies. Of course the ideals are questionable, for why should a postmodern poem including the stuttering line “I, I c . . . , I can’t breath!” be translated into an elegant line in a different language? Similarly, the “transfiguration theory” by Qian Zhongshu with his concept of the “sublime” may count as an important statement, that translation and interpreting cannot be analyzed and understood to the last resort and keep their air of mystery. However, recent neurological research and artificial intelligence research have been tackling this last resort already.

Still, Chinese is an important language and it has some characteristics, which make research especially on Chinese in translation and interpreting studies valuable. One characteristic is that the meaning of a sentence may change totally until the very end of the sentence. Imagine just a “.....的说法我反对。” (... is a statement I oppose.) at the end.. Therefore, the decalage for conference interpreters interpreting from Chinese into other languages is quite long.

Seyed Hossein Heydarian has analyzed the statistical occurrences of certain translation strategies with different pairs of languages. According to his findings, every language has a specific fingerprint of translation strategies, each fingerprint referring to specific language pairs.

The first lay interpreters naturally reflected on their interpreting work and this was the start of theories and studies. As soon as the written language was invented, critical reflection also started and with it translation theories and translation studies.

The first thoughts about transferring the meaning of one language into a similar one of another language were prescriptive with precepts and principles, sometimes exaggerated into dogma with people not adhering to them being tortured or executed, especially in the religious context, when the original was declared “holy” and certain groups claimed the monopoly authority of interpreting. During translation history, the perspective changed from “prescriptive” to “descriptive,” reflecting a more neutral approach of analysis. However, translation theory needs to be able to go beyond the description of translation to show parallels and differences between different translation processes in order to come to a generalized model which could serve to help understand the process better. Translation theories can also offer different translation methods/strategies depending on intersubjectively comprehensible criteria.

In the Renaissance, the most extensive treatise on the topic of translation is the *Interpretatio linguarum* (1559) by Laurence Humphrey. It is situated in the context

of a debate initiated by Joachim Péron in 1540, who analyzed Cicero's recommendations on translation. Cicero proposed, that the purpose of a translated speech was to be persuasive, therefore the translator needed to be free in his translation and not be bound by the original and by the request of a literal translation. Péron shifted the focus from the dichotomy of literal/free to the people involved in translation and to the interpersonal act. Humphrey understood translation as self-expression, a very modern understanding. There is an interesting new study by Sheldon Brammall (2018) in the *Review of English Studies* 68 (288) documenting the debate. It includes an annotation of the *Interpretatio* in 1570 by Gabriel Harvey. He recognized the text as an important document of early English translation studies. The text questions the applicability of the concepts in *Interpretatio*.

In the 1960s, translation was simply an element of language learning. Translations of *Aesop's Fables* in several languages (including in Chinese by Jesuit missionaries in China) were efforts at transmitting language learning textbooks. Only in the 1970s, did translation studies start to become aware of itself as an academic discipline, starting with a volume edited by André Lefevere. Some scholars chose the perspective of the contrastive approach. Eugene Nida, a bible translator, derived theory from practice while introducing linguistic theory and formal equivalence into translation studies. He defined verbatim translation, literal translation, faithful translation, semantic translation, compilation, free translation, authentic translation, and communicative translation. Later, his research was further elaborated with strong linguistic approaches and theories of equivalence and was followed by methods from discourse analysis and the speech act theory (translation as a communicative act in a social cultural context). There was a revival of the descriptive approach, which regards the target text as most important, and then the Skopos theory, which advocates functional equivalence and values the translator as most important. In the early 1990s, as a reaction to linguistic "scientific" analysis, the theoretical and methodological shift in Translation Studies toward cultural studies is primarily associated with the works of Susan Bassnett, André Lefevere, and Lawrence Venuti.

The volume at hand is both from practitioners in the field and scholars who embed their research in the theoretical framework of the field as well as into its development. In the field of translation and interpreting studies, the claim about Asian or Western traditions is overcome. We have international scholars from both sides whose only qualification is their expertise in the field. Still the voices are diverse, since they cover a large range of topics and perspectives, symbolizing how diverse the research is today. The keyword today is transdisciplinary research.

In translation history, especially when translation studies consisted mostly of prescriptions, ideals were pursued and equivalence was sought for, although a source text and a target text can never be totally equivalent. The myth of untranslatability was created by Wilhelm von Humboldt in the nineteenth century and further elaborated by L. Weisgerber in the twentieth century, although everything is translatable. It is more a question of appropriateness and acceptance of a translation. Evaluation criteria for the quality assessment of translations have been developed, although it can never objectively be judged, how far the translation result (also called "translat") corresponds to the source text. In certain situations, it is appropriate to translate a

pear into an apple (for example if the function of this fruit in the story stays the same and for the target audience apples are as common as for the source audience pears).

As we have witnessed during the history of translation studies, the concentration has been on the different actors in the field of translation: “Skopos” concentrating on the function for the target audience and on the person and intention of the translator, “foreignizing” the text by moving it closer to the source author (and staying loyal to him/her) or “localizing” it, thus moving it closer to the target audience. “Hybrid men-machine translation” moves the focus to the individualization of the target texts, tailoring translations to the needs of individual readers/spectators. Neurology will map the thought processes necessary to create a thinking artificial intelligence and even tackles issues like consciousness, (self-)awareness, understanding as well as artificially enhanced human translation, swarm intelligence, and consciousness. Besides this trend toward individualization, there is a growing interest in sociology to understand translations as social processes and to concentrate on the interaction between the different actors.

Certain things have turned out to be of eternal wisdom. It is also important to know your native language well, not just the foreign language.

We have also witnessed a journey of theories over the centuries, which all highlight different aspects of the phenomenon. They constrain themselves to the medium, the area, the grammatical level, the text-type, to certain problems (like establishing equivalence), they are oriented at products, functions, or processes. All these theories are at hand today to explain different parts of the translation process. We see different functional approaches, empirical-pragmatic ones, including didactic questions instead of old normative/prescriptive translation studies, approaches from the neurological and the social sciences, all trying to become aware of the translation process.

However, as Mary Snell-Hornby requested already in 1988 with her proposition of “integrated translation studies,” these theories need to be seen together as one today.

All of these theories can be boiled down to one question they serve: Is the translation appropriate? In other words, is it adequate, suitable, reasonable, fair, just, apt, situationally fitting, does it work in the target language/culture? Therefore, the “Appropriateness Theory” is the final theory of all translation theories. Of course there may be different answers to the question of appropriateness in different times and from different actors, perspectives, disciplines, etc. An evaluation of the appropriateness of a translation can only be relative and never absolute. Therefore it is necessary to establish a system of evaluation, valuing the different aspects such as the function of the text, loyalty to the author, the ideals of literal/free translation, and how far a translation can “work” in the target language.

Of historical importance is the question of appropriateness, which in turn leads us to fundamental ethical questions: Should you report things you overheard from the foreign negotiation team to your own team to enhance your own team’s chances? Is it appropriate to tell a standard joke in the target language when the country’s leader has told a racist joke? What implications does it have about the foreign country’s leader, when he laughs at your standard joke? The country’s leader may think he

laughed at his (racist) joke. Is it appropriate to take over the role of a negotiation participant when you are hired for interpreting? (See the contribution in this volume.) When you are a wartime interpreter: Is it appropriate to translate propaganda and to interpret for a dictator? Is it appropriate to translate the German order “Feuer!” [Shoot!] by the German commander into French if the collaborating French soldiers would commit a crime against humanity when they understood and executed the order? Where to draw the line to refuse to translate? What consequences does it have if you refuse? What responsibilities do interpreters and translators have? The Appropriateness Theory is complex and shows us that a Code of Ethics is of the utmost importance.

Bochum/Germany
September 2020

Martin Woesler

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Socio-historical Studies

Translating Concepts in Chinese: A Case Study Based on *The Wealth of Nations*



Sui He

Abstract The modern history of China is entwined with the publicity, adaptation, and acceptance of western sociological and philosophical ideas, the initial stage of which was pervasively mediated by translation. Owing to the prominent role that concepts play in constructing ideological frameworks, the translation of concepts weighs heavily in this knowledge communication process. Set in this context, this essay examines the translation history of five concepts selected from *The Wealth of Nations*, based on six Chinese versions published between 1901 and 2001. These concepts are *nation*, *wealth*, *workmen*, *labor*, and *value*. By tracing and comparing different translations in a chronological order inspired by *Begriffsgeschichte* (also known as Conceptual History in contemporary scholarship), this study aims to provide a comparative insight into the translation of chosen concepts as well as the changing meanings that they convey in a descriptive manner.

Keywords Conceptual history · Translation of concepts · Twenty-First century China · Social-Historical context · *The Wealth of Nations*

1 Introduction

The history of translation in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century China has long been a popular research topic due to the intensity of ideological collision and cultural exchange of this period (Lackner et al. 2001). According to Lippert (2001, 57), in the first half of the nineteenth century, Protestant missionaries played a prominent role in the intellectual and linguistic contact between China and the West. Since late Qing (the end of the nineteenth century) when an unprecedented change took place, native Chinese translators such as Yan Fu (1854–1921) started to lend their voices in rendering and domesticating western ideas. In the twentieth century, the land of China witnessed the transformation from a feudal system to a semicolonial state, and ultimately to independent sovereignty. As Richter (2009, 194, 2012,

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23) speculates, since China was never completely colonized by an alien entity, the domestication of western ideology in China was more creatively shaped by native agents, compared to India where the binary option of either accept or reject was dominating the paradigm. This multilayered competing power dynamic not only shapes modern Chinese history, but also makes relevant research into the translation and domestication of western ideas during this period more intriguing.

Within the broad realm of knowledge communication, the translation of concepts weighs heavily due to the vital role that they play in constructing ideological frameworks. Derived from Latin *concupere* (to take in and hold) and Medieval Latin *conceptum* (draft, abstract), “concept” gained the meaning of “a general notion, the immediate object of a thought” in the 1550s (Online Etymology Dictionary 2019). In the current study, the working definition of “concept” (*Begriff* in German) resembles its general explanation as “term, idea” (Collins German-English Dictionary 2001, 113), which denotes the crystallization of interconnected ideas into a concise linguistic form. Owing to its clear focus complemented by constructive embedded information, concept has been widely used as a powerful tool for publicizing novel ideas like a bullet. This case is particularly true for social and political concepts, which represent the cluster of concepts reflecting on their contemporary social and political facts.

Situated within the historical background of twentieth-century China, this research aims to explore the translation and domestication of key western concepts in a descriptive manner based on a case study comprising five concepts selected from Adam Smith’s *The Wealth of Nations*. Even though translations of this specific book have been extensively studied in Chinese scholarship, a great majority of existing researches solely focus on individual translators, especially Yan Fu. Against this backdrop, the current research brings six different translations into conversation. Inspired by *Begriffsgeschichte* (Conceptual History or History of Concepts in English), this research presents a comparative insight into the evolvement of translations embodied in their individual sociohistorical contexts in a chronological manner.

The structure of this chapter is as follows. Section 2 includes an essential review of the intersection of translation studies and conceptual history, as well as the guiding method of the current study inspired by these two disciplines. Section 3 displays an overview of the translation history of *The Wealth of Nations* in China, with a specific focus on the six versions sourced for this research. Section 4 comprises five case studies based on the concepts selected as data samples. Section 5 contains concluding remarks as well as suggestions for future research.

2 Translating Concepts in a Continuous History

The term translation itself is multidisciplinary in nature. Various types of practice and theories derived from translation can never solely belong to the realm of translation themselves. Moving from a prescriptive approach to a descriptive one, translation

studies embraces a cultural turn (Lefevere and Bassnett 1990) and a translator's turn (Robinson 1991), before taking off to further unleash its interdisciplinary potential. Translation of concepts is one of many fields that benefit from this trend. In history, concepts have been widely used in social and political movements, which makes this topic a prominent research target of historians. Linked by the same research target, established expertise in concept research, such as *Begriffsgeschichte*, and intercultural insights offered by translation studies, can collectively facilitate the research on concept translation based on a reciprocal relationship in between.

First articulated by Hegel (1837), *Begriffsgeschichte* (conceptual history hereafter) started its development in Germany and the UK before spreading to the rest of the world. One of the prominent advocates Reinhart Koselleck (1923–2006) summarizes the idea conveyed by conceptual history as “old words acquired new meanings, which no longer require translation as one approaches the present” (cf. Sheehan 1978, 313). As Bevir (2000, 278) shows, the main idea of conceptual history is to first obtain the meaning of concepts based on a comprehensive understanding of the contemporary background of these concepts, and second arrange these meanings in a chronological way in order to present the development over time and reveal the underlying reasons that could lead to such change.

As an early exploration of the connection between conceptual history and translation studies, Munday (2012, 54) observes that translation research related to terminology pays more attention to the standardization and unification, especially in product-oriented organizational translation activities. In comparison, conceptual history focuses more on the synchronic and diachronic variation of specific language usage. Although differences as such exist, the common ground shared by these two disciplines makes collaboration possible. The project *Genealogies of Knowledge*¹ nested at the University of Manchester in the UK, yields fruitful results based on rigorous research methods, which brings relevant studies on the translation history of concepts onto another level.

The consensus shared by conceptual history and translation studies is that, the meaning of concepts/translations undergo constant changes through time, depending on specific social and historical contexts, which makes it possible to establish a reciprocal relationship in between. As Burke (2005, 3) argues, “history deserves a large place in translation studies, and studies of translation deserve a large space in history.” In the pioneering book *Why Concepts Matter: Translating Social and Political Thought*, Richter (2012, 1–2) summarizes that conceptual history “emphasizes the central place of language and translation in political and social discourse, especially in concept formation, transmission, and reception.” Meanwhile, history of translation deals with questions such as “what has been translated, by whom, under what circumstances, and in what contexts” (p. 4). These ideas echo with what Toury (2012, 31) proposed in descriptive translation studies based on his recognition of “assumed translation,” which requires the corresponding description to be properly contextualized.

¹<http://genealogiesofknowledge.net>.

It is necessary to understand that the challenge imposed by the study of concepts mainly lies in two aspects: (1) difficulties in tracing meanings and historical facts over time and (2) identifying the degree of potential subjectivity. For the first point, as Sheehan (1978, 316) points out, since the number of translated concepts usually surges during social upheavals, it is difficult to keep trace of their changes in this unrested social condition. To address this issue, contemporary dictionaries can be used to trace meanings of concepts when possible. As for the second point, concept itself is a product of human thought, which is influenced by surroundings within specific time span aiming at specific outcome. The concern of authorial subjectivity has also been emphasized by many scholars since the initial development of conceptual history (for example Pocock 1972, Sheehan 1978 and Skinner 1978). Bevir (2000, 279) believes that the most appropriate context would be “the person who uses it on what particular occasion and in what particular situation,” which speaks to several mainstream translation theories in many ways. In the current study, this argument resonates with the descriptive approach in translation studies. In response to the traditional linguistic and prescriptive view of translation, Toury (1995/2012, 115) proposes a comparative analysis of “the coupled pair of replacing + replaced segments” in order to pertain translation research to its object level in a descriptive manner. With the establishment of *Target* journal, descriptive translation research has witnessed considerable development facilitated by advancing methodology.

With convincing solutions, these challenges cannot shield the benefits that conceptual history could bring to translation studies. It lends support to the chronological approach in translation analysis with comparative insights and it provides researchers with a diachronic vision of conceptual changes in a continuous historical scope, which, in practice, allows translators to obtain a thorough understanding of both source and target texts in history.

Guided by conceptual history and descriptive translation studies, this essay traces the meaning of translated concepts and arranges them in a chronological order to present the change of these concepts/translations over time. In addition, etymology is one of the primary concerns of conceptual history. Therefore, both etymological information and contemporary meanings obtained from corpus-based dictionaries and existing literatures are included in the analysis, in order to provide a continuum of conceptual development of translation samples. Last but not least, as previously mentioned, conceptual history also focuses on identifying the reason that might lead to conceptual change. In the current study, however, this aspect of conceptual history is not discussed due to the limited number of data samples.

3 One Hundred Years’ of Translating *WN* in China

The Wealth of Nations (*WN*), short for *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, was written by the Scottish economist Adam Smith (1723–1790). Between 1776 and 1789, five editions became available in Smith’s lifetime. Each edition contains two volumes, for a total of five books. Based on Adam Smith’s

observation at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, this collection aims at overcoming the defects of outdated theories of Mercantilism and Physiocracy back then. Taking self-interest and natural liberty as the basics, *WN* made a huge contribution to the formation of our modern society. In the introduction to the reprinted version of *WN* published in 1970, Seligman (1970, v) noted that this book “has become one of the classics of literature in general, as well as of the literature of economics in particular.” *WN* marks the starting point of Classical Economics as a discipline and has laid a huge impact on later economists including Jean-Baptiste Say, David Ricardo, and Thomas Malthus (O’Driscoll 1979, ix). With the help of translation, its influence breaks through the physical border of Scotland, crosses the Atlantic Ocean and the English Channel, and spreads all over the world.

As soon as the first edition of *WN* was published, a German translation became available in the same year, followed by French in 1778, Danish in 1779, Italian in 1790, and Spanish in 1792 (Lai 1996, 469). In China, this book started to attract people’s attention in the 1870s. In 1874 when Tongwen Guan (*tóng wén guǎn* 同文馆) was established, a selected section from *WN* was introduced in the textbook *Manual of Political Economy* (Zhang 2010, 95). This introduction of *WN* was initiated by the American missionary William Alexander Parsons Martin (a.k.a. 丁韪良 Ding Wei-liang). With the growing social attention, several abridged Chinese translations were published following this trend. In 1897, Yan Fu, as one of the primary advocates and translators of western thoughts back then, started to translate *WN*. In 1901, the first full translation into Classical Chinese was published, titled *Yuanfu* (*Yuán Fù*《原富》). Thirty years later, the first Contemporary Chinese version, translated by Marxists Guo Da-li and Wang Ya-nan titled *Guofulun* (*Guó Fù Lùn*《国富论》), was published in Shanghai. Dozens of Chinese versions became available in the twenty-first century, owing to an increasing public attention to the importance of political economics (Yang and Bao 2013, 211). The majority of Chinese scholars and ordinary readers rely on the translated versions of *WN*, which makes the research into these translations even more essential.

Taking six Chinese versions of *WN* published during 1901 to 2001 as the source texts, this study compares the translation of selected concepts by drawing on their change of meanings in a chronological order. Even though there are many Chinese translations of *WN* published during the twentieth century, the selection criterion in the current study is oriented by the public influence of these translations, evaluated by research attention, marketing reflection, and national media nomination. The six versions are:

1. 《原富》*Yuán fù* (*The Origin of Wealth*), Yan Fu 严复, 1901.
2. 《国富论》*Guó fù lùn* (*National Wealth Theory*), Guo Da-li 郭大力 and Wang Ya-nan 王亚南, 1931.
3. 《国民财富的性质和原因的研究》*Guó mín cái fù de xìng zhì hé yuán yīn de yán jiū* (*Research into the Nature and Causes of National Wealth*), Guo Da-li 郭大力 and Wang Ya-nan 王亚南, 1972 (revised edition).
4. 《国富论》*Guó fù lùn* (*National Wealth Theory*), Zhou Xian-wen 周宪文 and Zhang Han-yu 张汉裕, 1974 (Taiwanese edition published in Taipei).

5. 《国富论》*Guó fù lùn (National Wealth Theory)*, Yang Jing-nian 杨敬年, 1999.
6. 《国富论》*Guó fù lùn (National Wealth Theory)*, Xie Zong-lin 谢宗林 and Li Hua-xia 李华夏, 2001 (Taiwanese edition published in Beijing).

The coverage of exactly 100 years embedded in the dramatic historical evolution of China over this period provides a unique angle to observe the interaction between translation and Chinese history. Dating back to 1901 when the Qing dynasty was trembling at the edge of its unstable sovereignty, the land of China was shrouded by the haze of invasion. Activists such as Yan Fu were desperately seeking solutions to save the autonomy. For the first completed version of *WN*, Yan Fu spent four years translating *Yuán Fù* before it was published by the College of Translation in Nan Yang Public School (*nán yáng gōng xué yì shū guǎn* 南洋公学译书馆) in 1901. Yan Fu believed that Smith's economic theories helped the British government out of the depression, and if these ideas were accepted by the royal court, it was possible to save the Qing Dynasty in the same way (Liu 2015, 33). The source text used by Yan Fu was Thorold Rogers' edition, published by the Oxford University Press in 1869. Rogers was a Member of Parliament in the UK during 1880 to 1886. As an economist and historian, he was a supporter of free-trade policy and an advocate for social justice and his notes might have influenced Yan Fu's understanding of *WN* (Liu 2015, 33). In addition, as one of the translations by Yan Fu which aimed at the introduction of western philosophy to the Chinese audience, *Yuán Fù* also functioned as the supporting evidence of Yan Fu's own political and social theories (Ma 1995, 382). Although this translation has been criticized as being unfaithful, *Yuán Fù* was highly acknowledged by Yan Fu's fellow social activists in his era (*ibid.*).

When *Yuán Fù* was published in 1901, Wang Ya-nan was born. As a Marxist, he joined the Northern Expedition in 1927 but was expelled in 1928. He then moved to Dafo Temple (*dà fó sì* 大佛寺) in Hangzhou, where he met Guo Da-li, a 23-year-old recent graduate in philosophy who was passionate about translating Marx and Engels into Chinese. As a preparation for their later translation of *Das Kapital*, they decided to start with the classics in Economics. The source text they used for translating *WN* was Thorold Rogers' second edition, published by Oxford University Press in 1880. In 1931, thirty years later after *Yuán Fù* was published, the first Contemporary Chinese version of *WN* was accomplished by Guo Da-li and Wang Ya-nan. The translation received great popularity and was reprinted for several times, resulting from the low stock in bookshops. In 1965, Guo and Wang started to draft the revised version which was published in 1972. Two versions by Guo Da-li and Wang Ya-nan are regarded as the most readable versions for their use of languages and their loyalty towards the original copy. In the introduction to the first version, Guo and Wang (1972, 7) commented that Yan Fu's version was too tough to read with over-abridged content, and the social, economic, and cultural situation in late Qing was far below what the theory in this book required. In their own monographs, they strongly opposed the Capitalist ideas of Adam Smith. The main motivation for them to translate *WN* was to provide a critical foundation for their further introduction of Marxism, which was different from Yan Fu's incentive.

In 1999, the version translated by Yang Jing-nian was published, representing the perception of *WN* in the post “Reform and Open-up” era of contemporary China. Born in 1908, Yang Jing-nian obtained his doctorate in political economy at the University of Oxford in 1948. In the same year, he returned to China and worked as a professor at Nan-kai University (excluding 1957–1978 due to political reasons). As an active translator, his translation of economics, banking, and finance, as well as his monographs on Chinese economy made a huge contribution to the establishment and development of Economics in China. In the introduction to his translation, Yang mentioned that the source text he referred to was Edwin Canaan’s edition published by Methuen in 1904 and he also paid tribute to Guo and Wang’s translations. Although this edition contains abundant side notes of the main content, without translators’ acknowledgment, it is not possible to estimate to what extent they were influenced by these notes.

In addition, the only two copies translated by Taiwanese scholars, are chosen to provide a more comprehensive view in the 1970s and the 2000s. The 1974 version, translated by Zhou Xian-wen and Zhang Han-yu, also used Edwin Canaan’s edition of *WN* as the source text. Both translators were renowned economists and active translators who received academic training in Economics in Japan. As economists, they played an important role in shaping and leading Economics research in Taiwan. In Wu’s (2002, 789) review of the economic growth in Taiwan, he commented that Zhou and Zhang’s translation of *WN*, as the first attempt to translate the book (in Taiwan) after Yan Fu, marked the starting point of the theoretical analysis in Economics.

The 2001 version was translated by Xie Zong-lin and Li Hua-xia—two Taiwanese translators and researchers who had doctorate training in Economics in the Washington University in St. Louis and the Southern Illinois University the USA. Noticeably, this version was published by the Central Compilation & Translation Press in Beijing and it is not addressed which edition they were referring to or their motivation to translate *WN*. The other translations of these two translators, such as *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (Xie), *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (Li) and *Butterfly Economics* (Li), were also published by mainstream publishers in Beijing.

Based on the importance of these translations in understanding *WN*, and the vital role that selected concepts play in major ideological trends and historical events in the Chinese context, five concepts (*nation*, *wealth*, *workmen*, *labor*, and *value*) and their corresponding translations identified in the abovementioned Chinese versions were selected for the case study displayed in the following section.

4 Case Study

4.1 Nation

Originated from Middle English from Latin *natio(n-)*, “nation” has two basic contemporary meanings: (1) a country that has its own land and government; (2) the people

Table 1 Translations of *Nation*

	Yan Fu (1901)	Guo and Wang (1931)	Guo and Wang (1972)	Zhou and Zhang (1974)	Yang (1999)	Xie and Li (2001)
ST1	國 guó	國 guó	國民 guó mín	國 guó	國 guó	國 guó
ST2	(omitted)	國 guó	國 guó	國民 guó mín	國家 guó jiā	國家 guó jiā
ST3	國 guó	國民 guó mín	國民 guó mín	國民 guó mín	國家 guó jiā	民族 mín zú

of a particular country (Macmillan Dictionary Online 2019). In the late thirteenth century, “nation” meant “racial group,” and it did not acquire its political sense until the seventeenth century (Williams 1976, 178). The word “nation” contains informative messages throughout the book. Below is an extract from Chapter IV:

Different metals have been made use of by different **nations** (ST2) for this purpose. Iron was the common instrument of commerce among the ancient Spartans; copper among the ancient Romans; and gold and silver among all rich and commercial **nations** (ST3).

Adam Smith, *WN*, Book I, Chapter IV, p. 21.²

Table 1 shows the translations of three source texts: ST1 in the book title, and ST2 and ST3 in the above extract.

As the table shows, there are three varieties in translation: (1) *guo/guojia* (*guó/guó jiā* 国/国家)—state, a political regime; (2) *guomin* (*guó mín* 国民)—people within a country; (3) *minzu* (*mín zú* 民族)—racial groups, which echoes the contextual elements of “Spartans” and “Romans” in the ST.

For the title, Guo and Wang changed their translation from *guo* (*guó* 国, 1931) to *guomin* (*guó mín* 国民, 1972), bringing the notion of people into conversation. In comparison, other translations rendered “nation” as *guo/guojia* (*guó/guó jiā* 国/国家), weighting heavily on the meaning of “state.” For ST2 and ST3, the level of variation among the translations increases. In the excerpt, ST2 and ST3 bear the same meaning, although ST2 is presented in an abstract manner and ST3 is mentioned alongside concrete examples. There is a similarity between Guo and Wang (1931 and 1972) and Xie and Li (2001, TW): when nation is mentioned as an abstraction (ST2), they referred to it as *guo/guojia* (*guó/guó jiā* 国/国家); when it concretely refers to either “ancient Spartans” or “ancient Romans” (ST3), they chose *guomin* (*guó mín* 国民) and *minzu* (*mín zú* 民族) instead of the political sense.

The meaning of a source text can be tantalizing. In this case, however, the major difference lies in whether “nation” means state/government in a political sense or focuses more on the people within the nation. As a translator of the 2001 version, Xie Zong-lin (2010, 48) reflects on his translation experience and suggests that nation is closer to “state” than to “people” with two reasons: first, nation is frequently translated as “state,” as can be seen in “the United Nations”; second, the main issue discussed in *WN* is how to make a state wealthier.

²All page numbers of abridged paragraphs are as in *WN*, edited by Edwin R. A. Seligman (1910).

In response to this view, Bao and Cao (2012, 66) argue that based on the historical context, Smith's understanding of nation is nowhere close to the meaning of nation as in "the United Nations." Quoting Smith, they also contend that nation denotes people:

Political economy...proposes to provide a plentiful revenue or subsistence for the people, or more properly to enable them to provide such a revenue sufficient for the public services. It proposes to *enrich both the people and the sovereign*.

Adam Smith, *WN*, Book IV, p. 375.

Bao and Cao (ibid.) goes on to argue that although both "people" and "sovereign" are essential, "people" should have priority over "state." Similarly, Li (2014, 27–31) also demonstrates that in Smith's vision, individuals within the state are the real beneficiaries of economic activity.

As a mutual perception, Feng's (2013, 69) suggestion is that both "people" and "state" have their respective merits rooted in classical Chinese political ideas. On the one hand, the choice of "people" echoes Confucius's idea: good manners spread through morality; morality produces benefits; benefits appeal to citizens and this is the key to reign.³ On the other hand, "state" appeals to the value of Guan Zhong⁴ that a wealthy state stabilizes its governance: only when someone is fully stocked, will s/he learn about manners and refrain; only when someone has an abundant supply of clothing and food, will s/he understand honor and shame.⁵

While the above arguments have their respective merits, contemporary authors offer new suggestions to the meaning of nation in *WN*, facilitating the understanding of social norms conveyed by this concept. For instance, Donaldson (2001, 25–36) argues that apart from its traditional forms, new forms of wealth such as social capital, should be counted when determining the wealth of a nation. This idea brings the translation choice of "people" to vivid life with great expectations: the wealth of people within a state counts thereby a broader range of economic contributors is taken into consideration. It follows that "people" would be more appropriate than "state" for translating nation in modern times.

4.2 Wealth

According to Williams (1976, 280), "wealth" originally meant "happiness and well-being." In the late fifteenth century, it acquired its general meaning as (1) abundance; (2) money and possessions. Later in the seventeenth and eighteenth century, the meaning of wealth was dominated by "money and possession," leaving little space for "abundance." In contemporary understanding, wealth denotes (1) an abundance

³《左传·成公二年》：礼以义行，义以生利，利以平民，政之大节也。

⁴720–645 BC, a philosopher and politician who served as chancellor and was a reformer of the State of Qi during the Spring and Autumn period of Chinese history.

⁵《史记》：仓廩实而知礼节，衣食足而知荣辱。

Table 2 Translations of *Wealth*

	Yan Fu (1901)	Guo and Wang (1931)	Guo and Wang (1972)	Zhou and Zhang (1974)	Yang (1999)	Xie and Li (2001)
ST1	富 fù	富 fù	财富 cái fù	富 fù	富 fù	富 fù
ST2	财 cái	财富 cái fù	财富 cái fù	财富 cái fù	财富 cái fù	财富 cái fù
ST3	财 cái	(omitted)	富有 fù yǒu	财富 cái fù	财富 cái fù	财富 cái fù

of valuable possessions or money; (2) the state of being rich; (3) a plentiful supply of a useful thing. As a significant component, wealth represents the goal of a nation based on the theories proposed in *WN*.

Table 2 presents the translation of wealth in the title (ST1), in “national **wealth**” (ST2) and “**wealth** of a country” (ST3) extracted from Chapter VIII.

The main difference between fu (*fù* 富) and caifu (*cái fù* 财富) rests in their different emphases. As an adjective, fu (*fù* 富) means “abundant and rich.” As a verb, it means “to enrich.” In comparison, caifu (*cái fù* 财富) solely means “money or other valuable possessions” without the sense of “abundant.”

In Classical Chinese, fu (*fù* 富) is an independent word with various usages. As early as in the Warring States Period (fifth century BC), fu (*fù* 富), with its meaning of abundance, was mentioned as one of the nine methods to satisfy citizens in political theories⁶. Later in the Southern and Northern Dynasties Period (420–589), historian Fan Ye (398–445) mentioned fu (*fù* 富) alongside nation to express the meaning of “enriching and satisfying our people.”⁷

On the other hand, caifu (*cái fù* 财富) only appears in Contemporary Chinese. Specifically, the translation guomincaifu (national wealth, *guó mín cái fù* 国民财富), as found in the 1972 version—appears in mainstream contemporary Chinese dictionaries as: valuable possessions, both tangible and intangible assets, of a society or a country within a certain period.

In general, fu (*fù* 富) is an ideal correspondence of wealth in Chinese, for they share a similar history in evolvement. Nevertheless, as a single-character word, fu (*fù* 富) is not widely used in Contemporary Chinese, thus it might decrease the level of naturalness if used in translation. Additionally, according to contemporary Chinese dictionaries, caifu (*cái fù* 财富) includes everything valuable, both tangible and intangible assets. The intangible value of labor, such as dexterity, frequently appears in *WN*. It is undoubtedly an important part of national wealth and a potential rendering of wealth in the *WN* context. Despite this, the perception of caifu (*cái fù* 财富) could be partial without reference to dictionary since the character fu (*fù* 富) can easily be taken for its face value as money.

⁶《周礼·天官冢宰·大宰》：九曰斲，以富得民。

⁷《后汉书·方术列传上·许杨》：明府今兴立废业，富国安民 [...]

4.3 Workmen

The word “workman” derives from Old English with a contemporary meaning of “a man employed to do manual labor.” The phrase “Good Workman” normally means “a person with specified skill in a job or craft” (Williams 1976, 282). Meanings of workman, laborer, and worker are similar to each other: manual workers were generalized as laborers from the thirteenth century (ibid). After the nineteenth century, the spread of Marxism added a special sense to workmen—the plural form of workman—to denote a large and important social class. In *WN*, Smith frequently used the plural form “workmen” to represent a group of workers, as shown in three typical examples below:

A great part of the machines [...] were originally the inventions of common **workmen** (ST1)

...

Adam Smith, *WN*, Book I, Chapter I, p. 9.

The value which the **workmen** (ST2) add to the materials, therefore, resolves itself in this case into two parts, of which the one pays their wages, the other the profits of their employer upon the whole stock of materials and wages which he advances.

Adam Smith, *WN*, Book I, Chapter VI, p. 42.

...in every part of Europe, twenty **workmen** (ST3) serve under a master for one that is independent...

Adam Smith, *WN*, Book I, Chapter VIII, p. 58.

In *WN*, whether the term “workmen” specially refers to industrial workers remains a question. However, in most cases, it was used to describe industrial production process. Therefore, “workmen” in *WN* is clearly related to the employment relationship in the Capitalist framework, in contrast to the self-sufficient production system in the Chinese history. As Table 3 shows, translations of workmen in relation to both “employer” (ST2) and “master” (ST3) mostly appear as *gongren* (worker, *gōng rén* 工人) except for Yan Fu, whose translation contains the most creative elements.

For ST1, Yan Fu chose *gongyong* (hired worker, *gōng yōng* 工佣) even though the usage of *gongren* (worker, *gōng rén* 工人) had been recorded in his contemporary dictionaries (see for example, Kwong 1887). In dictionaries published around Yan Fu’s time, *gōng* 工 was noted as craftsman, peasants and other laborers in general, while *yōng* 佣 meant being employed (Hemeling 1905/1916). The combination of

Table 3 Translations of *Workmen*

	Yan Fu (1901)	Guo and Wang (1931)	Guo and Wang (1972)	Zhou and Zhang (1974)	Yang (1999)	Xie and Li (2001)
ST1	工傭 <i>gōng yōng</i>	工人 <i>gōng rén</i>	工人 <i>gōng rén</i>	工人 <i>gōng rén</i>	工人 <i>gōng rén</i>	工人 <i>gōng rén</i>
ST2	力作者 <i>lì zuò zhě</i>	(omitted)	劳动者 <i>láo dòng zhě</i>	工人 <i>gōng rén</i>	工人 <i>gōng rén</i>	工人 <i>gōng rén</i>
ST3	勞力者 <i>láo lì zhě</i>	(omitted)	工人 <i>gōng rén</i>	工人 <i>gōng rén</i>	工人 <i>gōng rén</i>	工人 <i>gōng rén</i>

these two characters did not exist as a commonly used word in Classical Chinese, nor in Contemporary Chinese. However, Yan Fu's translation of workmen as *gongyong* (*gōng yōng* 工佣) is a decent conceptual equivalence of workmen in *WN*. Before the first half of the twentieth century in China, the so-called self-sufficient agriculture-based peasant economy dominated the society, when the concept of employment relationship was not widely accepted. Therefore, it is not redundant for Yan Fu to include both "craftsman" and "employed" to spread the idea of modern employment relations in text since this concept was not yet well received in people's mind.

Except for Yan Fu, all translators chose *gōng rén* 工人. Later, this term became standardized in translating workmen in *WN* and started its new life as an independent concept in Chinese. Among all these translations, *gōng rén* 工人 was initially used by Guo and Wang (1931) to emphasize the identity of workmen as human (*rén* 人), in contrast to Yan Fu's focus on the employment relation. Since the New Culture Movement in the 1920s, Marxism spread wildly in China and the concept *gōng rén* 工人 was frequently used as a slogan to publicize Marxist ideas. Although it is the literal translation for workmen, *gōng rén* 工人, as a term in its own right, does not convey the employment relation carried by the original concept. However, when this relation was widely accepted by people, this constructive translation strategy witnessed a huge success with less in text but more in mind.

History shows that the standardization of *gōng rén* 工人 was mainly driven by the governmental propaganda of a specific period in contemporary China. This standardization process also means that employment relation was widely acknowledged. More importantly, the social status of workmen was promoted as public slogans of that period show. This upraised status of working class revealing the changing meaning of the target text, is further shown in the translation of "master" and "employer" included in the excerpts earlier: only Yan Fu translated the people who hired workmen literally as "master," and all other translators consistently rendered it as "employer," though both "master" and "employer" were used in *WN*.

To put these translations into a historical timeline, it shows that even though the same concept was used in translation, the actual meaning and representation of this standardized term *gōng rén* 工人 experienced several shifts in the twentieth century, resulting from the revolution and reform of the economic system. Initially, it was widely used to spread Marxism in China. For example, in Chairman Mao's influential article titled "An Analysis of Social Classes in China" (*Zhōngguó shèhuì gèjiēcéng de fēnxi* 《中国社会各阶层的分析》), *gōng rén* 工人 denotes the composition of a social class that represents the most advanced productivity. Major translations of Marxism theories and public slogans used by Chinese Marxists consistently chose *gōng rén* 工人 as the Chinese term for "workmen" and its affiliated terms, which thoroughly changed the social status and intellectual connotation of "workmen" in English. This trend influenced and was in turn driven by the authoritative translation of *Das Kapital* by Guo and Wang published in 1938. Since the establishment of People's Republic of China in 1949, the Working Class had been honored as the leading power and considered the greatest supporters of Socialism construction. Since the reform in the 1980s, a large number of state-owned companies went bankrupt, leaving a great number of workers unemployed. As a result, the Working

Class, mainly consisting of workers from these enterprises and once protected by the government, gradually lost their advantages (Chen 2009, 165). Together with the reform of household registration policy, peasant people from rural areas were able to travel freely and find new ways of living. As a result, the actual representation of the Working Class changed from workers of state-owned companies to individual workers from remote rural areas. With the ongoing reform in higher education and medical institutes in China, the meanings of social concepts have been undergoing constant changes. This example of workmen only gives a glimpse of this massive trend.

4.4 Labor

“Labor” is a notable example where the original meaning contained in the source text overpowers the original meaning of chosen Chinese terms due to the change of social and historical contexts. According to Online Etymology Dictionary (2019) and Williams (1976, 146), labor is derived from Latin *labor* and *laborem* via old French *labor* (noun) and *labourer* (verb). Based on contemporary dictionaries, it carries three contemporary meanings in English as a noun: (1) work, especially physical work; (2) especially referring to the Labor Party; (3) the process of childbirth.

According to Williams (ibid.), labor was initially associated with demanding manual works. In the sixteenth century, the meaning of pain in relation to childbirth was added to the concept. In the seventeenth century, the sense of difficulty mingled with pain became dominant and labor started to represent a general social activity with collective abstraction. Later on, Adam Smith’s classical economics theory and Marx’s labor theory of value further enhance the sense of labor being productive work and an element of production in paid employment (Table 4).

In order to differentiate labor as an independent concept from the term “division of labor,” samples were chosen where “labor” was used independently. The following extract is an example:

Table 4 Translations of *Labor*

	Yan Fu (1901)	Guo and Wang (1931)	Guo and Wang (1972)	Zhou and Zhang (1974)	Yang (1999)	Xie and Li (2001)
ST1	(omitted)	劳动 láo dòng	劳动 láo dòng	劳动 láo dòng	劳动 láo dòng	劳动 láo dòng
ST2	(omitted)	劳动 láo dòng	劳动 láo dòng	劳动 láo dòng	劳动 láo dòng	劳动 láo dòng
ST3	功力 gōng lì (footnote)	劳动 láo dòng	劳动 láo dòng	劳动 láo dòng	劳动 láo dòng	劳动 láo dòng
ST4	功力 gōng lì	劳働 láo dòng	劳动 láo dòng	劳働 láo dòng	劳动 láo dòng	劳动 láo dòng

...it is but a very small part of these with which a man's own **labor** (ST1) can supply him. The far greater part of them he must derive from the **labor** (ST2) of other people, and he must be rich or poor according to the quantity of that **labor** (ST3) which he can command...**Labor** (ST4), therefore, is the real measure of the exchangeable value of all commodities.

Adam Smith, *WN*, Chapter V, p. 26.

Before the 1930s, the meaning of labor perceived in Chinese was obscure. This led to translation differences found in the 1901 version and the subsequent translations. Yan Fu rendered labor as *gongli* (*gōng lì* 功力), which means the strength devoted to work as a living method (Classical Chinese Dictionary 2013). English-Chinese dictionaries of Yan Fu's time (Kwong 1887; Hemeling 1905/1916) show that the English word labor primarily meant *laoli* (physical work, *láo lì* 劳力), which to some extent explains Yan Fu's choice of *gongli* (*gōng lì* 功力). In Yan Fu's era, the term *laodong* (*láo dòng* 劳动) was denoted as exercising one's body with a close link to health and well-being. Although this term had been in existence before Yan Fu carried out his translation, it was not part of the modern production conversation and was not used in political and social contexts back then. This development of meaning is also true for the Japanese term *roudou* 労働, where the meaning of *hataraku* はたらく (to work) was also added to its original connotation of exercising for health (Grand Japanese Dictionary online). After the 1930s, this term was bonded with capital production activities in China (Morgan 1932). Taking *laodong* (*láo dòng* 劳动) as the corresponding Chinese term for labor undoubtedly changed the original meaning of this term, which is reflected in the difference between Yan Fu's translation and all other versions since the 1930s.

Due to historical and regional conventions, Guo and Wang (1931) and Zhou and Zhang (1974) used traditional Chinese characters in their translation. It is interesting to see that Guo and Wang (1931) used *dòng* 働 in contrast to the later-standardized traditional Chinese *dòng* 動 used in Zhou and Zhang's (1974) version. There are two possible reasons for this discrepancy. On one hand, Chinese language was in a transferring stage in the 1930s and no standardized reference was available back then. The difference between *dòng* 動 and *dòng* 働 lies in the radical of “亻”—a variation of man (*rén* 人). The usage of *dòng* 働 in Guo and Wang (1931) might indicate their preference in emphasizing the importance of people in the production process. Second, as pioneer translators, Guo and Wang could also be influenced by Japanese translations of *WN*. Before their Chinese translations, the available translations of *WN* in China were in Classical Chinese, German, and Japanese. In this condition, Japanese translations might have played a part in Guo and Wang's translation of *WN*. According to Japanese dictionaries, *roudou* 労働 and *roudou* 労働 both mean “labor” and can be used interchangeably. In the Grand Dictionary of Japanese (online database), these two terms are explained as “in Economics, the act of humans working on objects using their human parts including hands, feet and brains, in order to obtain necessary living resources.”⁸ However, based on the etymological information recorded in the dictionary, in the 1870s, these two terms were used interchangeably with traceable

⁸ 経済学で、人間がその生存に必要な物資を得るために、手・足・頭脳などの活動によって労働対象にはたらきかけること。[<https://kotobank.jp/word/労働>・労働-2093544].

Table 5 Translations of *Value*

	Yan Fu (1901)	Guo and Wang (1931)	Guo and Wang (1972)	Zhou and Zhang (1974)	Yang (1999)	Xie and Li (2001)
ST1	值 zhí	价值 jià zhí	价值 jià zhí	价值 jià zhí	价值 jià zhí	价值 jià zhí
ST2	贵 guì	价值 jià zhí	价值 jià zhí	价值 jià zhí	价格 jià gé	价值 jià zhí

evidence. But later since the 1890s, with the development of *roudou undou* 労働運動 (labor movement or working-class movement), 労働—the original Japanese term—became popular⁹. Also, in their verb forms, *ugoku* 動く implies “to change” or “to move” while *hataraku* 働く represents “to work.” Therefore, *roudou* 労働 is more frequently seen when describing the actual practice of labor in Japanese.

4.5 Value

Derived from Latin *valere* (be strong, be of value) via Old French *value* (worth, price, moral worth), value acquired the meaning of “social principle” from 1918 (Online Etymology Dictionary 2019). As a noun, it has four main contemporary meanings: (1) the amount that something is worth; (2) the degree of importance and usefulness; (3) principles and beliefs; (4) quantity with concrete meanings in different subjects such as mathematics (Oxford Dictionary Online 2019; Macmillan Dictionary Online 2019). Based on Adam Smith’s assumption of social participants as individuals driven by self-interests, value functions as a norm in capital markets, which plays a fundamental role in the formation of a self-regulating economy. In *WN*, it denotes the natural value of goods in relation to their real and nominal prices, covering both functional (i.e., utility) and moral aspects. The excerpt which provide the context for chosen examples is presented as follows:

The **value** (ST1) of any commodity [...] labor, therefore, is the real measure of the exchangeable **value** (ST2) of all commodities.

Adam Smith, *WN*, Book I, Chapter V, pp. 26–27.

Among the translations shown in Table 5 below, Yan Fu used *zhi* (*zhí* 值, worth) for ST1 and *gui* (*guì* 贵, expensive or valuable) for ST2. Yang (1999) chose *jiage* (*jià gé* 价格, price) for ST2. In addition to these translations, all others rendered value as *jiazhi* (*jià zhí* 价值). Although all four Chinese expressions mentioned above share certain similarities in meaning, *jiazhi* (*jià zhí* 价值) is undoubtedly the best choice for translating value based on the conceptual information this pair of translation segment conveys.

Similar to the situation of translating other concepts, it was challenging for translators to find Chinese terms that corresponded to their English counterparts back

⁹明治三〇年頃から活動が盛んになった労働運動では、「労働」を用いている。[ibid.]

then. In the case of “value,” Yan Fu’s choice of zhi (*zhí* 值) indicates this difficulty. At that time, zhi (*zhí* 值) mainly meant “when” and “encounter” in Chinese, which can be found in phrases such as shizhi (*shí zhí* 时值) or zhengzhi (*zhèng zhí* 正值), both of which mean “at the time when.” As for his rendering of ST2 as gui (*guì* 贵), this translation does cover the morality sense contained in the original concept. As a speculation, this translation could be the result of Yan Fu’s disagreement on the Labor Theory of Value by Adam Smith. In an article about Yan Fu’s working manuscript of the *WN* archived at the National Library of China in Beijing, Liu (2015, 36) shows that Yan Fu’s note on *WN* suggests that he held different ideas from Smith’s theory of value. In his handwritten annotations, Yan Fu clearly commented that “value is not determined by labor”¹⁰ and suggested that it should be determined by supply and demand.

After the Age of Enlightenment in the eighteenth century, ordinary people in the west started to look at individuality and liberate themselves from absolute monarchy and Roman Catholic Church through a series of reform and revolution. Consequently, people gained their rights to have individual beliefs and started to explore this modern concept. The value of a society was then formed based on these individual values in a bottom-up manner. However, the deeply rooted feudalism in China prevented this modernization trend. In Yan Fu’s contemporary, people did not have enough space for their own faith apart from being obedient to the royal court and honor Confucianism, which was manipulated as a strong tool to govern the people. As the replacement, dogma was everywhere. The principle of feudal moral conduct “Sangang Wuchang” (*sān gāng wǔ cháng*, 三纲五常, literally means three rules and five standards) is an example. Social ideology was in strict control by Tianzi (*tiān zǐ*, 天子, the emperor, the child of the heaven), as an efficient tool for governance. Even though this rigid system started to crack back then, value, in a liberal sense, was still emerging. This conflict also appeared in Yan Fu’s translation as Hu (2002, 65) mentions. Since the twentieth century, people started to set free from this kind of manipulation. Thereafter, the standardized Chinese term of value—*jià zhí* 价值—came into being.

However, Yang (1999) chose jiage (*jià gé* 价格), which literally means “price,” in his translation of ST2. It is clearly denoted that price does not equal value and price is merely the monetary representation of value (Zhu 1986, 80). Also, in Guo (2004, 59), the ordinary translations of jiage (*jià gé* 价格, price) into English are “price, cost, figure, rate, level and ratio,” where value is not an option. In comparison, the term jiazhi (*jià zhí* 价值), chosen by the majority of translators, is a better option for translating value into Chinese. The reason mainly lies in two aspects. In terms of the meanings, jiazhi (*jià zhí* 价值) covers both functional and moral aspects as value in English. For example, the term jiazhiguan (*jià zhí guān* 价值观, literally means the outlook on value) is used to denote both individual and societal value.

¹⁰真值不由功力决定。(《原富》手稿, 嚴復, 1901–1902。)

5 Concluding Remarks

The main idea of conceptual history is to reveal how concepts become fundamental subjects of a society by looking into the movement, reception, and further development of concepts. In the modern Chinese context, translation plays a critical part in this process. As the present study shows, retrieving both historical and contemporary meanings of translation products and arranging them in a chronological order as conceptual history requires, are useful to contextualize translation products in their contemporary contexts and observe translation shifts over time. This method not only meets the expectation of descriptive translation studies but also reinforces the credibility of the descriptive approach to examining the translation of concepts by taking both contemporary and historical elements into consideration.

It is shown that the obscure conceptual meaning in English and the lack of full correspondence in Chinese collectively lead to different translation results based on translators' contemporary contexts. This is particularly true for Yan Fu's translation, where new terms were composed to denote foreign concepts, or existing terms acquired new meanings to serve their historical roles. As a tool to naturalize western concepts for domestic needs, Chinese translations, blended with the novel meanings they conveyed, were then accepted as independent concepts. The discrepancies in translating keywords in the selected Chinese versions have revealed that the meaning of a concept is adapted for different circumstances, thus its target text is autonomous from birth and gradually gains its identity as a new concept in the target culture before further modifying its meaning under different social and political contexts. Based on this point, this study also seeks to offer clues to discuss the source–target relationship in translation practice, which can hopefully invite further discussions on the conceptualization of translation at a theoretical level.

There are several future directions of this topic. First, oriented by the descriptive feature shared by Conceptual History and Translation Studies, it is necessary to expand the data sample included in the discussion: the recent trend of corpus analysis within Translation Studies could of great help. Second, apart from the two research questions discussed in this paper, other issues such as translation strategies for concepts are also interesting to look into based on the categories of concepts within the realm of Conceptual History. Third, to obtain a higher accountability in tracing the meaning of concepts through time, other materials such as slogans, governmental documents, and literary works could be used as reference when analyzing translation issues. Last but not least, comparisons can be made between Chinese and other languages such as German, Russian, and Japanese. As a part of the world history, China shares an interactive relationship with the other countries where Conceptual History and Translation Studies together provide the route for researchers to reach a wider context.

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The Manchu Translation of the *Five Classics* in the Context of Confucianism



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Abstract Since the Han dynasty, Confucianism is the way of civil administration. From the start of Qing dynasty, Confucianism is not only a vital component of the national cultural policy, but also a major means for the rulers to build spiritual authority and implement imperial governance. In this context, many Confucian classics represented by the *Five Classics* and *Four Books* have been translated or compiled, and their translations have been used not only for imperial examinations, but also for textbooks in the Eight Banners Official Schools. For the ruling class, translation of the *Five Classics* are particularly meaningful in poetics, politics, and culture: First, the translation of the *Five Classics* is an important way for the Eight Banners to learn the mainstream academic system and traditional moral standards of the Han ethnicity; second, reading the translations has shortened the cultural and psychological gap between the Manchu and Han ethnics, eased their tensions, enhanced their exchanges, and consolidated the foundation of governance.

Keywords Confucianism · The *five classics* · Translation of the han classics · The imperial examination system · Political and cultural implications

1 Introduction

“Reverence for Confucianism and respect for the Way” was the way of cultural governance of the successive Chinese feudal dynasties since the Han dynasty. As

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the official philosophy espoused by the rulers of the past, the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius, and the Confucian value system they represented, have long enjoyed the status of being “fixed in one esteem” of social status. To the general public, the doctrine of Confucianism is their universal belief and spiritual pillar. For rulers, Confucian doctrine was an important tool for constructing spiritual authority and achieving imperial rule.

In the official literature of the Qing dynasty, the term “cultural policy” did not appear explicitly, it was expressed by underlying concepts such as “culture and education” and “edification,” but the explicit term “culture and education” was not used. This does not mean that the construction of culture in the Qing dynasty lacked an established policy/philosophy and code of conduct. On the contrary, since the tenth year of the reign of emperor Shunzhi, the Qing court had formulated a cultural policy of “respecting Confucianism and emphasizing Taoism,” incorporating traditional Chinese cultural concepts and political practice. In the subsequent dynasties the “rising culture and education,” “lofty scriptures” gradually formed the policy of governance. Such as the nine Kangxi years of the “holy teachings of the sixteen,” the Qianlong years of the revision of the “Siku Quanshu,” or the important practice “worship Confucianism and emphasize the Tao.”

In the realm of cultural policy, “respecting Confucianism and emphasizing Taoism” has its derivatives, such as acquiring scholarship in the imperial examinations, erudition, and so on, while seeking and compiling books. Objects of translation of Chinese scripts (books) in the Qing dynasty were not only Confucian texts such as the *Four Books* and the *Five Classics*, but also popular works like the *Jin Ping Mei*, the *Records of the Western Chamber*, and so on. The former, in particular, are rich in ethical concepts and moral codes, and their translation effectively bridges the gap between the Manchu and Chinese peoples’ relations and promoted cultural exchange. By guiding and regulating the translation business, the rulers not only learned about Han culture and codes and systems, but also used thought as a means of governance to perfect the concept and mode of ruling the country. Thus, they established the legitimacy of the regime and realized the harmonious unification of “rule and unification” and “Taoism.”

2 The Tradition of Chinese Translation Since the Early Qing Dynasty

Like the *Four Books*, the *Five Classics* are also the main classics of Confucian doctrine. In the “White Tiger Tong—The Five Classics,” the so-called “canon” means “the usual,” while according to the “Explanation of the Name,” “canon” means “the usual canon” (Yuan Xingjie 2009, 6). Then, what is the constant meaning of the *Five Classics*? (Yuan Xingjie 2009, 6) Undoubtedly, its meaning is to cultivate the body and shape virtue. Of course, the specific meaning varies from canon to canon; for example, Confucius was quoted in the *Book of Rites*: The Explanation of the

Scriptures as saying that the Scriptures' function was to make people "gentle and generous," the *Book of Documents*, or *Classic of History* (Shangshu) makes people "apart and distant," and the *Book of Changes* makes people "pure, quiet and subtle." "The *Book of Rites* makes one "respectful, thrifty and dignified," while the *Spring and Autumn Annals* makes one "compare things in terms of rhetoric" (Yuan Xingjie 2009, 7). In a nutshell, the core of the *Five Classics* lies in the cultivation of a gentleman's personality. In this sense, the "five canonized works" of the canon were very much in line with the Manchu ruler's philosophy of culture and governance and his policy of education, and were therefore strongly advocated and promoted by the latter.

During the Tiancong period, with the successive incorporation of Chinese officials into the Manchu regime, many reform proposals with Chinese cultural connotations or characteristics of Sinicization were put forward one after another. The Chinese system should not be transplanted at all. Such as on the ninth day of the eighth lunar month of the seventh year of Tiancong's reign, Ning Wanyuan-wo asked the Manchurian regime to "participate in the Han [culture] orderly and full-heartedly" not just transplant the Han system. It was necessary to make changes through authority and to create a system that suited one's own needs in a gradual and progressive manner (Luo Zhenyu 1980, 82).

Since then, the rulers of Manchuria have used the phrase "adopt the Han system" as an important guiding principle to govern the country and promote culture and education. In order to communicate ideas and explore the Han system, Han officials introduced Manchurian dignitaries how to translate and explain Chinese texts, which promoted the trend of translation of Manchu books into Chinese, and the rulers' understanding of Han culture. For example, in the ninth month of the seventh year of Tiancong's reign, Ning Wanyuan-wo requested emperor Taizong to translate the *Great Learning*, the *Doctrine of the Mean*, and the *Book of Filial Piety*, although these translations were not part of the *Five Classics*, but the translated books that were presented still had a subtle influence on Taizong's acquisition of Confucianism through the "daily lectures" that followed.

In fact, as early as in the second year of Tiancong, Taizong sent a letter to the Joseon Li dynasty, requesting translations of the Shangshu and Shijing from the Jin and Yuan dynasties. At the same time, he ordered Dae-hae to continue translating Chinese books on the basis of the royal edicts of Taejo. However, despite the fact that Taejo himself was an avid reader of classical texts and wished to learn about Chinese culture through translation and reading, the books he translated were mainly the *Four Books*, but rarely involved the *Five Classics*. As the rulers of Manchuria did not understand Chinese, this situation is mainly attributed to the sparse advice of Chinese officials. Such as in September of the sixth year of Tiancong's reign, Wang Wenkui presented appropriately, that mainly the *Four Books* were mentioned as covering the subtleties of the emperor's rule of the way of peace. In September of the following year, Ning Wanmei asked for translations of Chinese books, and although there were many references to other works, they were still limited to Daxue, Zhongyong, Lunyu, Mengzi, etc. In addition, there was the book collection called "Knowing the Rise and Fall of the Ancient World," and "Enhancing Wisdom and Wisdom," with the works *Tongjian* 通鑑, *Liutao* 六韜, *Sanlüe* 三略, and *Su Shu* 素

书。All the abovementioned books are not related to the *Five Classics* (Luo Zhenyu 1980, 24, 71).

The Manchu rulers had a habit of supporting the translation of Chinese books. In fact, emperor Shunzhi showed great interest in Chinese institutions and culture long before his own rule. In the first year of his reign, Shizu ordered Qi Chongge and others to translate the histories of Liao, Jin, and Yuan, and rewarded them for it. In the second year of Shunzhi's reign, Qi Chongge was awarded the university scholar of Hongwen College and the president of Ming History, which was to some extent an acknowledgment of his translation work. The following year, the internal history college scholar Ganglin was ordered to translate *Hongwu Baojian* 洪武宝训 (also known as *Hongwu yao xun* 洪武要训), this book was the first one being translated in the Qing dynasty. The first Chinese text to be translated was intended to teach Manchurian nobles a lesson borrowed from the words of the former founding emperor. Like his ancestors, emperor Shunzhi granted special favors to the eight banners of the Manchurian nobles as outlaws on the one hand, and on the other hand, he gave special attention to the official Chinese books and to the Han culture and adopted a policy of trust. In order to educate and strengthen the rule of thought, emperor Shunzhi ordered his subjects to respect Confucianism and read the scriptures, and to emphasize loyalty, filial piety, and righteousness. Confucius was worshipped at Taishaku with two kneelings and six kowtows, and a translation of the Five Classics was ordered. In the eleventh year of Shunzhi's reign, the emperor ordered E Mung-tu, who was proficient in Chinese, to translate the *Book of Songs* and the *Da Ming Hui Dian*. After the Qing army entered the pass, E Mung-tu was also royal edict to participate in the compilation of the actual records of Taizu and Taizong dynasties, and translate the Chinese encyclopedias "Book of Rites," the "Book of Documents," and "Compilation of Annals" into Manchu. In the eleventh year of Shunzhi's reign, the Ministry of the Interior published a 20-volume Manchu translation of the Poetry Sutra, which was in the hands of Emomotu and had a profound impact on the Manchu regime at that time. It played an important role in understanding the traditions and culture of the Han people.

Emperor Kangxi was also very supportive of translation, which is evident in the establishment of the "Book Translation Room" and the "Wuying Hall Study Room" as well as in the related activities. In the tenth year of Kangxi, the emperor's edict set up a "Book Translation Room," in which the imperial edicts, the notes, the imperial theory, and other documents were translated. The so-called "Book Translation Room" also known as "Inner Book Translation Room," or the "Inner Book Room" had no fixed members when they were established. As the name implies, "Book Translation" was set up out of the need for book translation, and here said "book" mainly refers to Chinese language texts, such as the *Four Books* and *Five Classics*. In compliance with the emperor's edict, the main task of the "Book Translation Room" included two major aspects, one of which was to translate the scriptures and history by imperial decree, and the other was to translate the imperial edicts of the emperor. Both of which were "compiled and edited to await admittance" (Zhang Hongwei 2009, 83). As an institution specializing in translation, the "Book Translation Room" was also responsible for language and text validation. The translation experience of the "Book

Room” is also recorded in the “Xiaoting Sequel of Records,” and it is believed that in it the *Zizhi Tongjian* 资治通鉴, the *Theory of Nature* 性理精义, and *Gu Wen Yuan Jian* 古文渊鉴 were translated and widely circulated for their simplicity and clarity of meaning (Zhao Lian 1997, 397). Emperor Kangxi was very smart and studious at an early age, and had a deep affection for Chinese books and culture. One of the cultural reasons for his support of translation is that he was a great scholar. According to the Dong Hua Lu, Shengzu [temple name of Kangxi, M.W.] was an indefatigable scholar who was not only well versed in imperial politics, but also in sage psychology and the six imperatives of the scriptures, and he could integrate them into his thinking and understand them. Accordingly, Shengzu thought of the classics of Confucianism as being of infinite meaning and especially important for “teaching” (Qing 1984, 80).

During the reign of Yongzheng, the Manchu translation and publication of Chinese books was still developing, but the type and quantity was a little monotonous and sparse. Obviously, this is related to the political situation during the Yongzheng years. In the 2nd year of Yongzheng, the emperor’s edict of the “On Cliques” and the “Yongzheng Edict,” indicated that there was a fierce struggle within the ruling group. At the same time, in order to strengthen the imperial rule, the Qing court obeyed the “Edict on the Eight Banners” and the “Second Edict on Banners,” which intended to weaken the royal family and to strengthen the rulers’ power. Also, in the 2nd year of Yongzheng reign, Shizong wrote a deduction and commentary “Edict sixteen” on Shengzu, and a synthesis of the “Edict on general education,” to strengthen ethical and moral education. In Shizong’s design, the writing and promulgation of the “General Education by Shengzu” was not just a concrete practice in language work, it was equally important cultural policies which helped to strengthen the ideological and legal education of the common people and to maintain the stability of the rule.

During the Qianlong period, the translation of Chinese books was similar to that of the Shunzhi, Kangxi, and Yongzheng periods. The translated works were generally divided into two types: one was the Confucian classics and the other was the Buddhist classics. Emperor Qianlong believed that the Confucian classics can enlighten people. So it was necessary to translate them though they commanded a lot of time and energy. Take *The Imperial Translation of The Four Books* as an example, it was first printed by the Hall of Martial Valor in the 6th year of Qianlong’s reign (A.D. 1741). It was compiled by the grand Secretariat Ertai on the basis of collating *The Commentary of Spring and Autumn Annals* ordered by the emperor. And then a Manchu-Chinese edition was published in the 20th year of Qianlong’s reign (A.D. 1755). Ertai’s purpose to organize and compile the book under the command of the emperor was to make sure that the translation was accurate and in accordance with the original in the aspects of meaning, intention, and style. Since the early Qing dynasty, the translation and printing of the Chinese books were undertaken by specialized divisions with clear procedures. Before the reign of emperor Kangxi, the translation and printing of books were managed by the Three Inner Courtyards or the Hanlin Academy. Around the tenth year of the Kangxi reign, after the establishment of the “internal translation study,” the work of Chinese book translation was handled by the internal translation study first, and after the completion of translation it was sent to the Home Office,

and by its subordinate body Wu Ying Hall engraving. In the 19th year of Kangxi's reign, Wu Ying Hall added a book repair office, the Chinese translation was again transferred to this, until in the seventh year of Yongzheng's reign it became a special institution of the early Qing dynasty to engrave books.

Following the previous practice, Chinese books, after being translated and printed, were bestowed by the emperor to all kings, civil and military ministers, among which the translated Confucian classics were separately given to Eight-Banner Schools as teaching materials to study Manchu.

3 An Overview of the Translation Studies of the *Five Classics*

In the early Qing dynasty, the translation of the *Five Classics* dates from the reign of Shunzhi.

No redundancy is needed because that has been recorded in a multitude of journals, including the *Whole Catalog of Ancient Rare Books in Taipei Palace Museum*, the *Catalog of World Manchu Journals*, the *Union Catalog of National Manchu Books and Materials*, *Explanatory Notes on the Catalog of Engraving Books in Qing Dynasty's Household Department*, and so on.

In the 11th year of emperor Shunzhi's reign, he issued an imperial edict to translate *The Book of Songs*, which totals 20 volumes and 20 books. And the Imperial Household Department was responsible for the print of this book. From then on, the Qing dynasty began to translate the *Five Classics*.

With reference to the Preface of *The Book of Poetry* (the version made by the emperor's order in the Shunzhi period), Qing Shizu issued an edict to translate *The Book of Poetry*. Its intention was to enlighten readers on humanity and observance of proprieties. Meanwhile, its content instructed the ruling class to run a country and the individual to cultivate himself in order to serve his superior officers with loyalty, to support his parents with filial piety. As such, subjects were expected to be honest and sincere, upright, and virtuous (Yeh Gaoshu 2002, 72).

The recommendation of Han bureaucrats, of course, is also an inseparable part in translating this book.

In March of the 2nd year of Qing emperor Shunzhi (AD 1645), Grand Secretaries Feng Quan and Hong Chengchou submitted memorials to emperor Shunzhi, and commented that from ancient times emperors could settle the world because of the policy of cultivating morals and acquiring knowledge. For example, emperor Wan Yanyong of Jin dynasty and emperor Hu Bilie of Yuan dynasty had widely read classics and promoted Confucian thoughts. What's more, the principles of the emperors' self-cultivation and the governance of the people are demonstrated in the *Six Classics*. If emperors could always accept advice from civil officials of Manchu and Han, then their virtues would surely advance day by day (Ba Dai and Tu Hai 1985, 3–4).

Afterward, Zhu Yunxian, Zhang Xuan, and other officials also successively advised the emperor to set up the system of “Jing Yan” for explaining *the Four Books*, *the Six Classics* and other books related to the mind and body, and the principals of governing the country and pacifying the world.

Although there are many Confucius classics, Qing emperor Shizu gave preference to *The Books of Changes* and *Filial Piety*. Because of its plain but meaningful words and simple but universal principles, he thought that Filial Piety could be applied ubiquitously. (Emperor Shizu 1986, 1–2) As for *The Book of Changes*, one of the *Six Classics*, the emperor also considered it to be far-reaching and widely used, and because of its inclusion of all the principals of the universe, it had been elucidated and developed by generations of those learned scholars (Emperor Shizu 1986, 2).

In December of the 13th year of emperor Shunzhi’s reign, Fu Yijian and Cao Benrong were assigned by Shizu to compile *the General Annotations of the Yijing* with their whole mind and integration. Emperor Shunzhi intended that the scholars could expound all the doctrines and ideas of the original text through this book, making it shine brightly like the sun and stars (Fu Yijian and Cao Benrong 1986, 1).

Although emperor Kangxi was keen on learning, his primary interest was in Song dynasty Neo-Confucianism. According to the *Imperial Collection of Emperor Kangxi*, the ancient emperors’ way of governance is based on Tao, while Tao is generated from the heart. There is no one greater than the scholars in Song dynasty who analyse the “li” of human nature, and utilize the *Six Classics* to assist emperors to exert their governance (Xuan 1966a, 1–2).

Emperor Kangxi advocated Song [Neo-]Confucianism, especially Zhu Xi’s theories. Conspicuously, he had his own political purpose through doing so. While besides that, he also gave credits to doctrines of the *Five Classics*. In his view, the *Five Classics*, elucidated by Zhuxi, is justified, peaceful, and broad-minded. The principles of the world and the rules of universe are absorbed in it, making it valid in political affairs and feasible in daily life. (Xuan 1966b, 10–12) It’s well-known in academic circles that the Manchurian regime made use of Chinese culture skillfully after emperor Kangxi had taken over the reign.

In June of the 6th year of the reign of emperor Kangxi, he accepted the advice of Xiong Cilu’s, a government official belonging to Han nationality. He advocated practical actions and supported Confucianism, also pointing out that scholars must read Six Classics, as well as the *Analects* of Confucius and *Mencius* (Ma Qi et al. 1985, 14–15).

In order to learn Han people’s mainstream academic system and traditional code of ethics, emperor Kangxi not only paid attention to the classics, but also ordered to edit a bunch of books. The work of editing was considered to be his major achievement, and the *Annotation to the Book of Documents*, which referred to the *Five Classics* has been edited since the 17th year of Kangxi’s reign and was ready to print after two years. The book consists of twenty-six volumes and twenty-six chapters, which were engraved by the inner imperial courtyards. At the beginning of the volume, there were the “Yu Zhi Preface,” and the “Jinchengshu” translated by Kulena, and the names and official titles of the fifty-eight compilers and translators including Kulena and Ye Fang’ai.

Though this book was called a collection of articles “Under Imperial Order,” it contained both translations and compilations. Therefore, in his book *Cultural Policy in Early Qing Dynasty*, Yeh Gaoshu still regarded it as one of the Chinese Manchu translations (Yeh Gaoshu 2002, 68).

From the 19th year of emperor Kangxi’s reign to the late Qianlong period, quite a few translated books of the *Five Classics* were officially printed in Qing dynasty, such as *Daily Interpretation of the Books of Changes* (Scholars like Niu Niu and Sun Zaifeng were ordered to edit it in the 22nd year of the Kangxi reign), *The Book of Songs* (translated by the order of emperor Shunzhi in the 11th year of the Yongzheng reign), *Daily Interpretation of Spring and Autumn* (in the second year of the Qianlong reign, Kulena was ordered to translate it with others), *The Imperial Translation of Shu Jing Ji Zhuan*, *The Imperial Translation of the Book of Changes*, *The Imperial Translation of The Book of Songs*, *The Imperial Translation of Rites*, and *The Imperial Translation of Spring and Autumn* (those imperial translations were all ordered to be translated by emperor Qianlong in the 25th, 30th, 33rd, 48th, and 49th year of the Qianlong reign). Most of the translated works above remain unclear in terms of translators, marked “By Order of the Emperor” in the prefaces only.

Nevertheless, if we look at it from the perspective of the cultural and educational policy and the official system of the Qing dynasty, the translators should have been clerks, Hanlin Academy bachelors, middle secretaries, and treasury envoys, who are proficient both in Manchu and Chinese.

It should be noted that the *Book of Songs* has been translated and printed three times during the reign of emperor Shunzhi, Yongzheng, and Qianlong. And the same version was published in the 11th year of the Yongzheng reign under Shunzhi. The Imperial Translation of the *Book of Songs*, which came out in the 33rd year of Qianlong has less volumes than the former ones. Thus they are obviously different versions.

The frequent translation and printing of the classics showed that the ruler placed great emphasis on translation and praised highly the Chinese classics.

4 The Application of the Translations of the *Five Classics* in the Imperial Examinations and the Studies of the Eight Banners

As in Ming and Qing dynasties, when officers were elected by their articles about the *Four Books*, the doctrines of the *Five Classics* were also an essential part of the imperial examinations of the Eight Banners.

As early as the Manchu army entered the Shanhaiguan [1644], the imperial court has issued a regulation that in both metropolitan and provincial examination, four questions of each of the *Five Classics* must be set in the first round, 20 questions in total. Examinees needed to randomly choose one of the *Five Classics* and answer four

questions. Taking the style of standardized eight-legged essays on the *Four Books* and the *Five Classics*, these are called both, creative art as well as practical essays.

During the entrance examination, there are Sui Kao and Ke Kao, the first and second qualification examination before triennial examination. Except for writing an essay whose topic derived from the *Four Books*, the candidate also wrote another article on a subject from the *Five Classics*.

According to the textual research of Shang Yanliu 商衍鏗, there were five examinations in the county examination of students in the Qing dynasty. The first one was mainly about the examination of *Four Books* and on the poetics of the five characters and the six rhymes, and the second on the theory of nature or the theory of filial piety were added. However, from the third test on, a scripture was added to the examination, and the scope of the test was limited to the *Five Classics* (Shang Yanliu 2014, 9–10).

The process of the entrance exam for Confucian students is also mentioned in *The Election Annals of Qing Dynasty Historical Manuscripts*.

From such facts, we can see that the exam, which was set for Confucian students in the Qing dynasty, took one question from the *Four Books* and the *Classic of Filial Piety* respectively at the beginning, but questions from the *Four Books* occupied the main position in the exam.

This method was later adjusted and changed into two questions from the *Four Books* in the “primary test” and two questions in the “retrial,” one of the *Four Books* and the other of the *Primary Learning*.

In the 39th year of emperor Kangxi’s reign (AD 1700), the emperor ordered that candidates should have a good grasp of Confucian classics in the provincial selective examination, since the *Five Classics* and the *Primary Learning* were part of their daily learning content. Moreover, candidates who were able to recite the *Three Classics* (the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, the *Book of Changes*, the *Book of Songs*) and the *Five Classics* (the *Book of Songs*, the *Book of History*, the *Book of Rites*, the *Book of Changes*, the *Spring and Autumn Annals*) had admission priority (Shang Yanliu 2014, 28).

In the 42nd year of emperor Kangxi’s reign (AD 1703), education administrator of Shuntian Prefecture even specially took the recitation of the *Five Classics* as the standard of candidate selection. Although this practice was just made by imperial order, the importance of the *Five Classics* could be seen from it.

After the middle period of the reign of emperor Qianlong, candidates needed to write two eight-legged essays, whose topics were derived from the *Four Books* and *Five Classics*, which is a token.

From the beginning of the Qing dynasty, classics had been designated as the subject, when primary students took part in Sui Kao and Ke Kao. Sui Kao is an exam held in the first year of the accession of the official inspector while Ke Kao is held in the second year. Initially students were appointed to write one piece. But after some time this rule was abolished temporarily.

In the 6th year of Yongzheng’s reign, the abolished test on the *Five Classics* was restored. And it was the same case both in Sui Kao and Ke Kao.

In the 23rd year of the Qianlong reign (AD 1758), Sui Kao was changed to write two essays, one on the *Four Books* and the other on the *Five Classics*. Although there were no scriptures tested in the imperial examination ever since, it became an “everlasting tradition” to test the *Five Classics* in Sui Kao. In the imperial examination system of the Qing dynasty, there was scripture testing as well.

Take “Ba Gong 拔贡” (an exam held by the provincial Department of Education which is intended to select students of fine qualities and fine scholars for the Imperial College) as an example, students were called Linsheng, Zengsheng, and Fusheng. They were provided with meals by the government and had to apply to the Educational Administration of the local governments at various levels before they could attend the exam “Ba Gong.” Then they took two exams, and in each exam they were required to write an essay to interpret opinions and ideas in Confucian classics.

In the 16th year of the Qianlong reign, the “huikao 会考” was added to the “Bagong exam,” which still included one question on the Scriptures and one on the *Four Books*.

In the 17th year of the Qianlong reign, the examination syllabus was changed from the text of Confucian classics into the explanation of the Confucian classics, with its scope staying unchanged.

It was the with the “Yougong 优贡” Exam (held every three years, where the provincial Ministry of Education selected the students with erudition as well as high moral code from lower levels for the Imperial College). In the 29th year of the reign of emperor Qianlong (1764 AD), two passages from the *Four Books* and one from the *Explanations of the Classics* were chosen to be tested in the exam.

Even in late Qing dynasty, for example, the 27th year of Guangxu, there was still one article from the *Five Classics* in the second round of the “Yougong” exam.

The exam section in the “Yougong” also had to finish a scripture just like “Bagong” exam. And after the eight-legged essay was abolished in the first year of the Xuantonq reign, the *Five Classics* test questions would still be adopted as the test content.

In Qing dynasty, the imperial exam at the provincial level, colloquially known as “Xiangshi 乡试,” followed the example of that in the Ming dynasty. Its codes were also handed down from the Ming court with few alterations, such as the date, the form of test questions, the way of sealing names, copying the manuscript (in case of cheating), and proofreading.

According to the system in Qing dynasty, the imperial provincial exam is divided into three exams, which is generally scheduled for August but it can be postponed when events or accidents occur.

The question type of the examination and the content still primarily take the form of “zhiyi 制艺,” which is also called “shiwen 时文.” The first examination comprises seven articles, three of which were on the *Four Books* and the remaining four were selected from the twenty articles in the *Five Classics* (four questions for each classic).

During the Kangxi and Yongzheng period, provincial examinations were adjusted. For example, in the second argumentation *Filial Piety* 孝经 was used in the beginning. However, afterward the *Theory of Nature* 性理 was added.

In the first years of the reign of emperor Yongzheng, the original system was changed again, and only the book of *Filial Piety* was examined.

The Imperial Court abolished the stereotyped writing temporarily for some reason in the second year of Kangxi's reign. Additionally, the five questions about "Ce 策" in the original third test was shifted to the first test and the second test was changed to require the candidate to write an essay about the *Four Books* and the *Five Classics*, respectively.

All these were temporary adjustments of provincial examination methods.

Whatever the adjustment was, testing the *Five Classics* in the provincial examination was the tradition in the Qing dynasty.

No matter what adjustments were made, the questions about the *Five Classics* in the Provincial Examination were customized in Qing dynasty.

For example, in the 52nd year of emperor Qianlong's reign, emperor Qianlong claimed that students could not be familiar with all of the *Five Classics* if the students learned only one of the *Five Classics*, which did not conform to the idea of pursuing all useful knowledge beneficial to the country. Therefore, he commanded to abolish the practice of "examining only one classic" and test the *Five Classics* in particular sequence, one classic a year. Later, it was changed again that one argument topic was selected from each of the *Five Classics*, which formed the five questions about the *Five Classics* (Shang Yanliu 2014, 80).

Although the original texts of the five topics were the *Book of Changes*, the *Book of History*, the *Book of Songs*, the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, and the *Book of Rites*, their contents were not totally the original theories of pre-Qin philosophers. Instead, the chapters, sentences, and annotations of Confucianism in Song dynasty were also added. Specifically, the original meaning of Cheng's and Zhu's theories was integrated into the *Book of Changes*, Cai Shen's 蔡沈 annotation was integrated into the *Book of Songs*, Zhu Xi's 朱熹 *Collected Biographies* was integrated into the *Book of Songs*, Hu Anguo's 胡安国 research was integrated into the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, and Chen Shu's 陈澧 biographical notes were integrated into the *Book of Rites*.

In late Qing dynasty under the reign of emperor Guangxu 光绪, the Qing government reformed the rules of Provincial Examination for some reason. But the *Five Classics* and *Five Books* were still tested.

Since the Qing dynasty had followed the examination system of Ming dynasty, "the questions in the metropolitan examination were not different from those in the provincial examination," so I will not specify them here. But it is certain that the *Five Classics* were still an important basis for both of the examinations (Wang 2015, 42).

According to *Draft of Qing History* 清史稿, starting in Tang dynasty the previous Imperial Examination System was abolished and a new system of testing in subjects was established, which was also followed by successive dynasties.

Since Ming dynasty, the examination topics were selected from the *Four Books* (*The Great Learning*, *The Doctrine of Mean*, *The Confucian Analects*, and the *Works of Mencius*) and the *Five Classics* (*The Book of Song*, *The Book of History*, *The Book of Changes*, *The Book of Rites*, and *The Spring and Autumn Annals*). These were called "Zhiyi 制艺" (Eight-legged essays). For 200 years, Qing dynasty followed the imperial examination system of the Ming. Although there were other ways to

become an official, officials who had passed the examination always enjoyed a higher position (Zhao Erxun et al. 1977, 3099).

It can be seen that the sessions and contents of the imperial examination system in Qing dynasty still went into the same direction as the old one of the Ming dynasty.

The reason why the imperial examination in Qing dynasty regarded the *Five Classics* as highly important is closely related to the content of official teaching and learning.

Since the early Qing dynasty, Manchu-Chinese texts were regulated as the textbooks for students of “Eight Banners,” which has gradually become a tradition.

As early as in the reign of emperor Taizu, in order to teach the bannermen to read and solve the contradiction of “no books can be read” 无书可读, Dahai 达海 began to translate Chinese books.

Although the translated Han books at this time did not involve the *Five Classics*, it signified the relationship between the translations and the bannermen’s education.

After Taizong ascended the throne, he attached more attention to the education of banner people (all members of the “Eight Banners” during Qing dynasty) and asked the Joseon dynasty for translations which including the *Book of Songs* and the *Book of Documents*.

It was recorded in *the Veritable Records of the Joseon Dynasty...the True Record of King Injo* 朝鲜王朝实录·仁祖实录 as: I have heard that there are the classics like *The Book of Documents*, *The Book of Songs*, and the *Four Books* translated in the Jin and Yuan dynasties. I ask for a copy of these with our sincere respect and hope you are so generous (Korea 1973, 38).

The event of emperor Taizong of the Qing dynasty seeking books happened in 1628, the second year of the Tiancong period (Tiancong was emperor Taizong’s reign title).

In December of the same year, the Korean authority replied: “Our country only retains the ordinary versions of those books, and we never obtain the translation versions from Jin or Yuan dynasty.” So they declined Tai Zong’s request.

However, in October of the following year, Renzu 仁祖 changed his mind and gave the Qing dynasty a portion of the Chinese translation requested by Taizong 太宗.

This was also recorded in the records and it said:

The Khan in Jin dynasty craved these books, and then was bestowed *Spring and Autumn Annals*, the *Book of Changes*, the *Book of Rites*, *History as a Mirror* 通鉴, *Outline of History* 史略 and so forth by the Ren Zu (Korea 1973, 352).

Although two of the *Five classics*, the *Book of Songs*, the *Book of History* and the *Four Books* that emperor Taizong thinks highly of didn’t get their honor, the other three classics, namely, the *Book of Rites*, *The Spring and Autumn Annals* and the *Book of Changes* can mitigate the textbook shortage of Banner people’s education in the early years of Qing dynasty.

At the initial period of emperor Shunzhi, when the Manchu of Qing dynasty entered the Shanhai Pass, the imperial court gave permission to the offspring of both Manchu and Han officials to choose to learn books of either Han or Qing at their own will with the establishment of the Imperial College for Eight Banners. The

textbooks at this time are nothing but traditional classics and histories of Han or Manchu translations of them.

And these Manchu versions are still dominated by classics and history, among which there is more from the *Four Book* than from the *Five Classics*.

The *Great Learning* and the *Doctrine of the Mean* translated by A Shentan 阿什坦, who was nominated Doctor Official in the 2nd year of the Qing emperor Shunzhi's reign, served as the main textbooks for Bannermen (Chen Kangqi 1997, 362).

In the 9th year of the Shunzhi reign, with the approval of the emperor, the Ministry of Rites proposed that nongovernmental booksellers could only publish and sell books on Neo-Confucianism, politics, or books that benefit future literature.

And the circulation of "lewd scripts and books and all the imitations of classics 其他琐语淫词,及一切滥刻窗艺社" were prohibited (通行严禁). Whoever violated this regulation would severely be punished (Solner etc. 1968, 165).

In order to improve the study atmosphere of literati, Qing emperor Shunzhi issued a general order to provincial education administrators that the *Five Classics* and the *Four Books* should be lectured by instructors and students should recite and explain them (Ji Huan et al. 1988, 5486).

Besides, in February of the following year, emperor Shunzhi ordered ministers of the Imperial Household Department to translate the *Five Classics*, and checked the translation scripts by himself. He sighed: "It's an eternal truth, the book contains all of the holiest doctrines 天德王道,备载于书,真万世不易之理也。" (Ba Dai and Tu Hai 1985, 572)

With the finished translation of these books in the 11th year of emperor Shunzhi's reign, its Manchu and Manchu-Chinese manuscripts sprung up in the nongovernmental bookshops. It can be seen that the widespread phenomenon of the book is as much due to the application for courts or textbooks of the Eight-Banner Schools.

During the reign of emperor Shunzhi, his excessive intimacy with people and culture of the Han nationality brought about pressure from the ruling class of Manchu, but the tradition that the Manchu translations of Chinese texts had been designated as teaching materials did not change.

An Example is the *Exposition of the Great Learning* translated by Fu Dali 傅达礼 during the reign of emperor Kangxi. As soon as it was published, it was bestowed to all ministers and official Eight-Banner Schools.

At the same time, the Hanlin Academy taught these every day on a regular basis, and various drafts were in turn considered as textbooks for the Qi minority such as "Interpretation of the *Scriptures*," "Interpretation of the *Book of Changes*," "Interpretation of *Spring and Autumn Annals*," and "Interpretation of the *Book of Rites*."

Notwithstanding some original Chinese versions, these Manchu books appeared in annotated editions and were actually retranslations of the *Five Classics*.

No matter if the purpose of compiling these classics was "to comprehend the classics as they are nationally recognized" or "to comprehend the national books as they are classics," the fact that they were used as textbooks for the eight banners disciples is verified (Yeh Gaoshu 2006, 1-42).

During the Qianlong period, one of the reasons of continuing the translation of the *Five Classics* was to revise the old version used as Manchu textbooks, to adapt the new change of Manchurian culture, especially the newest development of Manchu becoming the national language.

At the beginning, the Manchurian language had a small vocabulary and simple grammar. Until emperor Qianlong's reign, with the development of the language, the new features of language had already risen, which were reflected not only in addition of new words but also in completeness of grammar and syntax.

The *New Qing Language by Imperial Order* 钦定新清语 during Qianlong's reign could also show this change of Manchu language in 5 major aspects: Firstly, the translations of many loan words borrowed from Chinese into Manchu language were changed from transliteration to free translation. Secondly, many problems with free translation of Chinese were corrected. Thirdly, some Chinese characters representing certain phonemes in Manchu language were standardized. Fourthly, some problems of translating Chinese words with tones into Manchu language were solved. Fifthly, some meanings of Manchu words were elucidated and expanded (Tong Yonggong and Guan Jialu 1995, 66–69).

In this way, the old versions were out of date as the textbooks for the Manchurian nobles.

For example, in the 32nd year of Qianlong's reign, the imperial version of the *Book of Songs* was published containing emperor Qianlong's imperial preface, which refers to the prescription that retranslation should adopt to the newly established national language and make compromises (*Emperor Gaozong* 1986, 7–8).

The *Five Classics* texts translated by the emperor Qianlong under the standard of the new Qing language, facilitated the following generations a lot to retranslate the old Chinese books and to revise educational books for Bannermen, etc.

For instance, in July of the 6th year of Xianfeng's reign, emperor Wenzong just took the new Qing language in *Translation of the Five Classics by Imperial Order* as a reference when he proofread and collated *Translation of the Book of Filial Piety* (translated in the 5th year of Qianlong's reign by order of the emperor) again.

In the same year, Meng Bao's 孟保 translation version of the *Exposition of the Great Learning* 大学衍义 was presented to emperor Wenzong by the grand secretary Wen Qing 文庆. When the emperor read and commented on this book again, he also took the authorized version of the *Five Classics*, which was published during the reign of emperor Qianlong, as a reference.

At the time of the emergence of newly translated versions, some old book versions of the Han canon were still used as textbooks, but whether new versions or old ones, they were all utilized for banner education and talent cultivation, which boasted prominent contribution.

5 The Poetic, Political and Cultural Causes of the Translation of the *Five Classics*

Take the *Book of Songs* as an example. The two Manchu translations of this book are more than one hundred years apart, so there exist differences between the two translations in terms of syntax, vocabulary, and stylistic features. For instance, the old translation is more concise, while the new one is more detailed. The reason for this remarkable distinction lies in the development of the Manchu language in the two periods and the mainstream poetics of the society.

Masato Yamazaki 山崎雅人, a Japanese scholar, already had a detailed analysis about this point in his book *On the difference between the old and the new Manchu versions of the Book of Songs*, so it won't be repeated here again (Masato Yamazaki 2000, 246–261).

Yeh Gaoshu 叶高树 also made an investigation and research on the two versions of *The Book of Songs* in the article *Comparative Study of Manchu Versions of The Book of Songs*. His research is more detailed than Yamazaki's (2000). The content not only involves the language, such as the translation of nouns and reduplicated words, the comparison of words and grammar, but also quotes and explains the whole story of retranslation of *The Book of Songs* in emperor Qianlong's reign.

The original version was translated by Yu Shizu under the order of emperor Shunzhi in the 11th year of his reign, and the genre has been prepared for a long time. For those who are not completely fair to the *Qing Wen Jian* 清文鉴, they take part in the newly fixed national language and speculate that the matter is extremely detailed. Due to the order to sign the title in separate volumes, more than a few are eclectic (Emperor Gaozong 1768).

Above, the reason for retranslating the *Book of Songs* is clearly expressed. In other words, with the development of Manchu and the compilation of the *Si Ku Quan Shu* during the reign of emperor Qianlong, the language used in the past was so distinguished from that was used then, that retranslating became a must.

In the preface of the retranslated version, it was not mentioned whether the retranslation was fully out of linguistic revolution, or had something to do with political or cultural policy concerns. But this question was already explained in the older translations.

During the reign of emperor Kangxi, the work of translating and printing the Chinese books continued, it included two parts: One was to arrange the unpublished translations left by the former dynasty, another was to translate other Chinese books.

Although the *Five Classics* were not translated during this period, the chapters and sentences of it were used in the "Daily Talks," and collected and printed as *Daily Talks on Interpretation of the Book of Documents* and *Daily Talks on Interpretation of the Book of Changes* and so on, which was of great help to illustrate righteousness and politics, taught subjects to admire and respect the laws made by their previous emperors and he sought the governance diligently (Xuan Ye 1966b, 10).

In a strict sense, these "commentaries 解义" cannot be called translations for the reason that they were not translated from the Chinese classics directly. However,

they can still be called translation in a broad sense, since they were first written in Chinese and then in Manchu.

Under the reign of Kangxi, works about the *Five Classics* compiled in this way also include the *Daily Talks on the Annotations of the Spring and Autumn Annals* and the *Daily Talks on the Annotations of The Book of Rites*. However, neither of the two books was published until the Qianlong period.

As for the reasons for the delay of the publication of the *Commentary of Spring and Autumn Annals*, there is a clear explanation in the *Complete Collection of Poetry and Essays of Qing Emperor Gaozong (Qianlong) First Collection*. In this book it is explained that the task of compiling books was quite heavy in the later years of emperor Kangxi. Then, after emperor Yongzheng ascended the throne, he reckoned that the *Official Compilation of Legends during the Spring and Autumn Annals* differs a lot from Hu Anguo's own thoughts and it is "not consistent with the emperor's will." So Yongzheng ordered Prince Yunli, Grand Secretary Zhang Tingyu, and secretaries of Cabinet like Fang Bao to revise it. Therefore, the publication was somewhat delayed (Emperor Gaozong 1993a, 13–14).

An *Explanation of the Book of Rites* 日讲礼记解义 was finished under Kangxi's reign, but it was always kept in the translation study room due to the huge volume of the book, resulting in a delay in completing the Manchu translation.

At the beginning of Qianlong's reign, because of the *Commentary of the Three Rites* 三礼义疏, the book was taken out in order to collate the similarities and differences, and then the translation of this book was completed.

As for the *Daily Commentary of the Book of Songs* 日讲诗经解义, its translated version didn't go to press under Kangxi's reign.

The reason may be related to the circulation of the Manchu version of the *Book of Songs* in the period of Shunzhi and the compilation of the *Collection of Legends of the Book of Songs compiled and published by imperial order* 钦定诗经传说汇纂.

In the later part of Kangxi's reign, the translation of books of the Han canon was expanded. Besides classical and historical ones, the Confucian works of Ming dynasty became a part of it, such as the *Vegetable Roots* 菜根谭, *Awaken the World* 醒世要言 and so on. These books also involved ways to govern the word, as well as how to eliminate evil and promote the good as before, while none of them was about the *Five Classics*.

During the reign of Yongzheng, the established academic policy of the previous dynasty was generally followed.

On the one hand, emperor Yongzheng mandated that *Collection of Authorized Poetry* be completed to meet the unrealized ambitions of emperor Kangxi. On the other hand, he required that *Collection of Authorized Books* be completed with *Books collection* by the scholar Cai Shen, students of scholar Zhu Xi, complemented with the standardized script and with other theories formed since Han and Tang dynasties.

Meanwhile, the court published some old books in Chinese such as *Reader of the Five Classics and The Four Books* and *Wu zi jinsilu jiyao* 五子近思录辑要. Then the court issued some of these books to the Imperial College and other branches of Eight Banners Official Schools in response to the edict of Qing emperor Yongzheng.

However, among the seven Manchu versions published under Yongzheng's reign, none of them belong to the *Five Classics*. Thus we still have to look into the reasons.

After the reign of Qianlong, the royal court continued the policy of worshipping Confucianism and respecting Buddhism, and mainly focused on Confucian classics in translation.

Among them, the *Five Classics* were translated by books such as: *the Imperial Translation of the Book of Documents*, *the Imperial Translation of the Book of Changes*, *the Imperial Translation of the Book of Songs*, *the Imperial Translation of the Book of Rites*, and *the Imperial Translation of the Spring and Autumn Annals*.

There is no doubt that the teachings of the *Five Classics* can inspire people and refresh the soul. Gaozong must have had good intentions to insist on retranslating or re-engraving the abovementioned classics which is a kind of time-consuming and labor-consuming work.

According to the initial collection of *Literature Collection of Poems by Emperor Gaozong* (Qianlong) 清高宗(乾隆)御制诗文全集·御制文初集, emperor Gaozong once declared "I love to spend my spare time translating Confucian classics into Mandarin. Classics like *The Books of Changes*, *The Book of History*, *The Book of Songs* and *The Four Books* are all translated without exception." (Emperor Gaozong 1993a, 15) Emperor Gaozong's reverence for the teachings of the *Five Classics* can be seen from his practice of adjusting the imperial examination by using papers which examine the *Five Classics*.

As we all know, there were specific regulations on the imperial examinations of Qing dynasty about the question setting of the *Four Books* and the *Five Classics*. For instance, as was mentioned in the *Documents of History of the Qing Dynasty* 清史稿: The first exam tested three articles of the *Four Books* and four articles of the argumentation in Confucian classics, that is to say, it tested three questions according to the *Four Books*, extracting one question from the *Analects*, the *Great Learning*, the *Doctrine of the Mean*, and *Mencius*, respectively.

As for the four articles of argumentation in Confucian classics 经义四篇, it tested four questions each about the *Five Classics*, extracting one question from each classic respectively, a total of 20 questions.

Candidates could answer either four questions selected from a certain scripture of the *Four Books* or questions from the *Five Classics*, the former of which was called "acquiring one of the *Four Books* 认习一经," while the latter was described as "writing in a style of the *Five Classics* 全作五经文." (Zhao Erxun et al. 1977, 3159).

"Writing in the style of the *Five Classics*" varies from the exam regulation in Qing dynasty. "Acquiring one of the *Four Books*" may cause candidates to be unrealistic and narrow-minded. In this sense, the translation of the *Five Classics* is necessary as a way to improve the academic atmosphere and advocate pragmatism.

In the 52nd year of Qianlong's reign, emperor Gaozong issued an order, in which he pointed out that young men, studying at the age of fifteen, were supposed to read all of *Five Classics*, but nowadays a variety of students only read one classic, or even bundled up the books and never read them. This was not the way of worshipping the classics.

Therefore, emperor Qianlong decided to adopt the *Five Classics* round test from that year on. After the 58th year of the reign of emperor Qianlong, the exam was changed to test the *Five Classics* all at one time permanently so as to highlight the importance of learning the *Five Classics* (Chen and Pan 2018, 171)

Due to this policy, emperor Gaozong's reign witnessed a flourishing of the *Five Classics* translation, with official satisfaction in its good quality, high efficiency, and higher quantity than ever before.

According to the *Authorized Comprehensive Records of Eight Banners* 钦定八旗通志, since the founding of the dynasty, the Qing emperors firstly translated the *Four Books* which was regarded as "a bridge for the learners at the first stage," and then translated the *Five Classics* including the *Book of Changes*, the *Book of Documents*, the *Book of Songs*, the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, and the *Book of Rites*.

The *Five Classics* have different themes and purposes. "The *Book of Changes* reveals the good or ill luck through image-numerology; the *Book of Documents* explains the obscure words to make them easy to understand; the *Book of Songs* imitates its chants. The affection beyond the words provides us with much food for thought; the *Spring and Autumn Annals* check similarities and differences carefully, and every word is full of exhortation; the *Book of Rites* studies the specific things, law and truth in detail, explores and researches famous dictums, so that it can distinguish the arguments of Confucian Scholars who are committed to explain the Confucian classics." (Tebao et al. 1968, 5–6).

Furthermore, it was pointed out that most translations of scriptures from the *Five Classics* show formality and intricacy, while the translation of the *Four Books* and the *Five Classics* help people to understand, which is of great significance to education.

The translation of *Five Classics* in Qianlong's reign includes not only the contents of the original classics, but also from time to time the explanation of sections and phrases and the meanings of words, which helps scholars and readers to study the meaning of the classics.

It bears at least two benefits: One is the unification of academy, the other is the control of culture.

As is known to all, before the earlier period of emperor Qianlong, the translated texts of the Han classics and history books were mainly in Manchu language, while some of them were in both Manchu and Chinese. However, after the 20th year of emperor Qianlong's reign, all the translation of Chinese works were in combined versions of Manchu and Chinese.

This adjustment was made according to the changed situation of Banner people's ancient Mandarin learning. In early Qing dynasty, princes and ministers were all good at archery and mastered ancient Mandarin, while gradually, not everyone excelled in ancient Mandarin anymore (Zhao Lian 1997, 16; Yang Zhongyi 1969, 1).

Under Qing emperor Shunzhi's reign, on the premise that the Manchu people have learned the Manchu books, they translated Han books and then appreciated them to understand Han culture. Different from the former motivations, the translation of "*Five Classics* and *Four Books*" after the 20th year of emperor Qianlong's reign mainly aimed at persuading those sons of Eight Banners who gradually learned Han

characters and customs to relearn “Mandarin,” and consolidating the Manchu ancient customs and the root of the country.

Promoting national books was more important than studying doctrines no matter the national books were advocated for studying their doctrines so that the thoughts of saints could spread nationwide, or the classics were studied because they were nationally acknowledged so that the tradition of valuing doctrines could be inherited by later generations (Teibao et al. 1968, 6).

Gaozong was not only familiar with *The Book of Songs* and the *Book of History*, but also did a lot of research on the *Book of Change* and the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, especially under historical aspects. He has written more than 50 comments on history to discuss the gain and loss of each dynasty.

Meanwhile, obeying the will of emperor Shizong, Gaozong interpreted the words “Diyi 狄夷 (barbarians)” and “Jiguan 籍贯 (place of birth)” to construct political power ideology and thought, the orthodoxy of a country must comply with “the grand unification in *The Spring and Autumn Annals*,” “revere the king, drive off barbarians 尊王黜霸” and establish the cardinal guides and constant virtues over countless generations to redress social morality (Qing Gui et al. 1985, 34–35).

Through translating and printing the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, and comparing them with the *Compendium of General Knowledge* 通鉴纲目, emperor Gaozong not only overcame the criticism and doubts about himself but also constructed theories for governing the country.

Emperor Gaozong’s esteem for the *Spring and Autumn Annals* was extremely obvious, so that in the 47th year of emperor Qianlong’s reign, the princes and military chancellor were ordered by emperor Gaozong to cut and polish the content of the original book to fit the style and form of the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, when rectifying the *Compendium of General Knowledge* (Emperor Gaozong 1986, 57).

In the reign of emperor Gaozong, with the diversity of the scope of translation and the obvious increase of the translation of Buddhist scriptures, the trend of respecting and stressing Confucianism was still popular, and the translation of Confucian classics and history still occupied the most significant position ever compared with others, which became an important way to create peace for generations.

Qing emperor Gaozong spoke highly of the view, that the emperor should take charge of the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, while the right and wrong were the justice of all ages. He pointed out that, as an emperor who dominated supreme power above the masses, he was inherently endowed with the right to praise and criticize his officials. However, the non-justice was also a normality, that should be upheld by the emperor (The First Historical Archives of China 1998, 830).

Qing emperor Gaozong pointed out that there are many chronicle books over the years, and all of them were on the basis of the *Compendium of General Knowledge*, but it just wrote the meaning of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* and it was used to comprehend natural law, standardize the code of ethics and shown lessons from the past for the present. (Emperor Gaozong 1993a, 11) During emperor Gaozong’s reign, he praised highly in a Confucian school of idealist philosophy of the Song Dynasties, and considered Confucian orthodoxy was carried on the idea of five scholars who

were named Zhou, Cheng, Zhang, Zhu and that classics were famous to memorize Cheng and Zhu (Hong Li 2005, 20–21).

However, emperor Gaozong still adjusted the policy of the exclusive reign of Neo-Confucianism and cast his view on Confucian classics again since the 14th year of emperor Qianlong's reign.

That was recorded in detail in the *Qianlong Period Imperial Edicts Archive* 乾隆朝上谕档, in which it was written: “For sages and men of virtue, they should put moral conduct first and essay writing last. And in terms of essay writing, a good grasp of the *Five Classics* served as the foundation while the diction of the essay was much less important. Having served as literary servants in the imperial court, the members of Imperial Hanlin Academy were always committed to literary creation, because I focused the imperial exams on poetry and prose. But it is hard to find a person who strive to be fascinated by the *Six Classics*, who ponders over the essence of an article, and who explores the mysteries of classics. Are there few people devoted to doing this? Or is there still someone I just have not seen? Reading all the classics is not as good as actually practicing the principles in it, and doing things personally as your own pursuit. Advocating Confucian classics can bring a good influence on the social atmosphere and people's thoughts. Whether the great secretaries and nine ministers in the imperial court or the governors outside the imperial court publicly recommend people they know, not confined to jinshi, successful candidates, scholars, and even retired idlers, look who can concentrate on learning, and then choose carefully from them. We must carefully choose earnest, experienced, honest and knowledgeable people so that we can select talents. The selection must not be made indiscriminately but be in accordance with my mind. 圣贤之学:行,本也;文,末也。而文之中,经术其根底也,词章其枝叶也。翰林以文学侍从,近年来因朕每试以诗赋,颇致力于词章,而求其沉酣六籍,舍英咀华,究经训之闾(kǔn)奥者,不少概见,岂笃志正学者鲜与?.....夫穷经不如敦行,然知务本则于躬行为近。圣贤之学:行,本也;文,末也。崇尚经术,良有关于世道人心。.....内大学士、九卿,外督抚,其公举所知,不拘进士、举人、诸生,以及退休闲散人员,能潜心经学者,慎重遴选。务择老成敦厚,纯朴淹通之士,以应精选。勿滥,称朕意焉。(中国第一历史档案馆 1998, 393)

Originally, the Classics Studies referred to various theories of different schools in Pre-Qin period. But after Han dynasty, it typically referred to the *13 Confucian Classics*, in which the *Four Books* and the *Five Classics* were particularly important.

Therefore, the emperor emphasized that the classic was the basis of “the article” so they should contain the *Five Classics*.

It can easily be seen from the above imperial edict that the research of Confucian classics is encouraged by emperor Qianlong as a way to recruit ministers mostly from scholars who have dived into studying classics and to enable those erudite elders to make contributions to the country (Zhao Lian 1997, 15–16).

6 Concluding Remarks

Before the Manchurian Qing dynasty, Manchu had already started to learn Chinese culture. Such as in the period of emperor Taizong, the emperor had ordered Dahai, Ganglin, etc. to translate Chinese books into Manchu, such as “Ming Hui Dian,” “Su Shu,” “Sanliu,” “Teachings for everybody on the Governance of Finances 资治通鉴.” They learned the governance experiences and the finest selection of Chinese culture. After the entry into China, successive rulers continued to promote Chinese language and culture education by adhering to the wishes of their ancestors, and the translation of Chinese books was particularly important. For the Manchu regime, the translation of Chinese books had a very special significance. Take the “Four Books” and “Five Classics” for example, these books were not only the representative works of Confucianism, but also the typical thinking of the Han people in the Central Plains. The exposition of the way of Confucius and Mencius and the doctrines of Cheng and Zhu not only became orthodox official thinking, but the reading of Chinese translations narrowed the cultural and psychological distance between ethnic groups in the country, favorably eased ethnic relations, promoted ethnic exchanges, and consolidated the basis of power.

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The Vicissitudes of Supply Chain Translation: The Chinese Version of Kumāralāta's *Garland of Examples* Attributed to Kumārajīva



Diego Loukota Sanclemente

Abstract The narrative collection *Garland of Examples Adorned by Poetic Fancy* (*Kalpanāmaṇḍitikā Dṛṣṭāntapañkti*), written in Sanskrit by the third-century Taxilan Buddhist monk Kumāralāta, is a major but often overlooked source for the study of ancient India and Buddhism. The only complete version of the work is an early fifth-century Chinese translation (*Dà Zhuāngyán lùn*《大莊嚴論》, T201). This article proposes an analysis of the translational technique of this work to highlight how, whereas the ornate literary idiom of the original was lost in translation, the translational simplifications can act as explanatory glosses of sorts to support the interpretation of the fragmentary Sanskrit text. Moreover, the article considers the problem of the translator of the work, suggesting a new attribution and providing an insight into the difficulties inherent in assessing Chinese Buddhist translations.

Keywords Team translation · Paraphrase · Kumārajīva · Kumāralāta · Zhū fóniàn · Translator attributions

* * *

One aspect of the corpora of the primary texts on which historians base their work that is seldom considered is the historical circumstance that brings a given text to the scholarly foreground, to be, in short, a historical source widely acknowledged and widely used by historians. In the context of the study of Buddhism and ancient India, the vast scholarly fortune of the *Divine Stories* (*Divyāvadāna*), which are late as a collection and apparently wholly derivative from earlier sources, is undoubtedly due to the early edition of the text by Cowell and Neill (1886). Nevertheless, however late and derivative the *Divine Stories* may be, it would be unfair to locate the reasons for their popularity among scholars only on the early date of the edition of the Sanskrit text: the fact is that in the case of the *Divine Stories*, we do have a complete

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and fairly legible text in its original language. The *Garland of Examples Adorned by Poetic Fancy* (*Kalpanāmaṇḍitikā Dr̥ṣṭāntapañkti*), a third-century collection of literary stories, written in elegant Classical Sanskrit prose interspersed with verse by the Taxilan Buddhist monk Kumāralāta, presents an interesting study in contrasts. It is one of the first datable Buddhist texts composed in classical Sanskrit and according to the conventions of courtly poetry (*kāvya*), and it is probably one of the sources of the *Divine Stories* (Lüders 1926, 71–132); moreover, since many of its stories are not set in a mythical past but in the present time of its author, it paints a rich fresco of northwestern Indian society in the third century. The *Garland* attracted the attention of a cluster of very distinguished scholars in the early twentieth century (Sylvain Lévi, Édouard Huber, Heinrich and Else Lüders, Jean Przyluski, Entai Tomomatsu, and Johannes Nobel), but since then it has garnered very little scholarly attention.¹ Undoubtedly, one of the points that hinders a greater diffusion of the *Garland* is the fact that the original Sanskrit text is severely broken: all the seven known manuscripts are extremely fragmentary,² and so we have to rely on the translations. However, even in this field we are faced with difficulties: among the various translations in Chinese, Tibetan, and Tangut, only the Chinese translation traditionally attributed to the famous Kuchan monk Kumārajīva (334?–413? CE) is complete.³

In order, then, to access the hidden treasures of the *Garland* it is crucial to evaluate this Chinese translation, and such an assessment would highlight to what extent this complete Chinese translation can be used for historical research providing, in the process, a case study on translation from Sanskrit to Chinese. An ancillary question is the date and attribution of this Chinese translation: as mentioned before, the Chinese bibliographical tradition assigns the translation to Kumārajīva, and this has a bearing on the main question, because, as we will see, Kumārajīva's translational corpus went on to garner great admiration on account of achieving accurate but idiomatic renderings of the Indian text, to the point of becoming the *de facto* standard for later translators.

So far the only comprehensive treatment of the fidelity of the Chinese text to the Sanskrit text is contained in Lüders' monograph on Kumāralāta's *Garland* (Lüders 1926, 56–60). Lüders compared his edition of the Sanskrit text with Édouard Huber's French translation of the Chinese version (Huber 1908), and in spite of the obvious shortcomings of working from a translation of a translation, Lüders was able to

¹See Loukota Sanclemente (2019, 9) for bibliographic references. The one major exception to the pattern outlined here is the work of Michael Hahn on the Tibetan translation of the *Garland* (Hahn 1982).

²See Loukota Sanclemente (2019) for a survey of the Sanskrit manuscripts and quotations (pp. 65–89) and for a preliminary edition of newly identified fragments from Bāmiyān currently in the Schøyen collection in Norway (pp. 341–373).

³This Chinese version is available in printed and unedited manuscript fragments. On the manuscripts, see Loukota Sanclemente (2019, 2.2.4.1). The extant ancient printed editions in which this version is extant are the following, grouped according to Zacchetti's division in "lineages" (2005, 92–117): "Kaibao lineage:" Zhaocheng Jin canon (*Zhaocheng Jinzang* 趙城金藏) n. 588, Second Korean canon (*Gaoli/Goryeo* 高麗) n. 587; "Fuzhou-Sixi Lineage:" *Pilu* 毘盧 n. 588, Qisha 積砂 n. 606, Puning 普寧 n. 599. Regarding modern editions, the text is number 201 in the Taishō canon 大正一切經 (= T) and 637 in the Zhonghua canon 中華.

articulate a fairly balanced evaluation of the Chinese text against the Sanskrit text available to him. Although his treatment should remain the standard reference on the topic, there are two good reasons to revisit it: first, Lüders did not himself read Chinese; second, in a century of research we have come to better understand the translation process of Indic texts in China during the first centuries of the first millennium. Lüders' global assessment of the quality of the translation is explicit: the great German indologist, who assumed Kumārajīva to be the translator of the work, warns that, "one certainly should not believe that Kumārajīva's intention was to deliver a literal translation (*Man darf freilich nicht glauben, daß es Kumārajīvas Absicht gewesen ist eine wortgetreue Übersetzung zu liefern*)" (p. 56, the English translation is mine). He proceeds by providing a taxonomy of divergences between Sanskrit and Chinese—omissions, accretions, misunderstandings. Before we review these, it might be opportune to consider the new insights that we have gained in a century of research since Lüders' time on the praxis of translation in early medieval China.

Expressing an appraisal similar to Lüders', E.H. Johnston expatiates on the perceived habits of the Chinese translation teams when he discusses the Chinese translator(s) of Aśvaghōṣa's poem *Buddhacarita*:

The author [of the translation] had no doubt an excellent text at his disposal, but, in addition to some misunderstandings of the original, he has paraphrased rather than translated the poem. All passages of real *kāvya* style are either abridged or omitted altogether, and other verses are cut down or expanded according as they appealed to the translator, who was evidently a pious Buddhist, keen on matters of legend or moral, but with little taste for literature. In legendary details he sometimes makes additions to the text, and, as he evades textual niceties, contenting himself with giving the general sense, his work has to be used with caution.

(Johnston 1936, xiii)

The picture that emerges from these characterizations would be one of capricious translators prone to bowdlerization and keen on tampering with the text at will. However, the research of H.R. van Gulik and, more recently, of Jan Nattier, has added a good deal of understanding and nuance to our knowledge of the process involved in these ancient translations. The first point that we must consider is that, more often than not, Chinese translations of Indian Buddhist texts were carried out by teams rather than by single individuals.⁴ Van Gulik (1956, 25) describes as follows the essentials of the people involved and their functions:

[T]he stupendous task of translating into Chinese the hundreds of sutras that constitute the bulk of the canon was performed mainly by Indian and Central Asiatic monks. Since most of them knew as little literary Chinese as the Chinese did of Indian languages, theirs must have been a most difficult task, involving a team of several Indian and Chinese workers.

Van Gulik provides then an overview of the translation process. In its most solemn form under imperial auspices, this process may have assumed a highly complex

⁴As van Gulik notices (1956, 26), the obvious exceptions are easily identifiable: either Chinese scholars who studied Sanskrit in India like Xuánzàng 玄奘 (602–664) and Yījīng 義淨 (635–713) or Sanskrit scholars who, like Kumārajīva, may have acquired familiarity with literary Chinese.

and ritualized form;⁵ however, at its core the procedure involved a foreign monk familiar with the languages of the Indic texts delivering a more or less free paraphrase of the text in colloquial Chinese and then a transcript of this diffuse oral paraphrase being made the basis for a proper redaction in literary Chinese. The extent of the conversion of such oral paraphrase into a literary idiom is variable and especially so for the earliest Chinese translations. For Zürcher, the language of the early Chinese Buddhist translations “largely reflects the vernacular language of the period,” but “with various degrees of *wényán* 文言”—i.e. Classical Chinese—“admixtures” (1992, 278). Although the Chinese rulers that patronized Buddhism did not attempt to standardize the translation protocol as, for example, the Tibetans and Tanguts did, the advent of Kumārajīva stands as a watershed in the history of Chinese translation. Indeed, Kumārajīva’s highly characteristic brand of literary Chinese, strikingly different from the Classical language of the Confucian canon and yet also suitably different from the contemporary spoken vernacular—possessing a unique literary flavor, terse but not archaizing, and with a mature lexicon of its own—went on to become what Zürcher calls a “Church language” (1996, 1).

Judgments on the quality of Kumārajīva’s body of translations, both ancient and modern, agree on its merits. As just discussed, though, the translation of Indic texts in China was typically a team effort, and Kumārajīva’s corpus is not an exception to this general rule; in fact some of his Chinese translation assistants, like Sēngruì 僧睿 (371–438) and Sēngzhào 僧肇 (384–414), were highly skilled exegetes and writers in their own right and achieved fame by themselves. Kumārajīva’s translation team then contained at least one member able to understand well the Indic original and others skilled in the literary register of Chinese, and it seems that these two components were able to communicate well. Regarding, however, the proficiency in the Chinese language (and more specifically in its written or literary register) that Kumārajīva achieved in his lifetime, the evidence points in different directions. For Zürcher (2012 [1999], 21) Kumārajīva had a “well-attested knowledge of the language,” but also “occasionally had serious problems with Chinese.” The primary sources on this issue are scattered among the works of Kumārajīva’s students and assistants, mostly in prefaces to Kumārajīva’s translations.

⁵Van Gulik translates a passage of the “Record of the Buddhist Patriarchs” (*Fózǔ tǒngjì* 佛祖統記, T 2035) which describes the activities of the “bureau for the translation of scriptures” (*yìjīngyuàn* 譯經院) established by emperor Taizōng 太宗 (976–997) of the Táng 唐 dynasty. This account, written two centuries after the facts it purports to narrate, describes the complex protocol that the translation teams ideally followed. The team described includes nine members: one “translation master” (*yìzhǔ* 譯主) who technically reads aloud the original Indic text in its original language, two “witnesses [of the fidelity of] the text” (*zhèngwén* 證文), one “scribe” (*shūzì* 書字) who writes the Sanskrit text phonetically rendered into Chinese script, a “recorder” (*bǐshòu* 筆受) that adds Chinese glosses to the phonetically rendered Indic words, a “syntactician” (*zhuìwén* 綴文) who strings individual words into sentences, an “assistant translator” (*cānyì* 參譯) who compares the original text with the translation, an “editor” (*dìngkān* 定刊) that eliminates superfluous material, and a “style polisher” (*rùnwén* 潤文) in charge of the definitive literary shape of the text. This word-by-word method is evidently idealized and would be highly impractical if enacted, but it at least makes clear that for the Chinese historiographical tradition translation was conceived as a team effort, and one that involved a significant number of people.

Sēngruì declares that “although [Kumārajīva] translated by himself (*qīn-yì* 親譯), his [mastery] of the local language (*fāngyán* 方言) was not yet fluent [by 402 CE]” (雖親譯而方言未融, T1569, 168.a4), but elsewhere writes that “the Master of the Law held in his hand the foreign book and declared it orally in the speech of Qīn (= Chinese)” (法師手執胡本, 口宣秦言, T2145, 53b5). Sēngzhào elaborates on this image: “once he became fully immersed in the environment, [he] became very good at the local language, and occasionally held in his hand the foreign text and expounded and translated by himself in oral fashion” (既盡環中, 又善方言, 時手執胡文, 口自宣譯, T1775, 327b13). Sēngruì’s comments in the preface to the *Dà zhìdù lùn* 大智度論 (=T 1509) are problematic because the passage is probably corrupt on account of the numerous textual variants it contains, but it states unequivocally that Kumārajīva’s command of the “local language was particularly good” (方言殊好) T1509, 57b24–25 = T2145, 75b1–2). The difference that these passages imply between *Qīn-yǔ* 秦語 or *Qīn-yán* 秦言 “the language” or “speech of [the Later] Qīn [domain]” and *fāngyán* 方言 “local language” is unclear to me in this context, but if it points to the dichotomy between the unifying written register against the local spoken vernaculars, the point may have been that Kumārajīva was more proficient in reading and writing Chinese than in speaking it.

One often quoted (but seldom revisited) anecdote included in the collection of monastic biographies *Lives of Eminent Monks* (*Gāosāng zhuàn* 高僧傳) has Kumārajīva and Sēngruì reviewing a passage in Dharmarakṣa’s translation of the *Lotus Sūtra*. The Sanskrit text of a passage of the *Lotus Sūtra* (Ogihara 1934, ii, 178, ll8.11l-2) has here *devā api manuṣyān drakṣyanti, manuṣyā api devān drakṣyanti* “the gods will see men and the men too will see the gods.” In the anecdote in Sengruì’s biography (T2059, 364b.2–7), Kumārajīva and his disciple note that Dharmarakṣa had translated the passage literally as “the gods see the men, the men see the gods,” but then Sēngruì proposes a rendering of the passage that complies much better with Chinese ideals of literary elegance with its non-repetitive but parallel tetrasyllabic prose: “men and gods come into contact; both obtain to see each other” (人天交接, 兩得相見). This is indeed the Chinese text for the passage as it appears in Kumārajīva’s translation of the *Lotus* (T262.27c.25). The anecdote is somewhat marred by the fact that the passage in Dharmarakṣa’s *Lotus*, at least in the recension available to us now, does not have quite the text that Sengruì’s biography imputes to it, but rather one that is both literal and periphrastic at the same time (or rather literal with an interpolated gloss) and resembles Sengruì’s proposal more perhaps than his biographers may have wanted, but in any case it is not very refined from the point of view of Chinese literary ideals: “the gods above see those in the world, those in the world see the gods, heavenly and worldly people go to and fro and come into contact” (天上視世間, 世間得見天上, 天人世人往來交接, T263, 95c.28–29). Be that as it may, the anecdote points to the fact that, at least as far as the historical record goes, Kumārajīva did in fact voice opinions on the final literary quality of the Chinese in translations attributed to him. Furthermore, the authorship of the philosophical letters exchanged by Kumārajīva with the Chinese monk Huiyuǎn 慧遠 (T1856) has not been questioned, and one could legitimately infer from it that Kumārajīva must have

had a mastery of the written Chinese language sufficient to participate in epistolary exchanges.

The great success of Kumārajīva's output seems then to be due to an atypical mastery of both source and target languages, such that allowed him to supervise the whole translation process and to imprint a highly personal brand on the finished product that made his translational corpus a milestone in the history of Buddhist translations in China. Zürcher (2012 [1999], 21) summarizes the whole situation by stating that whereas "before Kumārajīva" "translators experimented with a variety of registers, ranging from pure *wényán* to semi-vernacular," whereas after Kumārajīva, the language of Buddhist translations became, again in Zürcher's words, "petrified" in emulations of his register.

However, let us bear in mind that Kumārajīva may have been an extraordinary exception. The process of literary redaction must have shaped much of the body of translated texts, and I would like to highlight the fact that the necessary consequence of this premise is that important decisions on the final form and content of the translated text may often have been in the hands of people whose grasp of the Indic source language may have been tenuous or non-existent.⁶ When seen in this light, the fact that the Chinese translations are as a general rule rather free and paraphrastic becomes less the outcome of the whim—or linguistic incompetence—of the translators and more a necessary outcome of the structure of the translation process itself.

With this background, we can proceed now to review a few illustrative examples of the main transformations that the text suffered in its translation into Chinese.

A very evident one is the blur of the original boundaries between prose and verse passages, of which Lüders provides some telling examples (1926, 56–57). This does not seem surprising though if we consider the very nature of the translation process. The Chinese literary redactor would have worked from a transcript of the oral paraphrase carried out by the foreign translator, a paraphrase that carried specific markers of the beginning and end of the verse passages,⁷ and any omission, confusion or misunderstanding of such markers would result in an altered distribution of the prose-and-verse pattern of the text.

⁶Van Gulik, subtitled who titled his 1956 monograph *An Essay on the History of Sanskrit Studies in China and Japan* (van Gulik, 1956), admits throughout, but most forcefully in pp. 9–12, that the study of the Sanskrit language never flourished in China, and that the "Chinese Buddhists in general showed but scant interest in India and the sacred language of its scriptures" (p. 11).

⁷The Sanskrit text of the *Garland* does not mark explicitly the verse passages, relying instead on the customary verse numbering to mark them. Direct speech is introduced by the declarative verbs $\sqrt{āh}$ 'say' and $[pra]-\sqrt{vac}$ 'idem': monologues in verse are introduced by either verb but so too is prose dialogue, which accounts for all other occurrences of these verbs. The Chinese text, on the other hand, invariably introduces the verse passages with a phrase containing the word **gat* 偈 '[Buddhist] verse' (> Sk. *gāthā* 'verse' or a cognate form like *Gāndhārī* < *gaṣa* >=*/*ga:zə*/); the closure of the verse portion is also marked by phrases either containing a verb that denotes perception (typically *wén* 聞 'hear') marked with the perfective adverb *yī* 已 or, in faster exchanges, a clause marked with a declarative verb preceded by *fù* 復 "then, once again," which precedes the verb that denotes the reply.

Another related modification concerns the sequence of the Sanskrit hemistichs (*pada*), which in some cases seems to have been rearranged (Lüders 1926, 59). If we consider that the literary redactor would in all likelihood have parsed into verse the transcript of the oral paraphrase without consideration for the original verse boundaries, this too is not greatly surprising.

Accretions in the Chinese text are typically simple explanatory glosses, which would also have been a natural component of the oral paraphrase of a text wherein anything obscure to a Chinese audience would likely have required an explanation. What E. H. Johnston remarked above about the Chinese translation of Aśvaghōṣa's *Buddhacarita* holds good for much of the corpus of Buddhist Indic texts translated into Chinese, which is that the main point of interest remained Buddhist doctrine rather than the remote Indic cultural background of the text or, even less, its literary aspects. Most of the explanatory glosses concern points of doctrine, as in the following passage, where highly technical and unfamiliar tenets require a fuller explanation:⁸

[1]

na śrutapūrvaṃ yad uktaṃ bhagavatā catvāro daharā nāvajñeyā iti? catvāraś cāmropamāḥ pūḍgalā iti na tvayā vicāritaṃ? (SHT 21/9r.2)

Is it that you have not heard before what the Blessed One (*bhagavat*) said: “There are four young that should not be looked down upon”? Have you not considered the four person-types likened by a simile to mangos?

汝寧不聞如來所說四不輕經? 王子、蛇、火、沙彌等都不可輕。世尊所說菴羅果喻? 内生外熟、外生內熟。(T4.201.261c4–6)

Have you not heard the *Scripture*, pronounced by the One Thus-Come (*rūlāi* 如來 = *tathāgata*) on the *Four that Should Not Be Despised*? The king, the snake, the fire and the novice (*shāmī* 沙彌 = *śramaṇera*): these four should not be despised. And what about the *Simile of the Mango Fruit* that the World-honored spoke? The [mango that seems] raw in the inside is ripe on the outside and the one [seeming] raw on the outside is ripe on the inside.⁹

Occasionally, the urge to highlight doctrinal content has forced a doctrinal reading upon a passage that did not originally have one. In the following passage, the non-technical list of items in the Sanskrit original (*śamapradānaniyama*, “calm, generosity, and restraint”) has been substituted with the canonical, and well-known triad of “giving, moral training, and concentration” (Sanskrit *dānaśīlabhāvanā*):

[2]

⁸The “four young that should not be despised” were a well-established doctrinal category, widespread in Indic Buddhist texts. Tomomatsu found several places in which it occurs (1931, 296–308). None of the evidence Tomomatsu collected suggests, though, that this category may have circulated as an independent *sūtra* devoted to this topic, and this must be an inference of the Chinese translator.

⁹Regarding the simile, we are obviously lacking two permutations: ripe outside and inside; raw inside and outside. The simile of the mango is well attested in Buddhist literature, on which see Lüders (1926, 62).

tat kārtāsmi śamapradānaniyamair adya prabhṛty udyat[ah] [...]/

(Hori 2011, 12–14)

That I will do through calm, generosity, and restraint: from today onwards I have made this undertaking.

自從今以後 勤修施戒定

(T4.201.289b12)

From today onwards, I will sedulously practice the giving, the moral training, the concentration¹⁰

Omissions follow the mirror image of the pattern outlined above: whatever is felt to be merely descriptive is often simplified to its bare essentials, as in this description of the hand of the Buddha:

[3]

*śata... . . . kāśenojvalacakrabīṃbālaṃkṛtamadhyena tanutāmravimalajālāvagu(ṅṅhit-)*¹¹

(SHT 21/52v.4)

[...] with [its] middle portion, whose extent [...] a hundred [...] was adorned by the disk of a flaming wheel, veiled¹² with subtle, copper-colored, spotless membranes.

相好莊嚴右手

(T4.201.300a20)

[His] right hand was adorned with the major and minor marks.

The general outcome is that very little of the poetic dimension of Kumāralāta’s idiom, so distinctive of his work, shows through the Chinese translation, and therefore Kumāralāta’s choice of vocabulary, which often favors poetic synonyms, is especially prone to loss. For example, in a verse section of story III (“The Novices and the Donor”), Kumāralāta tells us that the grandeur of the Buddhist monastic assembly is unfathomable, and compares the futile attempt to gain an idea of its extent to a mosquito trying to drink the waters of the sea. The Sanskrit text does not use the more common words for “sea” or “ocean” like *samudra* or *sagara*, but the poetic form *varuṇālaya* “the abode of Varuṇa.” Varuṇa characterized primarily as the protective god of the ocean is a relatively late development, but his association with the waters has illustrious Vedic precedents with the compound itself being mostly epic in usage and exclusively poetic. It is, however, rendered in the Chinese translation in correct—but utterly pedestrian—fashion, as *hǎi* 海 “sea.”

¹⁰“Giving, moral training, concentration” are a well-attested scholastic triad, whereas, to my best knowledge, “calm, generosity, and restraint” are not.

¹¹Lüders reads here *-āvaga +*, but in my opinion the *-u* diacritic is clearly visible on the foot of the *akṣara ga*. I would suggest here *avagu(ṅṅhit-)* “veiled.” This word occurs in the passage quoted in the next excerpt.

¹²Please see the previous note regarding *avaguṅṅhita*.

In other cases, rather than an omission, what we have is an attempt to turn an Indian description into a Chinese one. For example, the following passage, also from story III, lists the stereotypical features of old men in a description of a group of aged Buddhist monks walking;¹³ however, as stereotypes are culturally specific, the two descriptions differ except for a few elements:

[4]

*palitavidyotitaśirogaṇḍapārsvabhurulomabhir avaguṇḥhitākṣi- ... dhanurvakrapṛṣṭhivamśā
yaṣṭivīṣaktapāṇayaḥ pavanabalapracalitā*

Their eyes veiled with brow-hair [hanging down to] the cheeks, flashing white [like their] heads, their backs bent as a bow, hands clutching sticks, [they were] like blooming bushes of the *sindhuvārita*¹⁴ bush trembling under the force of the wind.

髮白而面皺

秀眉牙齒落

僂脊而拄杖

(T4.201.261.b11–29)

White hair and wrinkled faces

Long brows (*xiūméi* 秀眉) and fallen teeth

Their backs bent, clutching a stick.

We will return to this passage later on, as it provides evidence against the attribution of the translation to Kumārajīva, but for now, suffice it to remark that the “wrinkled faces” (*miàn qū* 面皺) and the “fallen teeth” (*yáchǐ luò* 牙齒落) do not appear in the Sanskrit text.

In other similar cases, the modification is not aimed at providing an indigenous Chinese cultural equivalent, but rather one that, although Indic in origin, may have been comprehensible to a Chinese readership, at least a Buddhist one. In the following passages, two Indian mountains—the legendary Mandara and the existing Vindhya—are both converted into the well-known Mount Meru, which on account of its ubiquitousness in Buddhist discourse would have resulted familiar to a Chinese readership:

[5]

pipīlikā mandare

[...] ants [...] against [mount] Mandara

汝如蟻封而欲與彼須彌山王比其高下

(T4.201.277c.14–15)

¹³For a much more detailed presentation of this story see Tomomatsu (1931, 253 ff).

¹⁴Generally identified with *Vitex Negundo*, the five-leaved chaste tree endemic to most of South, Southeast and East Asia, whose pale purple blossoms grow in visually striking clusters.

You are like an anthill wishing to compare itself in height to Meru, king of mountains.

[6]

[v]indhyapādā [...]

The foothills of the Vindhya [range]

猶如蚊子翅扇於須彌山

(T4.201.288a.16)

Like the wing of a mosquito brushing Mount Meru...

My own exploration of the text has not revealed to me cases in which the divergence between the Sanskrit and the Chinese would be most easily explained by the inability to understand the source text. These examples show, however, that a judgment on the literary qualities of Kumāralāta's text should be based only on the available Sanskrit text which may include not only the fragmentary extant manuscripts but also the stories in the *Divyāvadāna* that according to Lüders were borrowed from Kumāralāta's work, and to a lesser extent, on the more literal Tibetan translation of story I ("The Gandhāran Merchant in Māthura") and the proem or *maṅgala*.¹⁵ The Chinese text provides a plotline stripped of poetic description (perhaps the very "[poetic] fancy" or *kalpanā* that gives its title to the Sanskrit text) though it is largely faithful in regard to the narrative and moral sense of the stories.

Given what we know now about Kumārajīva, about the dynamics of the ancient translation practice, and of the translational idiom of the *Garland*, it might be opportune to tackle the thorny issue of the translator—or rather the translation team—to which the work should be assigned.

The text is attributed to Kumārajīva in the Chinese catalogues since Fājīng's 法經 *Catalogue of the Scriptures* (*Zhōngjīng mùlù* 衆經目錄, T2146, 141a26), completed in 594 AD, but crucially not (*pace* Demiéville 1953, 416–417) in the records of the best reputed bibliographer of early Buddhist translations: Sēngyòu 僧祐 (445–518 AD).¹⁶ This absence is itself a strong indictment against Kumārajīva's translatorship, because Fajing writes almost two centuries after the presumed translation would have taken place, whereas Sēngyòu based his records on first-hand accounts of Kumārajīva's disciples. Among the scholars who have tackled this issue—all Japanese—some have, however, attempted to account for Sēngyòu's supposed omission of this specific text: Mino et al. (1933–1936, 269–270) hypothesize that the *Dà zhuāngyán lùn* may have been a very early translation of Kumārajīva from when he first reached China and before he entered Cháng'ān 長安, and which may then have escaped the attention of Sēngyòu; Kanno (1998–1999, 79) revisits this conjecture by noting how Sēngyòu's notes make explicit that, in spite of the breadth of his survey, some texts were not available to him. Tomomatsu (1931), however, argued at great

¹⁵On this partial Tibetan translation please see Hahn 1982.

¹⁶On Sengyou's work, as well as on why we tend to lend credit to his assertions, see Nattier (2008, 3–13). For a much more detailed examination of the ancient bibliographic information see Tomomatsu (1931, 140 ff).

length that the translation cannot possibly be by Kumārajīva, and his argument is based mostly on historical evidence. On the basis of the language and especially of the renderings of proper names, Kanno (1998–1999, 80) notes that the language of the *Dà zhuāngyán lùn* does not belong with the “ancient translations” (古訳 *koyaku*, i.e., from before Kumārajīva) but indeed to the “old translations” (旧訳 *kyūyaku*, i.e. not from after Kumārajīva) and that, therefore, if the translation is not by Kumārajīva, it must belong to his same period. In the end, Kanno too doubts the attribution to Kumārajīva but does not propose an alternative.

An interesting piece of evidence against the attribution to Kumārajīva is that several long quotations from the *Garland* are included in a work whose Chinese translation can be attributed to Kumārajīva with ease, the already mentioned encyclopedic doctrinal treatise *Dà zhìdù lùn*《大智度論》(T 1509). Luckily for us, one of the passages quoted in this voluminous work is precisely the description of the old monks from story III included in example [4]. Here, the translation is much fuller than in the complete Chinese translation we have dealt with so far (= *Dà zhuāngyán lùn*《大莊嚴論》, T201):

[7]

*palitavidyotitaśirogaṇḍapārsāvabhṛulomabhir avagunḥhitākṣi- ... dhanurvakrapṛṣṭhivamśā
yaṣṭivīṣaktapāṇayaḥ pavanabalapracalītā*

Their eyes veiled with brow-hair [hanging down to] the cheeks, flashing gray [like their] heads, their backs bent as a bow, hands clutching sticks, [they were] like blooming bushes of the *sindhuvārīta*¹⁷ bush trembling under the force of the wind.

鬚髮白如雪 秀眉垂覆眼
皮皺如波浪 其脊曲如弓
兩手負杖行 次第而受請
舉身皆振掉 行止不自安
譬如白楊樹 隨風而動搖

T 1509.224.b1–c7

Hair white as snow,

Long brows (*xiūméi* 秀眉) that hung covering the eyes

Skin wrinkled as waves

Backs bent as a bow

Both hands clutching the stick

In succession they proceeded to the invitation

Holding their bodies unsteadily

¹⁷Generally identified with *Vitex Negundo*, the five-leaved chaste tree endemic to most of South, Southeast and East Asia.

Walking and stopping

Like white poplars

Shaken along with the wind.

The contrast between this translation by Kumārajīva and the one in the complete translation of the *Garland* (T 201) could not be stronger. Here we see a real willingness to render into Chinese the full poetic effect of the original passage, switching cultural references when necessary, with the “flashing gray” (*palitavidyotita*) of the monks’ heads becoming “white as snow” (*bái rú xué* 白如雪) and the “five-leaved chaste tree” (*sindhuvārita* = *Vitex negundo*) becoming a “white poplar tree” (*bái yángshù* 白楊樹 = either *Populus alba* or *Populus balsamifera*). This deft treatment of poetic translation is what we would expect from someone like Kumārajīva, widely celebrated for being both an expert in Sanskrit and conversant with the literary register of Chinese. I would like to remark, however, that the rendering of *gaṇḍapārśvabhṛuloman* “brow-hair [hanging down to] the cheeks” as “long,” or more literally “florid brows” (*xiūméi* 秀眉) and the addition of the “wrinkled face” or “skin” (*miàn qū* 面皺/*pí qū* 皮皺) are shared by the Chinese translations of this passage.

My own enquiries into the lexicon of the *Dà zhuāngyán lùn* have led me in a direction similar to Kanno’s in his conclusions that the language of the text is most consistent with the turn of the fifth century in Chang’an, and this might account for the shared features between these translators. My lexical analysis, on which more will be said in short, led me initially to conjecture that the complete Chinese translation of the *Garland*, T 201, should be attributed not to Kumārajīva but to Zhū Fóniàn 竺佛念 who overlapped with Kumārajīva in Chang’an and whose corpus is, according to Durt, “at the frontier of the archaic translation” (2010, 124) in a characterization that echoes closely Kanno’s assessment of the language of the *Dà zhuāngyán lùn*, placing Zhū Fóniàn precisely on the frontier between the before and after of Kumārajīva.

Nattier (2010, 232–235) has gathered all that is known about Zhū Fóniàn’s life and career. For our purposes, it should be useful to note here that according to his biographies he was born in the mid-fourth century in Liángzhōu 涼州,¹⁸ a cosmopolitan urban center in the Héxī 河西 corridor where Kumārajīva himself would spend some fifteen years around the end of the century. Zhū 竺 is an “ethnic surname” that should indicate people of Indian descent, but no Indic personal or religious name besides the Chinese *Fóniàn* 佛念 “meditation on the Buddha” is attested, and although he may indeed have had some Indian descent, his family had been in China for several generations and he must have had a native proficiency in Chinese. His biography declares him to be a polyglot perfectly able to understand the “sounds and meanings of both Chinese and Barbarian” (華戎音義莫不兼解, T2154.111b.11), but such flourishes are almost normative—and therefore unremarkable—tropes in monastic biographies. As we have seen before, Buddhist translation in ancient China was a team effort, but the common practice was to attribute the translation as a whole to

¹⁸Nowadays Wuwei 武威, but known in antiquity mostly as Guzang (Middle Chinese **Kodzan*) 姑藏, the < *Kc'n* >(= */*Kəʔjān*!) of the “Ancient Sogdian Letters”.

the foreign Indian and Iranian monks who brought the texts and paraphrased them in vernacular Chinese. As we will see, Zhū Fóniàn was likely in charge of the literary redaction in Chinese rather than in the interpretation of the Indic texts, but his prestige and foreign descent were maybe what allowed the translations of his team to remain under his name.

Zhū Fóniàn's output is impressive (it includes two *āgama* collection and a *vinaya*), and has garnered the praise of commentators as far apart in time and geography as Sēngyòu and Erik Zürcher (Zürcher 2007 [1959], 202). According to Nattier's characterization of his life, Zhū Fóniàn started his career as a translator in Cháng'ān, then the imperial capital of the Former Qǐn (*Qián qǐn* 前秦, (351–394 AD), where he arrived in 365 CE. His early period of translation is characterized by his collaboration with a number of monks originally from Gandhāra and Bactria: Buddhayaśas, Saṃghabhūti/Saṃghabhadrā, Dharmānandin, Saṃghadeva (Nattier 2010, 231–233; Radich 2017, 6–7). As we have seen, what this collaboration means is in all likelihood that he carried out the final Chinese literary redaction of the text.

Some of the texts translated during this period of collaboration with Western monks have interesting literary affinities with Kumāralāta's *Garland of Examples*. For example, the *Collection of *Saṃgharakṣa* (*Sēngjiālúoshā suǒjī jīng* 僧伽羅刹所集經, T 94), translated in 384 CE (T 194, 115c2–6) is a prosimetric life of the Buddha in a literary vein, whereas the *Story of the Prince who Damaged his Eyes for the Fulfillment of the Law* (*Tàizǐ fāyì huài mù yīnyuán jīng* 太子法益壞目因緣經, T 2045, on which see Radich 2017), translated in 391 CE (T 2045, 115c.2–6), is a fully metrical (and partially rhymed) poetic *avadāna* which is said by Zhū Fóniàn himself, in the preface he wrote for the work, to have been translated from a text consisting of three hundred and forty-three Sanskrit *śloka*s (T 2045, 172b.14). Both of these works were, it seems, collaborative efforts with Western monks, and this seems to be the general pattern for Zhū Fóniàn's early period of activity in Cháng'ān. Then, according to Nattier, there is a gap in the historical record of Zhū Fóniàn between 387 and 398 CE (p. 233). What happened in northern China during this interval explains this gap in part: the Former Qǐn collapsed with the murder, in 385 CE, of emperor Fú Jiān 苻堅, who had sponsored Zhū Fóniàn's career, and the rulers of the succeeding Later Qín dynasty (*Hòu qǐn* 後秦, 384–417 CE) seem not to have been keen on supporting the *protégés* of the earlier dynasty. Kumārajīva, a renowned prodigy, entered Cháng'ān in 401 and seems to have monopolized imperial patronage and public visibility. Zhū Fóniàn resurfaces after the turn of the century, and his output is again copious, but much more determined in genre than before with a sole focus on Mahāyāna *sūtras* dealing with the progress of the *bodhisattva*. According to Nattier's careful analysis (2010, 251–255), Zhū Fóniàn's late "translations" are, in fact, pastiches sewn from bits of already existing Chinese translations rather than original translations of Indic texts. In other words, he seems to have been *forging* translations, and one possible way to explain this puzzling picture of events is by conjecturing that he had lost access to foreign texts and foreign interpreter monks under the near-monopoly of patronage which Kumārajīva was able to secure for himself.

My analysis of the lexicon of the complete Chinese translation of the *Garland*, T 201, was initially rather impressionistic, based on the words and phrases that

seemed to me to connect the vocabulary of the Chinese *Garland* with the known corpus of Zhū Fóniàn. Contact with Michael Radich (Heidelberg), whose generous assistance I would like to acknowledge here, allowed me to refine the scope of my examination through the use of his lexical analysis tool TACL developed with programmer Jamie Norish. TACL (dazangthings.nz/tacl-guide/) allows researchers to highlight systematic lexical affinities between texts and large corpora on a much bigger scale than the one possible to a regular human observer.

The methodology laid out by Radich (2017) to reassess translator attributions involves a broad selection of highly frequent, characteristic, or contrasting vocabulary and phraseology whose cumulative evidence may build a strong case to reconsider the attribution of a text. My experience using TACL-generated results on the lexical affinities between the Chinese version of the *Garland* and the known translational corpora of Kumārajīva and Zhū Fóniàn was,¹⁹ however, that what TACL foregrounds is the essential commonality of the lexicon of these corpora, which in my view speaks about a shared milieu in time and space: Cháng'ān in the early fifth century. An additional difficulty is that given the literary nature of the *Garland* and its avoidance of narrative tropes, the *hapax legomena* within the text are singularly high, i.e., single words and expressions are unlikely to happen more than once in the work, in stark contrast with the recurring vocabulary of the typically repetitive style of canonical Buddhist texts.

Determining the feasibility of a large scale examination of the lexicon through TACL remains a task for the future. It might be opportune here, though, to showcase a few results reached through this tool, not meant of course to make a case for Zhū Fóniàn on their own but rather to build upon the circumstantial evidence laid out before.

Perhaps the most conspicuous phraseological trait concerns the rendering of two fixed formulas of Indian Buddhist phraseology:

[8]

Buddhist Sanskrit: *yena bhagavaṃs tenopasaṃkrāmat/-an/-ur*

Pāli: *yena bhagavā tenupasaṃkami/-iṃsu*

Gāndhārī: *yena bhagavaṃta tena uvasaṃkami/-iṣu*

He/she/they went there where the Blessed One (= the Buddha) was.

[9]

Buddhist Sanskrit: *bhagavantam etad avocat/avocur/ūcur*

Pāli: *bhagavantaṃ etad avoca/avocum*

Gāndhārī: *bhagavaṃta edad oca/(plural not attested)*

¹⁹For Kumārajīva the roster of safely attributed corpus texts is T 223, T 227, T 235, T 262, T 475, T 1435, T 1509, T 1521, T 1564, T 1568, T 1569, and T 1646; for Zhū Fóniàn T 1(30), T 125(50.4), T 194, T 212, T 309, T 384, T 385, T 656, T 1428, T 1464, T 1505, T 1543, T 1549, T 2045. I thank Michael Radich for these rosters.

He/she/they said this to the Blessed One.

The most frequent Chinese rendering of the Indic epithet of the Buddha used in these formulas, Sanskrit *bhagavat* “Blessed One” and its cognates, is *shìzūn* 世尊, literally “world-honored one.” These formulas are accordingly rendered both in Zhū Fóniàn’s corpus and in the Chinese version of the *Garland* quite straightforwardly as *zhì shìzūn suǒ* 至世尊所 “X went to the place of the World-Honored One” and *bái shìzūn yán* 白世尊言 “X addressed the World-Honored One saying....” One surprising fact discovered through TACL is that although Kumārajīva does use the term *shìzūn* 世尊 as well as the syntactic templates as *zhì... suǒ* 至世尊所 “X went to the place of...” and *bái shìzūn yán* 白世尊言 “X addressed... saying...” he invariably renders *bhagavat* in these formulas with *fó* 佛 “Buddha” and not with *shìzūn* 世尊. This does not mean that Zhū Fóniàn never switches to the “*fó* 佛-versions,” because he does, but the fact that Kumārajīva constantly avoids the “*shìzūn* 世尊-versions” is indicative at least of a clear-cut violation of what seems to be a stable feature of Kumārajīva’s translational idiom.

A second case concerns the terms for units of length *vitasti* and *hastamātrā*, which conventionally denote the length of a handspan. Again, TACL analysis reveals that whereas Kumārajīva sticks exclusively with the younger term *chǐ* 尺, Zhū Fóniàn also uses *chǐ* 尺 occasionally but prefers the archaic-sounding term *rèn* 仞, which is the only one to appear in the Chinese version of the *Garland* (T201.330b.10).

Finally, I would like to draw attention to the phonetic rendering *qiánbīluó* 黔毘羅, present in the Chinese *Garland* and in one text whose translation is firmly attributed to Zhū Fóniàn, the *Chūyáo jīng*《出曜經》a narrative commentary on verses in the *Dharmapada* tradition. The term in reconstructed Middle Chinese should read either **gambila* or **gimbila* as per Pulleyblank (1991) and although the underlying Indic text for both passages is lost, the only real candidate for an Indic substrate is *kampila*, which is in origin the name of a plant of the *crinum* genus but is also attested as a personal name in Buddhist literature (see Ogihara 1979, s.v.) and as a toponym elsewhere (see Monier-Williams 1872, sub *kāmpila*). This range of usages would fit well the context of both passages (T201.262b.12; T212.674b.26): in the *Garland* it is a personal given name; in the commentary, a country. I would like to draw attention to the fact that this phonetic rendering seems to be only attested in these two passages, and that the usage in Buddhist literature of the character *qián* 黔 “black,” even in phonetic renderings, is exceedingly rare.

That it is highly unlikely that Kumārajīva led the translation team that translated the *Garland* seems to me fairly clear; if it could be further argued that Zhū Fóniàn is responsible for the translation, this would give us a rationale for the specificities of the translated text. If it was the case that Zhū Fóniàn is behind the translation, which I hope to have shown is at least a possibility, Zhū Fóniàn would have acted as the final Chinese redactor rather than issuer of the initial oral paraphrase in vernacular Chinese, a task carried out by one of the many foreign monks with whom Zhū Fóniàn collaborated throughout his career. The reason for this state of affairs to have eluded contemporary and later bibliographers may be difficult or impossible to assess at a distance of centuries, but the specific translational dynamics of the text would be

accounted for: the collective, rather than individual, translational process outlined above would explain the accuracy of the rendering of the narrative matter as well as the general loss of the literary and poetic refinement of the original.

Abbreviations

T = *Taishō Issaikyō* 大正一切經 = Takakusu and Watanabe (1924–1932). References to passages in this edition are always in the following format T[aishō].volume.text. page.register (a = upper, b = middle, c = lower).line. T4.201.277c5–24 in p.2 above is then Taishō volume IV, Text 201, page 277, lower register, lines 5 to 24.

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Literary Studies

Retranslation and Culturemes: Searching for a “Dialogic Translation” of a Modern Chinese Classic



Nicoletta Pesaro

Abstract This chapter aims at reflecting and analyzing the role of “culturemes,” as both a hindrance and an asset in translating modern Chinese literature, through the case study of my recent retranslation of Lu Xun’s fiction and a brief comparison with some previous renditions into both Italian and other European languages. Lu Xun 鲁迅 (1881–1936) is by large considered as a “modern classic” both in China and abroad. After an overview of the history, frequency, and motivations of the translation of his works in Italy, I will reflect upon how the translator can accommodate the contradiction between meeting the readership as well as the publisher’s expectations and producing a piece of “dialogic translation.” The translated text should enhance cultural differences while respecting the linguistic norms of the receiving culture and being readable for the average contemporary reader. In order to illustrate the translation strategy adopted, I will display a range of translation issues mainly related to the so-called “culturemes” or “rich points”—in Michael Agar’s words—which pose to the translator the challenge of “making sense out of human differences in terms of human similarities,” of identifying and negotiating on what provides Lu Xun’s works with their unique value and flavor.

Keywords Retranslation · Literary mediation · Cultureme · Rich points

1 Retranslating Lu Xun

This chapter deals with the long-standing tradition of retranslation, presenting the case of an important classic of modern Chinese literature, and suggesting a specific strategy of retranslation mainly based on the concept of cultural mediation.

I will present the main reasons why, in my opinion, it is quite necessary, or even urgent, to re-introduce or introduce ex-novo in Italy some of the so-called “modern Chinese classics” (中國現代經典). In a 2007 article on Chinese canonical books, Qian Liqun 錢理群 (2007) claimed that, in addition to reading the ancient classics,

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also modern classics, such as Lu Xun's works, should be reread or recontextualised. I will also argue that, with the growing importance assigned to the recognition of Chinese literary works within the frame of world literature, the modern Chinese writer Lu Xun 鲁迅 (1881–1936) needs to be re-introduced in the Italian cultural domain, in order to make more readers (and not just students) be acquainted with him, and to restore his real value and the significance of his contribution not only to Chinese literature but to world literature as well. In 1996 Kovallis wrote:

Whether Chinese studies is a closed world, or the outside world chooses to maintain a closed attitude toward “Chinese studies,” the importance of expert translation in the whole enterprise of getting the West to take Chinese literature seriously seems, finally, on the verge of being recognized. (153)

First of all, I will briefly present the main theoretical approaches to retranslation, then I will offer a brief overview of the history of the translation of Lu Xun's works in Italy. Finally, I will focus on the several meanings and goals of my current work of translating the two first collections of short stories by Lu Xun, *Nàhǎn* 呐喊 (Outcry, 1923) and *Pánghuáng* 彷徨 (Hesitation, 1926), for the Italian publisher Sellerio, including some general translation problems connected to the strategy I adopted in order to enhance both the author's inner world and his cultural environment, drawing from Roger Sell's theory of “literary mediation.”

1.1 On Retranslation

“Einmal ist keinmal”: this German proverb has been used to define retranslation by the philosopher Walter Benjamin, who devoted some of his most inspiring pages to the theory of translation. According to Deane-Cox (2014, 1):

Retranslation is generally understood as a reiterative and a multiplicative event which gives rise to a second, third, ad infinitum target language instantiation of a source text. But in another sense, retranslation resists easy delineation, marked as it is by a mercurial inconstancy with regard to frequency, behavior and motivations.

I will come back later to these three elements—frequency, motivations, and behavior—in order to analyze the circumstances of the Italian translations of Lu Xun's works.

The opinions of translators and other scholars on retranslation cover a range of features related to the importance of repeating an act of cultural and linguistic resonance, which sheds light on the network of intercultural and interlingual relations between two cultural systems.

According to Goethe, the retranslation of a literary work usually undergoes three phases: “the first acquaints us with the foreign country on our own terms”; in the second phase, “the translator endeavours to transport himself into the foreign situation, but actually only appropriates the foreign idea and represent it as his own”;

then, in the third phase “the goal of the translation is to achieve a perfect identity with the original” (Goethe 1992, 64–5).

“Benjamin argues that, unlike art, translation cannot claim permanence” (Kristal 2014, 235–6). He stresses the changeable nature of a text, as well as the evolving interaction between languages and their mutual completion.

Following in Goethe’s footsteps, Antoine Berman, considers retranslation as a process of approximation to a better comprehension of the source text. In his seminal article, “La retraduction comme espace de la traduction” (Retranslation as a space for translation) he states that every translation is an incomplete act, which can only seek completion through retranslation (1990, 1). This approach has been sternly criticized and revised by recent essays on the issue, such as for instance Deane-Cox’s *Retranslation: Translation, Literature and Reinterpretation*, which argues for the possible coexistence of multiple translations of the same text without necessarily entailing any linear progression toward an alleged perfection. She argues that the repetition of the same act, the retranslation of the same text, is not only affected and caused by the subjective view of the translator and her understanding of the source text, but also motivated by the continuously changing “material conditions of translation production, namely the external influences which exist beyond the confines of the text” (Deane-Cox 2014, 5).

The recent debate on retranslation is focused on problems of norms and ideology and attempts to fill a substantial lacuna in translation studies, Deane-Cox (1) stresses the paucity of theorization on the issue, in relation to the breadth and level of diffusion of this practice.

A retranslation is not necessarily a criticism of previous translations, a “reading against,” as Brian James Baer puts it (Baer 2014, 342):

Perhaps the greatest evidence of the readerliness of translated texts is the existence of retranslations, that is, competing or alternative translations of a “single” source text, which fosters the practice of reading one translation *against* the other. [The emphasis is in the original]

Anthony Pym has enriched the discussion with his reflections on retranslation in his book *Methods in Translation History*: first of all, he distinguishes between “passive retranslations” and “active retranslations,” the former being different versions of the same texts which are not in competition and do not question each other’s validity; in the latter case, on the contrary, “retranslation strongly challenges that validity, introducing a marked negativity into the relationship at the same time as it affirms the desire to bring a particular text closer” (Pym 2014, 83).

Lawrence Venuti stresses the role of “active retranslations” as well, but he also argues that every new translation should be judged within a comparative perspective:

The retranslation may claim to be more adequate to the foreign text in whole or part, which is to say more complete or accurate in representing the text or some specific feature of it. Claims of greater adequacy, completeness, or accuracy should be viewed critically, however, because they always depend on another category, usually an implicit basis of comparison between the foreign text and the translation which establishes the insufficiency and therefore serves as a standard of judgment. This standard is a competing interpretation. (Venuti 2004, 26)

Lu Xun himself encouraged retranslations as they could not only increase knowledge of the target culture both in terms of quantity and quality, but also enrich the source culture.

取舊譯的長處, 再加上自己的新心得, 這才會成功一種近於完全的定本。但因言語跟著時代的變化, 將來還可以有新的復譯本的, 七八次何足為奇, 何況中國其實也並沒有譯過七八次的作品。如果已經有, 中國的新文藝倒也許不至於現在似的沉滯了。(Lu Xun 1935, 285)

Only by taking advantage of old translations and adding to them also what one has learned can one successfully achieve an almost definitive edition. However, as language changes over time, in the future there might be new retranslations [of the same text], even seven or eight of them and this is not surprising, considering the fact that in China no work has ever been retranslated seven or eight times. If it had, new Chinese literature perhaps wouldn't be in such a stagnant situation as it is now.¹

Therefore, Lu Xun views retranslation as a positive, dynamic practice able to revitalize not only the source text but also the target culture.

In my opinion, retranslation can be determined by a range of motivations which come together in shaping a need or at least a desire for a new version: while it is important that the translator can take advantage of the work of his or her predecessors and their achievements by adding his or her own study of the translated text and of the source literature and culture, as Lu Xun suggests, it is also fundamental that the new retranslation take into account new material and cultural conditions both in the source and in the target culture. This is especially true when it comes to the classics, which, according to Italo Calvino (1991, 5), are like a “book which with each rereading offers as much of a sense of discovery as the first read.” Thus, according to him, retranslation can offer the opportunity to suggest new readings or find new aspects of the prototext or source text.

In some cases, it is the subjectivity of the translator that leads to this operation, her aim being to “confront anew and more urgently the translator’s ethical responsibility to prevent the translating language and culture from effacing the foreignness of the foreign text” (Venuti 2004, 26).

I will demonstrate that the proposal to retranslate Lu Xun’s fiction reflects a variety of motivations at both the cultural and the publishing level, both in Italy and in China. I will simply summarize the main motivations as follows: (1) new global and local trends call for a re-contextualisation of Chinese literature; (2) generally speaking, the publishing market for Chinese literature in Italy needs to be upgraded to a higher and more comprehensive status; (3) at the same time China has enacted a full-breath “global-scale” translation and publishing policy for its literature; (4) last but not least, the specific circumstances of Lu Xun’s translated works in Italy must be reconsidered.

¹Unless otherwise noted, all translations are mine.

1.2 *Frequency and Reception*

The translation of Lu Xun's works in Italy has quite a long history, and a certain number of renditions of his fiction have been available to the Italian reader since the middle of the twentieth century.

The first translation of Lu Xun's fiction was achieved by a distinguished Italian translator, Luciano Bianciardi (1922–71), and published by a renowned young publisher, Giangiacomo Feltrinelli, in 1955: *La vera storia di Ah Q e altri racconti*; however, it was not translated directly from Chinese but from the English version (*Selected Stories of Lu Hsun*, 1954), published by the Foreign Languages Press.

A new translation, this time directly from the Chinese, was achieved by Primerose Gigliesi ten years later (1969). This is so far the most complete—and in my opinion the best—edition of Lu Xun's fiction, as it includes all three collections of stories, and it was published by one of the most prestigious Italian publishing houses, Garzanti. Afterward, only some of his short stories were retranslated (in most cases by small publishers). Some of the most recent translations derive, surprisingly, from previous English translations, revealing a persistent habit among Italian publishers to publish an “indirect” or “second-hand” translation, mainly from English, rather than resort to a Chinese-speaking translator. If this behavior might have been justified in the past by the scarcity of Italian translators proficient in Chinese, it is indisputable that many Chinese-speaking and proficient literary translators are now available in the Italian publishing market. Actually, the main explanation for such an unreasonable choice is to be found in budget issues and time-saving.

Here below I will list only some of these re-editions:

- 1992 Lu Xun, *Diario di un pazzo e altri racconti*, trans. from the Chinese by A. Nota and R. Pelosi, Angelo Signorelli Editore, Roma 1992.
- 1996 Lu Xun, *Racconti esemplari*, trans. from the Chinese by L. Regola, Fara Editore, Rimini 1996. This edition includes only eight short stories and a selection of essays from *Wild Grass*.
- 2005, Lu Xun *Diario di un pazzo*, trans. from the English by P. Mattei *Call to Arms* (Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, China, 1981, the famous translation by Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang).
- 2014 Lu Xun, *Fuga sulla Luna* (故事新編), trans. from the Chinese by I. Franceschini for O barra O, a small Italian publisher specializing in East Asian literatures.
- 2016 Lu Xun, *La vera storia di A Q versione integrale*, trans. from the English by U. Ledda, Newton Compton.

Although, as will be discussed later on in this chapter, most of these retranslations do not do justice to the complexity and profundity of Lu Xun's works, the frequency of retranslation in this case is proof of the writer's canonical status as a classic in his own culture, as well as in the corpus of translated Chinese literature in Italy.

In other European languages—although tracing the history of English, French, or German translations falls beyond the scope of this study—Lu Xun's works followed

different paths. While in West Germany and France his works were translated quite late and infrequently, even the list of distinguished translations into English is not very long at all (see Lovell 2009, xl and Kowallis 2012).

1.3 *Motivations*

In a previous article published in Chinese on the translation and diffusion of contemporary Chinese literature in Italy (Pesaro 2011), I mentioned the fact that Italy was one of the first countries in Europe to publish Lu Xun's fiction and *zawen* 雜文 (miscellaneous essays), mostly for ideological and political reasons. During the 1960s and 1970s Lu Xun was recognized as a prominent writer in Italy—a country where left-wing intellectuals and the local Communist Party were quite influential within cultural life. An early translator of Lu Xun's essays, the Italian sinologist Edoarda Masi (1927–2011), in her preface to the first and only complete collection of his short stories in Italian, warned against the risk of transforming Lu Xun into a Chinese Brecht (Pesaro 2014b, 10).

The case I have just described may be defined as an example of the political and ideological reception of the author, as Giangiacomo Feltrinelli—who was not only a young and wealthy publisher but also a radical activist in those years of political struggle—acted as the “agent of translation” that made Lu Xun's fiction known in Italy earlier than in other Western countries. In those years imbued with a strong rebelliousness, Lu Xun was received as a kind of Third-World political *guru* (a reading of Lu Xun which was also proposed by the American literary critic Fredric Jameson in 1986).

The partial translations that appeared in the following years differ greatly from the first phase of Lu Xun's reception in Italy in terms of their editorial purposes, target readership, and cultural breadth. The lively interest demonstrated for this author until the 1980s by Feltrinelli and other left-wing publishers (such as Editori Riuniti in Rome) rapidly declined, while recent retranslations have been carried out mostly for educational purposes or on account of the importance personally assigned to this Chinese intellectual by individual translators/publishers. None of these editions, though, aims to draw a complete portrait of Lu Xun and his literary and moral legacy, or even to bring him into “dialogue” with Italian culture.

I believe that, given the growing centrality that Chinese culture is acquiring within the “world republic of literature”—to borrow Pascale Casanova's famous expression, (Casanova 2004)—we definitely need to re-introduce Lu Xun's works and thought to Italian readers. In the mid-twentieth century, Italy followed PR China's trend and Mao's “consecration” of Lu Xun, presenting him mainly or solely as a “political author” and “the saint of Chinese literature.” This operation did not only heavily influence and distort his real image in modern Chinese culture and society, but also affected his reception abroad.

Over the last decade, a number of partial retranslations of Lu Xun's works have appeared, in most cases at the behest of minor publishers mainly aiming to exploit

the increasing number of students interested in the Chinese language as their selling target. Nonetheless, editorial operations of this kind lack any contextualization and cultural profundity. Any a-historical and a-systematic introduction of such a prominent writer undermines the possibility for the contemporary reader to see through the complexity of his personality, and grasp the ironic self-scrutiny by which he was “questioning not only his own ability as an intellectual to faithfully represent the suffering of others through the figure of an unreliable narrator, but also the social implications of such representations” (Cheng 2013, 25).

At a time when national literatures are being challenged by the growing influence of globalized literary identities and globalized literary market, a more systematic and culturally founded dissemination of modern and contemporary Chinese literature is warranted. This is the main motivation for proposing the retranslation of Lu Xun to an important publishing house, Sellerio, which was founded by Enzo Sellerio in 1969, and which has always pursued a policy of social engagement and literary quality in its publishing strategy. While it is impossible as well as undesirable to revert to the time when Lu Xun was first introduced in Italy, I still believe that only a leading national publisher and a multifaceted, ambitious project can justify a new retranslation of Lu Xun’s complete fiction.

1.4 Behavior

“Translation is a norm-governed behavior” (Toury 2012, 81): this concept explains the activity of translating as a “decision-making type of behavior. [...] a cognitive activity, an intelligent type of behavior to be considered from the perspective of problem solving and decision making” (Gambier and van Doorslaer 2011, 31). In this sense, the behavior of a translator may be observed and studied through the effects of his or her decisions, namely how they are deployed in the target text, by taking into account the “dominant/dominants”² of the text, the model reader, the purpose of the retranslation, and the publisher’s editorial policy. According to Toury the norms of translating behavior tend to be quite conservative and are the result of a consolidated practice in a certain (national) literary system: “Conservative tendencies may be perpetuated, even further enhanced, if novice translators receive encouragement from socialization agents, especially powerful ones, holding to dated norms themselves.” Innovative retranslations appear when a translator (an experienced and recognized one according to Toury) challenges previous mainstream norms: “Having internalized those norms, and having been granted more than mere recognition by society, [s/he] can afford to start practising deviations from accepted patterns of behavior” (77).

²One of the basic tenets of translation theories, the dominant of a text is “the focusing component of a work which both guarantees the integrity of its structure and specifies it” (Tobin 1988, xxi).

It is precisely the existence of different patterns of behavior that makes retranslations vary and transform a canonical literary work into an unstable text liable to changing interpretations or, at least, to changing style adaptations.

As already noted, ideology was the first motivation for importing Lu Xun's fiction into the politically and culturally engaged society of postwar Italy. However, when reading Gigliesi's translation (made in the 1960s), one immediately notices that it does not betray the influence of the political climate and circumstances of her day. On the contrary, the "dominant" in her translating strategy seems to be more poetical and emotional than political.

However, sometimes, Gigliesi's search for fluency and elegance of style makes her omit or efface some specificities of Lu Xun's style and his cultural background. Other, later translations, instead, proposed an image of Lu Xun as a great writer of the past, from a distant China still imbued with traditional culture: a typical revolutionary of the twentieth century who casts an authoritative shadow over younger generations and foreign readers. Taking a glance at some translations into other European languages, such as the brilliant endeavor by Julia Lovell for Penguin (2009), on the contrary, it becomes apparent instead that the exotic chronotope (the time and space of the source text) has been transcended: despite recognizing Lu Xun as a canonical writer, she tries to assign him the role of "a creative stylist and thinker whose ideas about literature can transcend the socio-political circumstances in which he wrote" (Lovell 2009, xlv). Comparing the three main English translations of Lu Xun's fiction (the Yangs edition, William Lyell, and Julia Lovell), Kovallis states that: "Although Lovell and the Yangs aim at readability, what they give the reader in fact are simplifications (and hence at times also distortions) of Lu Xun's more complex thoughts and diction, something he himself advised us to avoid in translation" (Kovallis 2012, 209).

The decision of proposing a retranslation of Lu Xun's fiction has been guided by some principles inspired by both literary and cultural considerations. Despite the frequency with which Lu Xun's short stories have been retranslated by Italian publishers, the different patterns of translating behavior and the impact of these translations suggest that a new strategy has to be adopted not only in terms of pragmatic and textual choices, but also in terms of the cultural contextualization of his figure and works. Therefore, a demanding effort is required in order to create a solid cultural and educational background in which not only this important writer, but the whole literary system of modern China with its historical and social specificities, should clearly emerge. I would argue that, contrary to what is usually believed, translation is not an individual but rather collective endeavor: only by involving many publishers and translators through a long-term and pluralistic plan for translations, can we really open up the "closed world" of Chinese studies—as in the abovementioned quotation from Kovallis—and let the best works of Chinese literature interact with our cultural system.

1.5 Process

In retranslating Lu Xun, I first of all produced an initial version of the target text based only on a close reading of the source text, without rereading previous translations in Italian or in other languages. The reason for this was my wish to let myself newly encounter the texts I had read for the first time many years before, as a college student, and then several times again as a teacher in my literature classes, striving to avoid any possible influence from other versions. Indeed—to quote Calvino again—“each rereading [offered me] as much of a sense of discovery as the first reading.” Surprisingly enough, the Chinese text seemed to me quite different from the one which lay in my fragmented memory: time and experience, my increased knowledge of China and enriched comprehension of the Chinese language and literature made me see these stories under a different light.

In this sense, we cannot deny the objective, important role that the translator’s subjectivity plays in translating a text: the critical self-engagement at both a cognitive and emotional level is the mainstay on which any serious translation project should be based. However, the subjectivity of the translator must be integrated with a range of essential translating norms and activities in order to prevent from letting personal tendencies obscure the historical, conceptual, and textual framework in which the source text has been produced and transmitted.

Indeed, Lu Xun’s short stories represent a rather peculiar narrative work, which is not clearly inscribed within any particular genre framework, but undoubtedly reveals some ties to both poetry and essay writing. Many critics, both in China and in the West, have emphasized the “lyrical” vein in Lu Xun’s fictional creation (詩意 or 詩化), which encompasses “intrinsic poetic qualities” (Gu 2006, 110–11). In his famous preface to *Nàhǎn*, Lu Xun (1919b) himself defines his works as “小說模樣的文 章” (short-story-like pieces); as has been noted by Gao Yuanbao (2013):

[...]魯迅心目中的“文章”(廣義的文學)包括小說,但不限於小說。因為在他看來,小說僅屬文學一科,文章(文學)大於小說,可以用文章涵蓋小說。[...]魯迅的“小說模樣的文 章”夾帶著許多文章做法,甚至就以文章為骨骼、為經脈、為氣息、為底子,《吶喊》、《彷徨》、《故事新編》中小說氣味最濃厚的幾篇也不例外。[...] In Lu Xun’s eyes *wenzhang* (literature in a broad sense) includes fiction, but is not limited to fiction. Indeed, according to him, fiction belongs to a branch of literature: *wenzhang* (literature) is broader than fiction, it can cover fiction [...]. Lu Xun’s “short-story-like pieces” encompass several methods used for composing essays, to the extent that the essay-form can be considered their bone structure, their blood vessels, their breath and their basis: this is true even of those stories with a most markedly fictional flavor collected in *Outcry*, *Hesitation*, and *Old Stories Retold*.

As regards the relationship with previous translations and retranslations (both into Italian and other European languages), I consider it to be an essential tool for improving and enriching the strategy adopted by the individual translator after the completion of an initial version of the text. It is in this phase that the “competing interpretation” (Venuti) takes place, which allows translators to build their strategy through the rejection or acceptance of previous patterns of behavior.

In addition to this, of course, an intensive reading of critical essays and of the recent results of the long-standing research on Lu Xun is also part of the translation process.

In the last section of the chapter, I will illustrate the main criteria I have followed in translating Lu Xun's short stories, providing a range of examples taken from both the collections. Taking into account the shared opinion on transgeneric qualities embedded in Lu Xun's stories, in the phase of reflection preliminary to the translation, I have integrated the essential norms that govern the translation of fiction with the following steps and criteria, developed by Buffoni (2004) in his seminal essay on poetry translation. In order to achieve a retranslation compatible with the aims of the translation project, I have been paying attention to: (1) pretexts, co-texts, metatexts; (2) language changes over the course of time; (3) the author's poetics; (4) rhythm; (5) intertextuality; (6) the historical and sociocultural background of both the source and the target literary system.

This process must reflect the original intentions and artistic effects envisaged by the author. To give only a few examples to explain the abovementioned categories, I have been working from a multi-perspective viewpoint, by taking account of other works written by the author prior to or during the writing of the short stories (pretexts). As I have discussed elsewhere (Pesaro 2014a, b), in my translation I have devoted particular attention to the words and sentences surrounding certain pivotal passages and expressions (co-texts), in an attempt to reconstruct a web of meanings often based on repetitions, contradictory statements, internal references between different short stories etc. After the first draft of my translation, I have taken into account the "metatexts" connected with the source text, both in Genette's and Popovic's sense: respectively, metatexts as a secondary commentary on the source text (Genette 1997) and as texts which are the result of a transformation (translation) of the source text, namely other translations of the collection (Popovic 1976).

Besides, I could not avoid reflecting on the need to consider the "language in motion":

We suggest regarding the literary text to be translated, be it classic or modern, not as a rock that stands motionless in the sea, but rather as a floating platform, where the translator operates on the living body of the work, but the work itself is constantly changing or, precisely, in motion. (Buffoni 2004, 17).³

For this reason, I have tried to steer clear from both a timeless, standard Italian, and an affectedly antiquated style; rather, I was determined to keep a trace of the tangible difference between *baihua* and *wenyan* words used by Lu Xun, often by mingling them or creating an ironic contrast. At the same time, as my "competing" version was definitely the 1969 one, it was necessary to rejuvenate and somehow adapt the language into an Italian more suitable to the twenty-first century.

³"Si propone di considerare il testo letterario classico o moderno da tradurre non come un rigido scoglio immobile nel mare, bensì come una piattaforma galleggiante, dove chi traduce opera sul corpo vivo dell'opera, ma l'opera stessa è in costante trasformazione o, per l'appunto, in movimento".

As far as rhythm is concerned, intertextuality and the sociocultural context are concerned, the first element has been particularly considered in the process of reviewing translation by reading all the texts aloud, a practice Lu Xun himself adopted when reviewing his writing: “我做完之後，總要看兩遍，自己覺得彎口的，就增刪幾個字，一定要它讀得順口” (Lu Xun 1933, 526). “After finishing a story, I would always read it through twice. When I felt something didn’t sound right, I would add or delete a few words, so that it would read more smoothly” (Lu Xun 2017a, 57).

The last two categories are a core part of the main translating strategy, which lies behind the paratextual support given by the translator’s preface to the book and the footnotes. Cultural and historical specificities—in other words the “culturemes,” on which I will elaborate later—should not be dismissed on the basis of the author’s alleged capacity to “transcend the socio-political circumstances in which he wrote,” for Lu Xun’s universality lies precisely in his deep, insightful and unquestionable connection with his own time. Finally, a few words must be said about intertextuality—a vast and complicated matter indeed. In his two first collections Lu Xun creates such an intense network of references both with other literary texts and among the stories themselves that this inter- and intra-textuality plays a pivotal role in shaping the literary world he presents to his readers. It is up to the translator to keep alive this inner dialogue, this interconnectivity, which shapes the short stories of *Outcry* and *Hesitation* into a sort of “novel,” where the different characters, although belonging to different plots, share the same setting and the same cultural and psychological atmosphere.

2 The Dilemma of Literary Mediation

As illustrated in the first section of this chapter Lu Xun was introduced officially in Italy thanks to Luciano Bianciardi’s translation of a selection of stories from the English version (edited in China by Feng Xuefeng for the Foreign Language Press). Actually, Lu Xun was mentioned in an Italian academic publication for the first time as early as in 1949, in the Italian encyclopaedia Treccani, where Giuliano Bertuccioli dedicated a short introduction to him.⁴ The earliest translation, though, seems to be that of his short story “Guxiang” (Ritorno all’antico Villaggio—Back to the ancient village), published in the academic journal *Asia*, in 1941 (Bujatti 2011, 320).

What kind of audience did this first approach to the most important modern Chinese writer address?

Lu Xun in those years was mainly known and appreciated by young and curious sinologists such as Edoarda Masi (1927–2011) and Anna Bujatti (1937–2013), who were eager to introduce and disseminate Chinese literature in Italy. They translated part of his essays, the *zawen* and some prose poetry while his fiction was completely translated into Italian from the Chinese in 1969 by Primerose Gigliesi. However, some Italian intellectuals of the time had the chance to visit China in the 1950–60s

⁴Enciclopedia Italiana - II Appendice (1949) http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/lu-hsun_%28Enciclopedia-Italiana%29/Last access Aug. 29.

and were introduced to his figure and his works, such as Franco Fortini (1917–1994) who got to know the Chinese writer during his visit in China in 1955, when he saw his home in Shanghai and read some of his short stories: Fortini was deeply struck by Lu Xun's intellectual clarity and determination, and found that his views bore similarity with the ones of European thinkers of the same period.

Fortini (whose real name was Franco Lattes) himself is one the most important Italian intellectuals of the twentieth century, an essayist, poet, critic, and translator he represents a time when literature, social concern, and political engagement were tightly intersected. He mentions Lu Xun in many of his essays, for instance:

Concerning Lu Xun, I haven't had any doubts, since when in 1955 in Beijing I read some of his stories and then many other of his writings, in the early 1960s: not only a great writer and a leading intellectual, but also a mind very close to those of the same period in the West.⁵

The translation of Lu Xun was carried out in those years in an atmosphere of commitment and a sense of cultural affinity. Besides, Italy was one of the earliest countries in Europe to translate a variety of Lu Xun's works (which, on the contrary, were introduced into France and Germany relatively late). "In Western countries, with the exception of Italy, Lu Xun received serious attention only after attitudes towards the People Republic of China began to change" (Eber 1985, 250).

However, it is undoubted that this outstanding achievement of cultural dissemination and intellectual exchange only involved a small elite, who was eager to recognize and share with the Chinese writer the signs of an intellectual activism and a strong commitment, as well as a high consideration of the power and value of literature. All these factors contributed to the shaping of an enlightened but still elitist position. In this sense, Italian sinologists and intellectuals were both agents and addressees of the translation of Lu Xun's works, as they did mirror themselves in his endeavor and recognize in his literary standpoint their own. They built up a "dialogue" with the Chinese writer.

In the late twentieth century, that kind of commitment and tight connection between literature and politics progressively but inexorably disappeared: in the same way as the cultural page, which was called "terza pagina" because it appeared in the third page, was moved to the last pages or even completely erased from the contemporary Italian newspapers. After the 1980s the retranslation of Lu Xun's works was more oriented to a selection of his short stories (only the best known ones) and often with a domesticating approach, while his more politically and historically marked *zawen* (miscellaneous essays, endowed with a strong critical and ironic flair), and his controversial, quite obscure prose poetry did not attract new translations recently.

Nowadays, the new context of cultural globalization and the commercialization of publishing around the world require works that circulate smoothly in a deeply marketized literary system. Constantly hunting for exotic bestsellers, publishers must

⁵"Quanto a Lu Hsun non ho avuto dubbi da quando nel 1955 a Pechino lessi alcuni suoi racconti e poi tanti altri suoi scritti, nei primi anni Sessanta: non solo un grande scrittore e un intellettuale maestro, ma anche una mente molto prossima a quelle del medesimo periodo in Occidente" (Fortini and Jachia 1993, 77).

respond to the needs of this “age of de-literarization” applying new strategies of translation and bookselling.

My proposal of retranslating the main modern classics of literature from China (which have never been translated into Italian or need a retranslation because the earlier ones are now long out of print) has been finally accepted by Editore Sellerio, one of the few Italian publishers who envisions the necessity of a more systematic and culturally appropriated circulation of literary works in order to provide Italian readers with an array of cultural tools and hints to decode China and better understand its rise in the present-day political and economic international context. However, at the same time, both the publisher and the translators are aware that this action has to be accompanied by a realistic understanding of the contemporary readers’ expectations and cultural background.

Being the author of the forthcoming retranslation of Lu Xun’s first two collections of short stories, I have analyzed in the first part of this chapter the reasons and modalities for a retranslation of Lu Xun’ fiction, which I sum up as follows:

- (1) New imposing global and local trends appeal for a re-contextualisation of Chinese literature;
- (2) generally speaking, the publishing market of Chinese literature in Italy needs to be upgraded to a higher and more comprehensive status;
- (3) at the same time China has enacted a full-breath “go global” translation and publishing policy of its literature;
- (4) last but not least, the specific circumstances of Lu Xun’s translated works in Italy have to be reconsidered;
- (5) Today’s readership might be composed mainly by students of Chinese and ordinary readers interested in Chinese culture for a variety of reasons. The ideological factor which prevailed until the 1980s is now replaced by a cultural, ethnic curiosity, and attraction.

2.1 Translation as Literary Mediation

In shaping an overall translation strategy that takes into account the abovementioned factors, I have proposed myself to pursue a form of “literary mediation” as the final aim of the whole work of translation, in other words, to preserve the cultural “chronotope” of Lu Xun’s works in terms of the so called “rich-points” (Agar 2006) and to make any effort in order to let the readers be able to decode them, by trying to prevent the reconstruction of the somewhat harsh style of Lu Xun’s writing from depriving the readers of their reading pleasure.

I draw the concept of “literary mediation” from the British scholar Roger Sell, who considers literature as one of the highest forms of human communication and agrees with Isaiah Berlin when he states that:

Members of one culture can, by the force of imaginative insight, understand (what Vico called *entrare*) the values, the ideals, the forms of life of another culture or society, even those remote in time or space. They may find these values unacceptable, but if they open

their minds sufficiently they can grasp how one might be a full human being, with whom one could communicate, and at the same time live in the light of values widely different from one's own, but which nevertheless one can see to be values, ends of life, by the realization of which men could be fulfilled. (Berlin 1990, 11)

If literature, as Sell argues, is a form of human communication grounded mainly on language, the literary critic, but we could say here *a fortiori* the translator, should first of all be aware of the force of literature as a speech act, in other words, be aware of the power of literature of effectively changing its users (both writers and readers, and again, I would like to add, translators). In fact, as Sell (2000, 2) states, “writing and reading [...] are capable of bringing about a change in the status quo,” and “The writing and reading of literary texts are seen as actions in a strong sense, with an interpersonal valency that cannot be fudged.”

But what is Sell's method? “The process I have in mind can be thought of as a careful negotiation of differences” (Sell 2000, 15). Indeed, the translator often deals with literary texts coming from different epochs and cultures, which may represent an additional challenge to the main problem of language recognition and decoding. Besides, Sell (2000, 4) reminds us that “[a] use of words representing one particular conjuncture of sociocultural history and circumstance, when processed at some different conjuncture, may offer a considerable challenge.” However, he believes in the human ability of accepting and processing cultural landscapes of difference, which he calls “empathetic imagination” (in Vico's words “imaginative insight”):

For communication between differently positioned people to stand any chance of satisfying both parties, the human imagination must be sufficiently autonomous to empathize with modes of being and doing that are different from the ones valorized within its most immediate milieu. The power of imaginative self-projection into otherness is in fact a kind of provisional independence of spirit which the mediating critic can seek to stimulate in readers, sometimes, we can hope, to lasting effect (Sell 2000, 4).

Sell manages to show how difference can be dealt by means of literary mediation:

Often, differences of situationality are something human beings like to explore. Sometimes, they may positively need to explore them. It is only as the communicative act proceeds that the context of receiving may to a greater or lesser extent change, and if there happens to be a feedback channel, changes may also be registered to the context of sending as well. When completed, the negotiation taking place will have been a historical process by which the mental distance between the two contexts has perhaps been shortened. (Sell 2000, 7)

Building on Sell's theory of literary mediation and adapting it into translation practice, in the last part of this section, I will further explore this process of re-translation by presenting some concrete examples taken from the translation of *Nàhǎn* and *Pánghuáng*, illustrating the variety of elements in Lu Xun's short stories, which, paraphrasing Agar, represent “those surprises, those departures from an outsider's expectations that signal a difference between [Chinese language culture] and [Italian language culture] and give direction to subsequent learning” (Agar 2006, 2).

Removing some bias derived from both the historicist approach, which only sees literature as a mirror of life, and, on the contrary, the postmodern de-humanisation

of literature, which believes that a text has an independent life and meaning, transcending the author's personal and historical context, Sell takes into account the dialogic reality of literature, which functions as an interpersonal set of relations. In this sense, his view is quite close to Agar's concept of culture as a relational, translational activity.

What I draw mainly from Sell's theory is his conviction that a reader can deal with a text distant—in time, space and culture—if adequately supported by a mediator (in our case the translator) that accompanies her in discovering and understanding the rich points.

This does not mean that a reader will understand a text in exactly the way its author understood it. A reader always brings to the interpretative process a greater or lesser ignorance of the author's historical life-world, plus types of information and evaluation which, though affecting the text's impact now, originally could have had no bearing at all. Even so, readers are not wholly confined to their own horizon. With the help of historical and philological scholarship, and by using the same inferential processes as they successfully use in life at large, they can try, as Gadamer would say, to merge their own and other horizons, and as a result will often approximate an authorial intention fairly closely. (Sell 2000, 39)

2.2 *Analysis of the Dominant and Translation Strategy*

A self-analysis in the decision-making process of translation allows the translator to assess the extent to which the mediation approach does not efface the text's literary specificity and cultural diversity.

This can be a real dilemma for the translator. However, all choices are admitted, even self-contradictory ones, provided that each of them ties back to the general strategy mainly based on the analysis of the so-called dominant⁶ and the model reader.

If nowadays ordinary readers are less or not involved at all in ideological or political matters, what they possibly look for in reading an important Chinese writer such as Lu Xun, is not what Franco Fortini wrote, namely the sense of ideological commitment and of sharing a momentous feeling of decadence. Rather, nowadays when Italian readers approach his fiction might be struck by the fears and anxieties he was haunted by: the power of history and traditional culture, the traditional way of transmitting culture and assigning power, the Chinese imperial examination system; the social and moral burden exerted by the clan system on the individual; the long-standing and apparently unfillable gap between peasants and intellectuals, feelings which generate in him a sense of nostalgia, loneliness and even despair. In other words, they might be struck by his human and intellectual experience: he was discovering the limits of the individual's identity and the burden of a centuries-old heritage in a changing society. This can be adequately conveyed to contemporary

⁶It can be defined as the focusing component of a text, which guarantees the integrity of its structure. The definition evokes something very specific, yet in a text there might be more than one dominant, and these can be put in a hierarchy according to their importance: a dominant followed by all the sub-dominants (Osimo 2010, 93).

Italian readers. The dominant of the metatext is thus most similar to the one of the prototext, but the human trait is enhanced while the ideological one is faded. If I can use a very simple metaphor, the Lu Xun I wish to introduce to the readers is neither the one Fortini felt so close, nor the “creative stylist and thinker whose ideas about literature can transcend the socio-political circumstances in which he wrote” (Lovell 2009, xlv), because Lu Xun *is* unmistakably part of “the socio-political circumstances in which he wrote.”

Building on Torop’s concept of dominant-focused translation, I argue that these elements can be considered as the “content dominant” of the first collection *Nàhǎn*, while the “expressive dominant,” as I call it, is, in my opinion, well explained in the author’s preface to the first collection, where he confesses that his state of mind oscillates between loneliness and hope, and it is precisely the outcry, which give the name to the whole collection, the method he finds to resist to his loneliness.

The second collection, *Pánghuáng*, which is nevertheless tightly connected to the first one in terms of language, topics and style, focuses more on the tense relationship between the individual and the family. Each of the various characters depicted in the collection seems to struggle against an invisible but binding network of controls and moral yokes (Xianglin’s wife; the loner; the friend at the tavern etc.). As far as the “expressive dominant” is concerned, in *Pánghuáng* one is struck by the diffuse sense of loneliness that pervades the stories and reflects Lu Xun’s own state of mind, as depicted in the abovementioned preface.

Therefore, I have been almost pedantic in maintaining these elements, in both collections, enhancing whenever possible this feeling, which Lu Xun shares with some of his characters, but which is also constantly mentioned in other works, such as in *Yecǎo* 野草 (Wild grass 1925): the piece entitled “Xīwàng” 希望 (Hope), one of the lyrical texts composing this prose-poetry collection:

我的心分外地寂寞。然而我的心很平安：没有爱憎，没有哀乐，也没有颜色和声音。(Lu Xun 1925b, 16)

My heart is extremely lonely. However, my heart is in peace, without either love or hate, either sorrow, or joy, either colour, or sound.

I will come back later to the concept of “expressive dominant,” providing some examples from Lu Xun’s works in translation.

2.3 Rich Points and Culturemes

A translation macro-strategy has to be deployed by means of a range of micro-strategies, smaller, even insignificant choices that contribute to the final result of reconstructing the dominants of the prototext. Some of these micro-strategies can be identified with the treatment of the so-called “rich points” and culturemes. I have already explained the meaning of rich point, “cultureme” is a more practical term, adopted by translation scholars:

A cultureme is a social phenomenon of a culture X that is regarded as relevant by members of this culture and, when compared with a corresponding social phenomenon in a culture Y, it is found to be specific to culture X. (Nord 1997, 34f)

In Lu Xun's short stories dating from the 1920s I have detected the following types of culturemes:

- (1) Names and appellatives;
- (2) Cultural traditions and historical events;
- (3) Measures and money;
- (4) Cultural-specific objects: clothes, ritual objects, furniture, herbs, food etc.;
- (5) Intertextuality.

Once detected, the culturemes have to be explored in their function in the prototext, which, according, to Luque Nadal (2009, 109–110), maybe one of the following:

- (1) aesthetic function: aiming at achieving and embellishing a text;
- (2) argumentative function: aiming at expressing one's opinion about a certain subject;
- (3) cognitive-hermeneutic function: perpetrating the collective memory of some archetypal situations, as they can easily visualize the complexity of the avatar of existence.

I would say that all the three functions match with Lu Xun's writings, we should not forget the lyrical inspiration that pervades some of the stories in the two collections (especially "Hometown," "Village Opera," "In the Wineshop," and "Regret of the past"); the criticism of China's cultural and social oppression of the individual, and, last but not least, the obsession about power—the power of language, the power of culture, the power of superstition, and power relations—which is apparent in stories like "Diary of a Madman" and "The True Story of Ah Q," just to list a few.

Then, how to treat these culturemes in the metatext depends on the translator's choices and overall strategy.

Of course, the translator should be aware that

[t]he context in which a literary work is currently being read is a cognitive environment which varies, infinitely, and quite beyond the writer's control or knowledge. **The decisive factor is the matter of who, where and when the particular reader of the moment actually happens to be.** This has direct consequences for how any given reading works out. **A literary text, like any other kind of utterance, calls on its recipients to perform a number of inferential activities: to disambiguate, assign reference, resolve vagueness or indeterminacy; to recover implicit content and/or attitudes; and to take things ironically, metaphorically, symbolically or literally.** (Sell 2000, 132. Emphasis mine)

As a "special reader" and a "constrained writer" (subject to the prototext's authoritativeness), translators have to negotiate with their intended readers to let these culturemes be correctly received, understood or at least imagined: they will need sometimes "to disambiguate, assign reference and resolve vagueness" as Sells states, calling for the readers' capacity "consciously or otherwise, to guess what the language used must have meant for the author in the context of writing." (Sell 2000, 138). The translator is aware that:

[g]iven the appropriate balance, **reading is a meeting of two minds**, such that readers' grasp of the author's words within the context of writing is constantly affected by their sense of themselves and their own current context of reading, and vice versa. Looked at from the here and now, the past and/or the foreign can no longer seem as it did or does to its own denizens. (Sell 2000, 144. Emphasis mine)

Sell grasps the unique relationship that is built up during the process of reading between the author and the reader; therefore, with the double capacity of author and reader, the translator on behalf of the intended readers negotiate with the author of the prototext, deploying the results of this negotiation in the metatext. I draw from Sell his method of reading, based on the concept of "coadapting":

Both a writer and a reader, by **interacting with prevailing sociocultural circumstances, can do something which may bring about a change in both themselves and in those circumstances, a change which may ultimately be to the wishes of the individual writer or reader.** (Sell 2000, 154. Emphasis mine)

In other words, when we translate we should try to bridge the gap, adapting the context expressed in the text in a way that changes the text itself but will change also the mind of the reader, in doing so we have to be aware that "[u]sers not only adapt to language, but can adapt language to themselves, permanently affecting the range of human possibilities" (Sell 2000, 156). Sell claims that, despite the cultural, spatial and historical distance, and

[a]lthough the variety of viewpoints is endless, although rationalities and values vary, **we do have the capacity for empathy and comparison, a capacity which can focus on the quick of life as experienced by some other person, or as experienced, or still to be experienced, by ourselves under different circumstances from the present.** In effect, our ability to envisage widely differing life-worlds represents a preparedness for communication (Sell 2000, 155–156. Emphasis mine)

Translation carried out as a form of literary mediation should enhance the cognitive and emotional impact the literary text produces on the readers, exploiting the function of "empathetic reading": indeed, as Bernini and Caracciolo state (2013, 82), "[o]ne of the reasons why fiction raises our emotions is that it always posits itself in relation to the repertoire of emotional scripts of a particular culture."⁷

In my "dialogic" attempt, I have taken into account the need for the reader to access the "mindset" and emotional repertoire of the author as well as Chinese society at his time; I argue that a literary translator is also a critic who explores the world of the writer and sheds light on it during the process of translation, if possible, and, if not, provides the translation with meaningful paratexts, such as the translator's preface.

As the theory makes very clear, **what critics specially need to draw on are all those kinds of philological, literary-historical, general-historical, and even biographical information which can serve to bridge the gap between the current context of reading and the context of writing.** (Sell 2000, 256. Emphasis mine)

⁷"Una delle ragioni per cui la narrativa suscita le nostre emozioni è che si colloca sempre in rapporto al repertorio dei copioni emotivi di una particolare cultura".

This aim can be achieved by means of a historically and culturally detailed introduction to the translation, a translator's preface, to provide readers with a contextualization of Lu Xun's personality and life environment as well as China's sociocultural features of the time, such as family and social traditions, historical events, intellectual aspirations, and individual's and people's conditions. This can reduce the number of footnotes, which (if too many and too scattered throughout the text) can distract or even disturb readers from the pleasure of the narration, providing instead the most curious of them with an emotional and sociocultural landscape they can see through. The attention in preserving the network of culturemes, without erasing them for the sake of an easy access to the text, might contribute to the overall balance of its cognitive and emotional functions, engaging the readers participation in the process.

2.4 *Translating the Culturemes*

Finally, I will show a few examples of some of the abovementioned types of culturemes, in order to illustrate how does the negotiating or coadapting method work. Both Sell as a literary critic and Agar as an ethnographer enhance the possibility of

making sense out of human differences in terms of human similarities. Without the universal connections, the human similarities, translation would not be possible. Those universal human connections are what this second meaning of culture is all about. (Agar 2006, 11. Emphasis mine)

In fact, if “human universals are the ground against which the figure of rich point translation is possible” (Agar 2006), the specificity and universality of a writer such as Lu Xun can be variously transmitted through translation.

Therefore, considering the historical and cultural backdrop and the expressive dominant of nostalgia and bitter despair as main dominants of the prototext, I have chosen to enhance those rich points which help readers grasp Lu Xun's obsession with cultural imprinting and historical binding. Nonetheless, I have also focused my strategy on a more emotional feature, which is the struggle of the individual against social and family oppression, and against its own contradictions.

As far as appellations are concerned, they are a significant epitome or a metonymy of traditional family structure in China: Lu Xun's critical position against its powerful, sometimes pernicious, influence on the individual is well known.

便是“孝”“烈”這類道德，也都是旁人毫不負責，一味收拾幼者弱者的方法。在這樣社會中，不鬪老者難於生活，即解放的幼者，也難於生活。(Lu Xun 1919a, 44)

The virtues of filial piety and chastity are simply ways in which to persecute the young and frail while bystanders bear no responsibility. In this kind of society, it is not only the old who find that life is difficult, it's the same for the emancipated younger generation. (Lu Xun 2017c, 136)

Taking into account Lu Xun's views on family ties and women emancipation, we should not underestimate the importance of some linguistic elements that represent

his polemical target: such as forms of address used in the countryside, titles and appellations that show the social and psychological entanglement between the identity of the individual and its burdensome social background. I kept thus the traditional *lao* 老 (vecchio—old) and *xiao* 小 (giovane—young) in “Yào” 藥 (Medicine, 1919), by translating and not transcribing or erasing them; another issue is the way women are seen in the traditional context criticised by Lu Xun: for instance, the young widow who loses her little son for a wrongly treated illness in “Míngtiān” 明天 (Tomorrow, 1920) is called *Shànsì sāozi* 單四嫂, which I translated into Italian as “*moglie del Quarto Shan*” (Fourth Shan’s wife), and similarly to what I did with the protagonist of “Zhùfú” 祝福 (New Year’s Sacrifice, 1924) *Xiánghlín sāo* 祥林嫂 (*moglie di Xianglin or Xianglin’s wife*). Differently, Lovell in her recent translation for Penguin Books, granted the character the title of “Mrs. Shan,” which, in my opinion, is a far too polite and dignifying term for the poor weaver from the village of Luzhen. We may as well remember what Lu Xun thought about women condition in old China:

假使女子生計已能獨立，社會也知道互助，一人還可勉強生存。不幸中國情形，卻正相反。(Lu Xun 1918, 40)

If women were economically independent and people had the spirit of mutual assistance, then a widow might be able to survive on her own. Unfortunately, in China, the opposite is true. (Lu Xun 2017b, 121)

但大抵因為寡婦是鬼妻，亡魂跟著，所以無人敢娶，並非要他不事二夫 [...]。(Lu Xun 1918, 38)

A widow was considered the wife of a ghost, and as she was followed by her ghost husband nobody would dare marry her. (Lu Xun 2017b, 118)

A translator’s aim, borrowing Sell’s words again,

must be to **awake a sensitivity** to writers’ communicative faith in their readers’ human receptivity, a faith which in a more perfect world would itself be enough **to bring readers of different backgrounds** [...] powerfully together [...]. Above all, perhaps, there needs to be a sense of literature’s bi-dimensional ethics: of its moral force both in the there-and-then and in the here-and-now.

[...]

The ratio between [a work’s] potential stimulus to the current reader and the sociocultural distance from the context of writing to the current context of reading is directly proportional. (Sell 2000, 256)

I agree with Sell’s concept of the “bi-dimensional ethics” of literature as communication, and I claim that for a translator the need to reflect both the ethical and the aesthetical is a challenging but sustainable and desirable goal. The micro-strategy adopted to enhance Lu Xun’s denunciation against gender iniquity in China is strongly connected to the overall strategy of a translation intended as literary meditation, able to connect the contemporary Italian reader to Lu Xun’s China and his struggle against century-old discriminations.

Literary translation, as it is generally recognized, is one of the highest and most difficult forms of communication, by preserving any detail which can reflect—and

let the reader visualize—the hegemonic system Lu Xun tirelessly condemned in his life and works by means of a systematic reproduction of meaningful linguistic and conceptual elements such as the culturemes, the translator can infuse the text with the powerful force of self-projection, despite the great cultural and temporal distance:

[...] communication between different situationalities is most certainly possible. Given, too, that a reader's self-projection into the communicative relationships proposed by a literary text involves the same mental effort as is required for any other kind of communication, and given that such heuristic dialogicality is indistinguishable from the very process of human individuation, the experience of literature can even result in significant self-reassessment and self-development, which may ultimately entail a change to society as well. (Sell 2000, 256)

In the first collection, one of the most remarkable themes is the burdensome cultural and social oppression exerted by the examination system: the stories “Kǒng yǐ jǐ” 孔乙己 (Kong Yi Ji, 1919c) and “Bái guāng” 白光 (The White Light, 1922) are the clearest examples of the pervasiveness of this system, but I'd rather cite “Ah Q zhèngzhuàn” 啊Q正傳 (The True Story of Ah Q, 1921), where the terms connected to the examination system form another network of culturemes: the different levels of examinations for the literati, county, province, and national, are often reminded to the reader although the story deals with a peasant and a rural community, remarking thus the social distance between ordinary people and the literati: terms such as *xiùcai* 秀才 (successful candidate in county level examination; fine talent), *maocai* 茂才 (talented person), *jǔrén* 舉人 (successful candidate in provincial examination), *wentong* 文童 (examination candidate for the lowest degree), *jìnxué* 進學 (candidate who passed the lowest examination degree) often recur in the text. In “Kuáng rén rì jì rì jì” 狂人日記 (Diary of a Madman, 1918) we also find the term *hòubǔ* 候補 (be a candidate for a vacancy).⁸

I decided to keep some of these terms untranslated, namely those which are more representative, such as the appellation for the county and province candidates, while informing the reader in the preface about the meaning and structure of these positions, which are not only social, as I have said before, but also real identity marks. In fact, in the text they are often used together with a surname, becoming something more than a simple appellation (Zhao *xiùcai* 趙秀才; Mr. Maocai 茂才先生); in the last part of the story, it is said that people even believe that *jǔrén*, the successful candidate at the provincial level, is not a title but a real name!

這也不獨在未莊是如此，便是一百裡方圓之內也都如此，人們幾乎多以為他的姓名就叫舉人老爺的了。(Lu Xun [1921] 2005, 89)

Not only in No-village, but even people within a hundred miles around it almost thought that his name was Mr. Juren.

⁸The complicated system of examinations that for centuries provided the Empire with a hierarchy of officials at all levels was based on the county level examination, in order to receive the title of *xiùcai*, then that of *jǔrén* at the provincial level and, finally, the highest level of examinations was the one at the capital, through which the candidate could enter the court with the title of *jìnshì* 進士.

These expressions are real rich points, which have to be adequately signaled to the reader, in order to describe the impact of the old system upon the lives of the intellectuals, private individuals as well the local population, and the power it exerted on their psychological and social identity.

Therefore, where the previous translations (both from English and Italian) opted for a descriptive translation of the terms—*xiùcai* “vincitore del concorso provinciale” (winner of the provincial examination) (Lu Xun 1955, 1969), *jǔrén* “il dotto della provincia” (the province’s erudite) (Lu Xun 1955, 1969), a generic name such as “the magistrate” (Lu Xun 2009) or a literal translation as in Lyell: “budding talent” and “selectman” (Lu Xun 1990)—I think that the plain *pīnyīn* 拼音 (official Chinese alphabetical system), with a preliminary explanation in the preface, can make the readers register those names as obscure yet meaningful signs.

Another micro-strategy adopted in the process of translation aiming at illuminating Lu Xun’s thought and cultural environment is the translation of symbolic names. I will only provide two examples, though very significant: the first one is the main toponym in “The True Story of Ah Q,” the small village (which foreshadows Lu Xun’s own home village), where the story is set. Lu Xun calls it *Wèizhuāng* 未莊, and I have chosen to keep its symbolic meaning literally translating it as “no-village” (Villaggio-che-non-c’è), a paradoxical, almost dystopic setting for Ah Q, who himself is deprived of a family and even of a real name. In Lu Xun’s strategy, he is nobody and thus everybody, just like No-village is anywhere and thus everywhere.

Gu Ming Dong (2016, 221) also stresses the importance of this element in reading the novella in the frame of Lu Xun’s socio-political engagement and his reflection upon human condition: “The ‘no village’ or the village that has never existed is another piece of evidence for the idea that the author might have intended his novella to refer to the universal conditions of human existence.” The space where the story of Ah Q takes place is specific/local and universal at the same time, and, as remarked by Gu (2016, 207) “Ah Q is not merely a typical character under typical circumstances, but an artistic representation of an existential problem.”

The second example is my adaptation of the name of a secondary character in one of the stories included in *Hesitation*, “*Dìxiong*” 弟兄 (Brothers, 1925), which is a deeply psychological and ironical portrait of the tense relationships within the family, dominated in Chinese society by heavy social and cultural expectations, and, at the same time, foreshadows Lu Xun and his brother’s Zhou Zuoren complicated relationship. When his brother falls ill, the protagonist of the story, Zhang Peijiun, despite all his apparent concern for the health of his beloved sibling, is in fact subconsciously torn by the fear of having to support his family, in view of his possible death. The foreign doctor who is anxiously called on to visit the sick man, is called 普悌思普 (Butisibu, Lu Xun 1925a, 258), an imagined foreign surname containing the characters *tì* 悌 which means “respect for one’s brother,” and *sī* 思 meaning “think of, long for.” In my translation I used the German-sounding name “Bruderliebe,”

which literally means “brotherly love,” in order to suggest the same ironical context created by Lu Xun.⁹

Beyond cultural-specific elements, translation as a form of literary mediation has to deal with a variety of linguistic and narratological devices: such as deixis,¹⁰ modalities,¹¹ intertextuality¹² and free indirect speech. Indeed, “as far as emotive and evaluative expressions go, they can be almost anything — nouns, adjectives, adverbs, verbs or expletives” (Sell 2000, 167). I will not explore these elements here as they do not fall in the scope of this contribution, but they undoubtedly represent effective devices both for the writer, and then for the translator aiming at conveying symbolic messages even through function words, which was, indeed, a linguistic practice very often adopted by Lu Xun himself.

3 Conclusion

In this chapter I have retraced the history of the Italian translations of Lu Xun’s fiction, trying to account for the changing audience to whom they were addressed and, mostly, the changing political and cultural frame within which they were received. The amount of translations of Lu Xun’s short stories produced since the mid-twentieth century, despite the different “behavior” adopted by each translator, not only reveals the status of the writer as a classic, bound to resonate in different epochs and among different readerships, but also testifies the enduring power of translation in giving a classical work an “afterlife” (Benjamin). I have also shown the importance of retranslation as a practice which revives texts and challenges translators’ ability in “bringing texts closer”—as Pym puts it—and in renovating their meaning for new audiences, while shedding new light on pre-existing translations.

In the second part of the chapter, I have illustrated the presence of a variety of structures and devices in the strategy of the writer, which claim for the need of literary mediation as both an attitude and a necessary tool for decoding historical, cultural, and psychological values when translating a literary text. In the early reception of Lu Xun, this dialogue with the author and his system of values regarded

⁹According to Zhou Zuoren it is a true story, but in his literary creation Lu Xun deliberately changed the name of the German doctor—whose real name, according to Zhou Zuoren (2013, 243) himself was *Diboer* (probably referring to Edmund Dipper 1871–1933)—into a quite allusive surname.

¹⁰“Person deixis assigns first-, second and third-person roles, while social deixis marks the degrees of respect the sender conceives as being demanded or manifested by various parties. Both these types of denotation help to establish the sender and receiver personae as communicative latching-on points, and they are reinforced by time deixis and place deixis, which offer to set the virtual sender, the virtual reader, and the worlds and people under discussion within temporal and space relationship as well” (Sell 2000, 165).

¹¹“Modality is the linguistic means by which senders indicate to recipients some degree of commitment or hesitation as to the truth, probability or desirability of whatever they happen to be talking about” (Sell 2000, 166).

¹²“That extreme intimacy of bonding which results from allusiveness, at points where the writer deliberately seeks to raise an intertextual relationship to consciousness.” (Sell 2000, 169).

mainly the elite and left-wing intellectuals in Italy. Later, when China opened up to the West bringing forward opportunity of new cultural and business relationships, publishers, and translators, when proposing translations of Lu Xun's works, started addressing students of Chinese language and ordinary readers interested in a new, rapidly developing China. In contemporary Italy, I think the time has come for introducing Lu Xun as an internationally renowned and recognized author, whose fiction can still resonate in describing old and new slaveries, human and inhuman social practices, in shedding light on his own country and society. As Qian Liqun reminds us, "Lu Xun's works provide a realistic, vivid, and profound description of modern China's cultural psychology, behavioral norms, and value orientations, as well as the character, customs, feelings, and spirit of the people" (Qian Liqun 2013, 534).

Just as the literary critic who scrutinizes the text and draws from any available epistemological repertoire—historical, linguistic, literary, and personal—in order to enable the readers to "converse" with the author, the translator as well should think of her translation as the construction of a complicated dialogue where the voices of the author and the characters can be empathetically heard and understood by today's readers. The specific key to access what Sell calls the "mysterious interpersonality of literature" is mainly based on enhancing the rich points and helping readers enter the emotional world, real or fictionalized, of the author. The translator, building on both her reading and life experience, can thus resort to any kind of micro-strategy, even self-contradictory, in order to preserve and transmit the sensitiveness of the original text. Putting it in Lu Xun's words—he himself an experienced translator and a reflective practitioner—

凡是翻譯，必須兼顧著兩方面，一當然力求其易解，一則保存原作的風姿。但這保存，卻又常常和易懂相矛盾：看不慣了。不過它原是洋鬼子，當然誰也看不慣，為比較的順眼起見，只能改換他的衣裳，卻不該削低他的鼻子，剝掉他的眼睛。我是不主張削鼻剝眼的，所以有些地方，仍然寧可譯得不順口。(Lu Xun 1935, 364–365)

For any translation two aspects must be taken into consideration: one of course is understandability, the other is to preserve the charm of the original work. But this preservation often contradicts understandability: it is hard to understand. But if [in the text] there is originally a foreign devil, of course no one will understand. In order to make it easier, the translator can only change his clothes, but he shouldn't lower his nose and gouge his eyes. I don't advocate cutting noses and gouging eyes, so in some cases, I would rather translate it in an unpleasant way.

It is my opinion that if we want to assign a valuable meaning to the translation of modern and contemporary Chinese literary works, we cannot simply adhere to philological or academic criteria, but should strive to overcome the basic dilemma between an engaged reconstruction and a wholesale popularization. The main strategy is the full recognition of the rich points, a balanced treatment of the culturemes: although I believe that in each text each choice may need a different treatment and consideration, generally speaking, in order to achieve a satisfactory mediation effect, we should neither efface the cultural specific elements nor emphasize them, but help readers find a meaning in what is obscure, find a charm in what is different. Differently from social and cultural mediation, literary mediation should not make everything clear and easy to understand, but should rather help readers getting closer to the

text without really abolishing the distance, “the mental distance between the two contexts” as Sell suggests, should only be shortened. Indeed, as the Korean-German philosopher Byung-chul Han (2017, 13) argues: “The abolition of distance does not bring about nearness, it destroys it.”¹³

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¹³“L’abolizione della lontananza non genera maggiore vicinanza, bensì la distrugge”.

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Publishing Chinese Literary Works During 1965–2018 Romania: An in-Depth Study in the Sociology of Literature



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Abstract According to the sociological theory of literature, constraints on the creation and share of cultural works can be placed between two extremes: one with a high level of politicization and the other with a high level of commercialization (Sapiro 2003). Following the principles of Sociology of Translation, the overall objective of the present research is to closely map and analyze the publishing activity of Romania concerning China and Chinese literature during the two stages of Romanian history—1965–1989—which represents the Communist regime of Ceausescu; 1989–2007—a period of transition to democracy, marked by chaos and reestablishment of international relations and 2007–2018—which corresponds to the current period of Romania’s recent history, marked by a strong pro-European and Western direction. The socio-cultural as well as linguistic and literary meanings of the substratum of the text, but also the macro-context in which the literary works are created, can be crucial factors that affect the reader’s understanding and reception of translated texts. However, this is a problem that conventional concepts of translation cannot always solve without sacrifice, either in the sense of understanding of the translated text or in the lack of integral transmission of the substrates of the source text. This shows the need for further investigations into new principles and methods to address the cultural issue of translations. This need is the goal of the present research, a need to which we hope to make a modest but significant contribution. In order to obtain a clear picture, as accurate as possible of the literary relations between Romania and China during two completely opposite political regimes, we carried out an extended study; through quantitative research, we created a statistical database on two stages: the first part containing literary and non-fictional Romanian works that address and discuss issues related to China; the second part includes literary translations of Chinese literature into Romanian, either by direct translation or by an intermediate language. Mapping not only the number of works, but also the topics addressed by writers along the two periods of the political life of Romania, we focused on the specific sociological questions on the interest and functions of translation, the agents and institutions included, on the space in which it is located, but also on the political and economic constraints that surround them.

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Keywords Sociology of translation · Socio-cultural reception · Socio-political constraints · Publishing · Chinese literature · Bilateral relations · Communism · Intercultural understanding · International relations

1 The Sociology of Translations

The sociology of literary translation and reception, as developed by Pierre Bourdieu, is in contradiction both with the interpretive approach of the text and with the economic analysis of international exchanges. The interpretive approach is born from a hermeneutic movement that aims to have access to the meaning and uniqueness of the text. The economic approach, less common in translation studies, removes the uniqueness and singularity of the text and the author, and assimilates translations into a wider category of goods, identifying them as products for sale, distributed, and consumed according to national and international market demand. The recent sociological approach (Heilbron and Sapiro 2007) separates these two limited and opposite analyses, and includes in the research spectrum a whole set of social relations in which translations are produced and distributed. Overcoming the inter-textual issue, focused on the relationship between the original text and the translation, we will focus on the specific sociological questions on the interest and functions of translation, on the agents and institutions included, on the space in which they are located, but also on the political and economic constraints that surround them.

The sociological perspective of literature reception broadens the area of research proposed by Jauss (1982). Contrary to hermeneutic and Marxist theories, Jauss promoted an anti-positivist literary history based on a notion of reception conceived as a history of the effects produced by literary works. His key concept is the Horizon of Expectations borrowed from Edmund Husserl, Karl Mannheim and Karl Popper (Sapiro 2016), developed following a diachronic analysis of the readings of some works, and consisting of the reader's knowledge of genres and poetry, of works produced in the same historical and literary context, about the opposition between literary style and everyday language, imaginary world and everyday reality (Jauss 1978). The Horizon of Expectations is, therefore, the set of reference categories that make it possible to understand a work at a certain historical moment. The meaning of the text, although inscribed in the text, is reborn with each reading, thus revealing its meanings and value. If for Jauss the reader is abstract, erudite, with a hermeneutic attitude to the text, from a sociological perspective, the reader is a real character, and the research object is composed of material and intellectual aspects of creating and disseminating the literary text, as well as the selection procedure, division by categories and evaluation—literary criticism, awards in literature, institutional consecration, sales, etc.—through which the literary work is ranked. The recent approach of the sociology of reception is interested in the functions of translations in their context

of production and reception, in the target culture. The analysis of the relationship between the production and the reception context supports the historical study of cultural transfers, which investigates the role of agents/mediators, be they institutions or individuals, in these exchanges, and their influence on political, economic, and cultural relations between the two countries.

“Constraints on the creation and distribution of cultural goods and on international exchanges of literature can be located between two extremes: one with a high level of politicization and the other with a high level of commercialization” (Sapiro 2003). Thus, in countries where the economic environment is subordinated to politics and cultural institutions are governed by state instruments, the production and distribution of cultural goods is heavily politicized. On the other hand, cultural exchanges are governed by the logic of the market, where cultural goods are seen, first and foremost, as commercial products that must obey the laws of profit; and where journalism is dominated by large companies that impose the criterion of profitability and marketing activity to the detriment of cultural and literary logic. Between these two extremes, we find various configurations in which the importance of political and economic factors varies depending on the needs of culture, the national market and the level of involvement of culture for ideological purposes. However, for the present moment, the trend is toward economic influences on the translation process, export agencies, as named by Heilbron (2007)—official cultural institutions, diplomatic corps, translation institutes, cultural attachés, etc., ceding some of the power to import agents—translators, literary agents, publishers, reviewers, etc.

Translation is, after all, an entity in the equation of power relations between countries, beyond any other political considerations. For a nation, the translation of its literature is immediately a symbol of its international recognition. This is the reasoning behind which more and more states are allocating generous funding for the export of their literary goods.

2 Research Methodology

Judged against this theoretical framework, we pursued a research on the literary relations between Romania and China and the Romanian reader’s interest in Chinese culture. To achieve a clear and accurate image, we conducted a quantitative research of all works, published during 1948–2018, regardless of literary genre, which debated topics related to China. Quantitative research proves to be vital in mapping Sino-Romanian relations, both from a literary, cultural, but also political, diplomatic, and economic point of view, helping to highlight and emphasize the evolution of the reader’s interest, but also of the Romanian authorities for China, in distinct periods of Romania’s political life. In this regard, in order to build the database, we analyzed all the volumes from 1948 to 2018 whose subject and theme are focused on various aspects of Chinese culture and civilization.

The main objective of the research was to build a rich and reliable statistical database which serves for the present analysis of the evolution of Sino-Romanian

relations, but also as well as for future references of other research. Without claiming to be an exhaustive database, an analysis was carried out using several sources of information, as, although each source itself proves to be very useful for this study, it is not reliable and comprehensive enough to perform a more accurate analysis of the translation market of Chinese literature in Romania, so that for the present study we used several complementary sources to re-verify and complete the information.

To create the statistical database, two stages were followed—the first part containing literary and non-fiction works that address and debate issues related to China, whether we consider Chinese language, culture, civilization, philosophy, or Chinese economy and politics; the second part consists of literary translations from Chinese into Romanian, either through direct translation or through an intermediate language. The selection criteria were Romanian, as the language of presentation and publication in the period 1948–2018. The same criteria were applied in all sources of information and the same keywords, in Romanian language, were used to generate records, namely: China, chineză (Chinese), traducere chineză (Chinese translation), literatură chineză (Chinese literature), sinology (Sinology), chinezesc (Chinese), Confucius.

- ROLINEST Catalog (Romanian Library Network Science & Technology)—which is, according to the creators, an efficient tool for searching and retrieving simultaneously the existing bibliographic information in 14 universities and research libraries in Romania and 16 Romanian libraries. (rolinest.edu.ro). “The RoLiNeST catalog is based on MetaLib, an application of ExLibris, which shares distributed databases on servers connected to the Internet via RoEduNet. Within this system, libraries update and maintain their own catalogs locally and the information is found by the user in the shared virtual catalog RoLiNeST” (rolinest.edu.ro) shows the initiators of this portal of major importance for the literary research in Romania.
- The second source of information was the online catalog of the National Library—alephnew.bibnat.ro
- Another source for completing and verifying the mapping of the evolution of literature dedicated to China in the period 1948 to 2018 was the UNESCO Index Translationum database—www.unesco.org/xtrans.
- The two dictionaries published by Sextil Pușcariu Institute: The Chronological Dictionary of the Novel Translated in Romania from Origins to 1989, Romanian Academy Publishing House (Institutul de Lingvistică și Istorie Literară “Sextil Pușcariu”, 2005) and the Chronological Dictionary of the Novel Translated in Romania 1990–2000, Romanian Academy Publishing House (Institutul de Lingvistică și Istorie Literară “Sextil Pușcariu”, 2017) were also invaluable and reliable resources for the sociological and quantitative study of Chinese literature translated into Romanian.
- Last but not least, specialized blogs and online articles have been a way to cross-check primary research sources.

Thus, through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software, which allows the editing and analysis of a wide range of data, a database was

created on a series of variables, through which the mapping was aimed, not only the number of works, but also of the subjects and themes approached during four distinct periods in the political life of Romania: 1948–1965, during the Regime of Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej; 1965–1989—which corresponds to the Regime of Nicolae Ceaușescu; 1989–2007—the beginning of the democratic government, until Romania’s accession to NATO, in 2004 and to the European Union, in 2007; and 2007–2018—which corresponds to the current period of Romania’s recent history, marked by a strong pro-European and Western direction.

3 Mapping the Romanian Publication Activity Concerning China During 1965–2018

The current article will present the results related to the period of 1965–2018, corresponding to three different periods in the history of Romania, the first one, the Communism regime of Ceausescu, during which the creation and distribution of cultural goods and of international exchanges of literature experienced a high level of politicization, following the period of 1989–2007 a period of transition to democracy, marked by chaos and reestablishment of international relations and 2008–2018—the period of a Europeanized Romania, member of European Union and NATO.

The analysis follows the principles of the reception theory, a rich and pluriform theory, which changes its influences and valences, being open to the construction of new ramifications in fields, often related but, more and more frequently, different, such as economics, politics, and international relations. The reception theory will help us follow the development of Sino-Romanian relations on social, economic, political but, above all, cultural and literary, from the perspective of receiving literature dedicated to China in the Romanian cultural space profoundly influenced by communist propaganda.

Referring to the total number of translations from the previous period of 1945–1965 of Gheorghiu-Dej period, Chinese literature was an exotic literature, the monopoly being held by Russian, Soviet literature. Between 1950 and 1965, more than 500 Soviet novels were translated, and since 1956 there has been a substantial decline in translations of Soviet literature, from 40 titles in 1956 to less than 30 in 1958 (*The Chronological Dictionary of the Novel Translated in Romania from Origins to 1989*, 2005, Macrea Toma, I. (2009). An impressive number of translations and an ideal reception guaranteed, both by laudatory reviews and by appreciations occasioned by various gatherings, more or less political. What is noteworthy, however, is the fact that even the literature, whose numbers reached colossal heights, had an obvious decline following political differences, between the authorities in Bucharest, those of the USSR but, certainly, also in terms of open conflicts with China, from which Romania seemed to be migrating more and more.

Another factor of Gheorghiu-Dej’s low number of Chinese literature in socialist Romania is the closure of China and its lack of interest in the transfer of literature

with the outside world, but also the country's financial and social problems. As we will see in the periods to be presented, the Chinese literature present in our territory is largely due to the dissemination programs of China, which financially support the publishers and encourage translation through various projects.

4 Evolution of Romanian Publishing Activity Concerning China During 1965–1989

The position on China-USSR conflict is also followed by the new Romanian leader, Nicolae Ceausescu, who between June 16 and 24, 1966, has a friendly meeting with the Prime Minister of the State Council, Zhou Enlai in Bucharest. In fact, on his first visit to Moscow, Ceausescu refused the Russians' request to join them in the conflict with China, promising only an equidistant political and ideological attitude. 1968 finds the Romanians expressing a gesture of support for China during the meeting of the 81 communist and labor parties in Budapest, when the Romanian delegation supports the reconciliation of the communist parties, and the withdrawal of the criticism brought to the communist parties, with direct reference to the Chinese one; a gesture that makes Romania gain a privileged place in China's foreign relations directions (Buzatu 2005, 115).

Historians call the period of 1968–1978, as the historical apogee of Sino-Romanian relations on several levels, including the cultural one, a period in which Romania occupied the fourth position in China's hierarchy of friendship. The events of the "Prague Spring," a Russian intervention, imminent in Romania too, brought to Ceausescu's support both US President Lyndon Johnson who sent a strong warning to the Russians, but also the Chinese Prime Minister, who, during Romania's National Day celebrated in the Romanian Embassy in Beijing, sent absolute solidarity to Romania, even in a military conflict (Buzatu 2005, 116).

Next, on June 28, 1970, China announced financial support of approx. \$25 million non-reimbursable for Romania, which was devastated by heavy floods, followed by a "long-term, interest-free loan" on November 20–26 (Buzatu 2005, 118) during an official visit to China by a delegation of Romanian officials. On this occasion, commercial collaborations are initiated, which by 1978 will reach a figure of 2 billion dollars. Definitive for the Sino-Romanian friendship is also Romania's direct contribution to the recognition of China in 1971 as a member of the UN.

The next period is marked by multiple visits of Ceausescu family to China—a total of five official visits as head of state—1971, 1978, 1982, 1985, 1988. The visit in 1971 is followed by a gala show of the Chinese Ballet Ensemble and a photography exhibition (October 9, 1971) in Romania, which had the role of demonstrating the cultural closeness between the two countries.

Maybe from the chances of the times, but also due to the geostrategic position, Romania becomes, for a short time, however, the mediation channel for the secret discussions between American President Richard Nixon and Chinese President Mao,

having an important role, as historians appreciate, in the “initial stage of the process of gradual normalization of US–China relations and in shaping a new strategic power balance in the world” (Buzatu 2005, 120). Mediation continues for the USSR–China relations, so that in a conversation note from August 1976 between Ceausescu and Leonid Brezhnev it is reported: “Romania has not done and will not do anything that will lead to the tightening of relations between the Soviet Union and China. We want these relationships to improve. We are convinced that this will be achieved. If we can contribute to such an improvement, we are ready to do it” (ibid.). This position becomes favorable to Romania, which is now among the three great world forces—the USA, the USSR, and China.

The social and political turmoil in China did not attract any reaction from Romania, which in 1978 received with great honors the new president Huo Guofeng in Bucharest. During this period there is an important evolution of trade relations, in the following years numerous Chinese economic and scientific delegations undertaking documentation visits and exchange of good practices with Romanian experts in the field of lasers (Budura 2015, 301). Also noteworthy is the agreement “for the training of Chinese personnel using electronic computers” (Idem, 1419) and the visit of the famous Dr. Ana Aslan to China in June 1979, which was “expected with great interest in China to share for the Chinese specialists Romania’s experience in the field of geriatrics” (Idem, 1458).

Based on the background of fruitful economic and political collaboration, the cultural relations between the two also experienced new stages; Romanian films being “the most sought after—a situation unprecedented by Romanian film productions in any other country” (Buzatu 2005, 123), through which Romania managed to promote its image and culture on such a wide stage as China. Also noteworthy is the appreciation of the Chinese for Romanian athletes, which has strong echoes to this day.

Regarding the literary life, Fig. 1 shows us a much higher number of original works that debated various topics about China but also translations of Chinese literature, compared to the previous period of Socialism (a total of 83 titles, compared to 44). However, in the first period of the Ceausescu regime there are no very big differences, Romania remaining at an average of 2 publications per year until the seventh and eighth decade of the century, when, as an obvious consequence of the developed economic and political relations, between 1970 and 1979, 27 works are published, of which 21 are translations from Chinese literature, and 51 between 1980 and 1989, of which 34 are Chinese literary works. However, it should be noted that 1966 was the year of the first direct translation from Chinese to Romanian language—Pu Singling’s *Duhul crizantemei* (*The Golden Flower*, *Huáng yīng* 黄英), translated by the Romanian sinologist Toni Radian.

It should not be neglected that since 1971, after returning from China, and stopping by in North Korea, Ceausescu tightens his policy of censorship of the creative, literary act, triggering a “cultural mini-revolution” through the Theses of July 1971, which announced innovative measures to “improve political and ideological activity.” “Ceausescu’s theses represented a new guide for all cultural productions in Romania. From an ideological point of view, the theses were dogmatic rather than innovative:

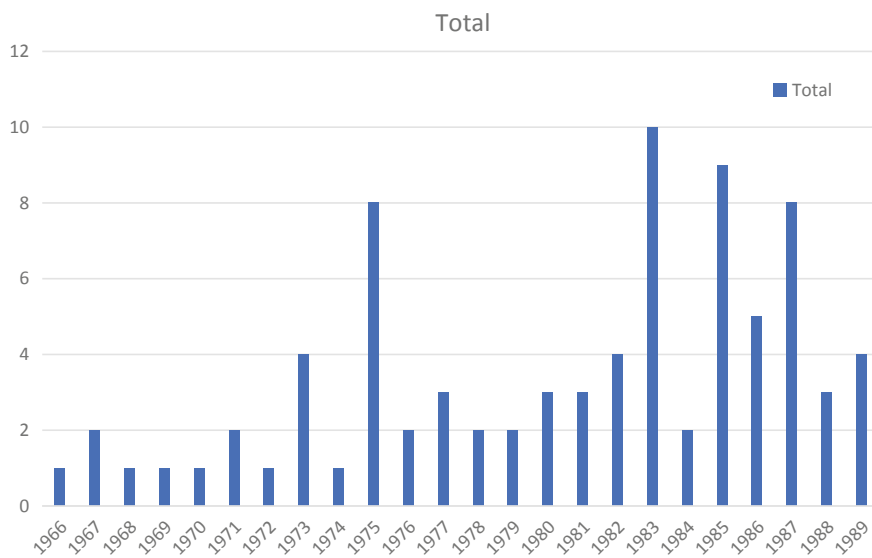


Fig. 1 Mapping of books on China in the period 1965–1989

notions long abandoned in the rest of the communist camp, such as socialist realism, were brought back to life by Ceausescu, who put an end to all illusions of liberalization of cultural life maintained during the beginning of his leadership” (Deheleanu 2015, 530). “The political message of the theses, considered by the literary and artistic media as a brutal return to the practices of socialist realism, was recorded in Romanian historiography at the end of the liberal period of the Ceausescu regime” (National Archives of Romania, as qtd. In Deheleanu 2015, 534). Through these control measures, the party tried to restore the strict period not long ago gone, by keeping the Romanian culture connected only to local realities, without too much contact with foreign trends, especially with Western ones, with which, for a short period the connections were resumed (note the return of translations from French literature between 1954 and 1971 and the decline of the socialist Russian one)

Thus, Chinese literature acknowledges, in this period, an increase possibly dictated, by several factors: on the one hand, the evolution of the economic-political and ideological relations encouraged the increase of the number of translated works; on the other hand, the new scholars of Chinese language and literature, graduates of the Chinese language program launched in 1956 at the University of Bucharest, now make possible the direct translation from Chinese of works from classical literature but also the publication of sinological works about Chinese language, literature or Chinese culture—necessary both to facilitate and deepen the studies in Bucharest, and to disseminate them among ordinary Romanian readers. We can, thus, notice that a point of major importance was the opening, almost simultaneously, in 1956 of the Romanian and Chinese language study departments in the prestigious universities of Beijing (Beijing University of Foreign Studies in the over 60 years, the Romanian

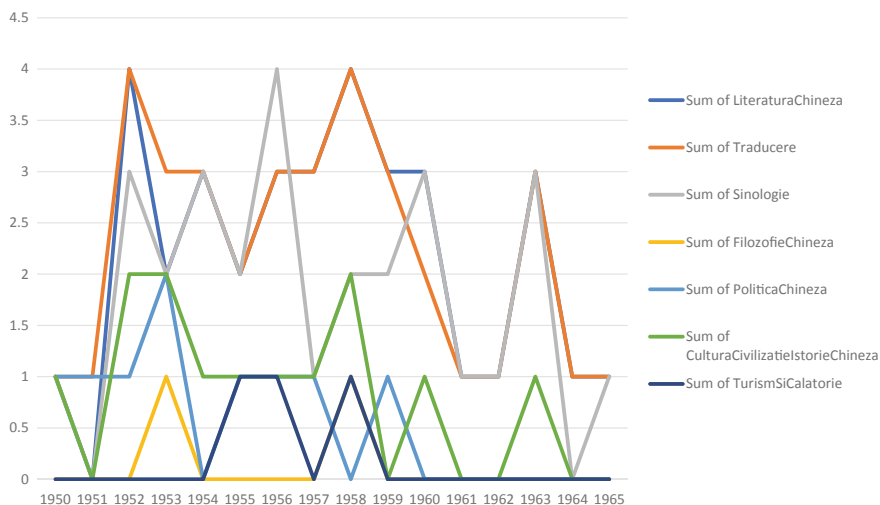


Fig. 2 Categories of book and their evolution for the period 1950–1965

language department trained 18 promotions with over 250 graduates of Romanian language and literature) and Bucharest (University of Bucharest). Most of their graduates became specialists who made possible the mutual knowledge and promotion of bilateral relations, through their diplomatic, literary or journalistic activity, which according to the statistical data of this study had an upward trend since this event (Figs. 2 and 3).

Figure 4 shows us some peaks of the publication of works related to China, respectively, 1975, 1983, 1985, 1987, moments preceded by high-ranking official visits either from the Romanian side to China (1971, 1982, 1985) or by Chinese leaders in Romania (1986, 1987). Without being convinced that these events had such a direct impact on the publishing and translation activity, we can, however, claim that the Romanian society of this period could not be indifferent to the directions drawn on the political line and especially the party, to the affinities or relationships promoted, even if only superficially by Ceausescu couple.

In 1975, 9 works were published, 2 of which originals, presenting ancient Chinese literature (written by Ileana Hogeia Velişcu) and classical Chinese painting (written by Nina Stănculescu Zamfirescu), the rest being translations of novels from Chinese literature; 1975 is also the year of the publication of the first Romanian course book for the study of the Chinese language. 1983 brings on the Romanian market 10 titles—4 translations of Chinese novels, 1 dictionary of Chinese literature, 3 works on Chinese language, and 2 travel books. 1985 launches the first book on traditional Chinese medicine, but also a treaty on the science of state administration, in addition to 6 titles of Chinese literature—novels but also a book of poems; 1987 made known to the Romanian public 6 new works from Chinese literature, and 1 political book by Deng Xiaoping. Noteworthy is the admirable activity of several sinologists of the

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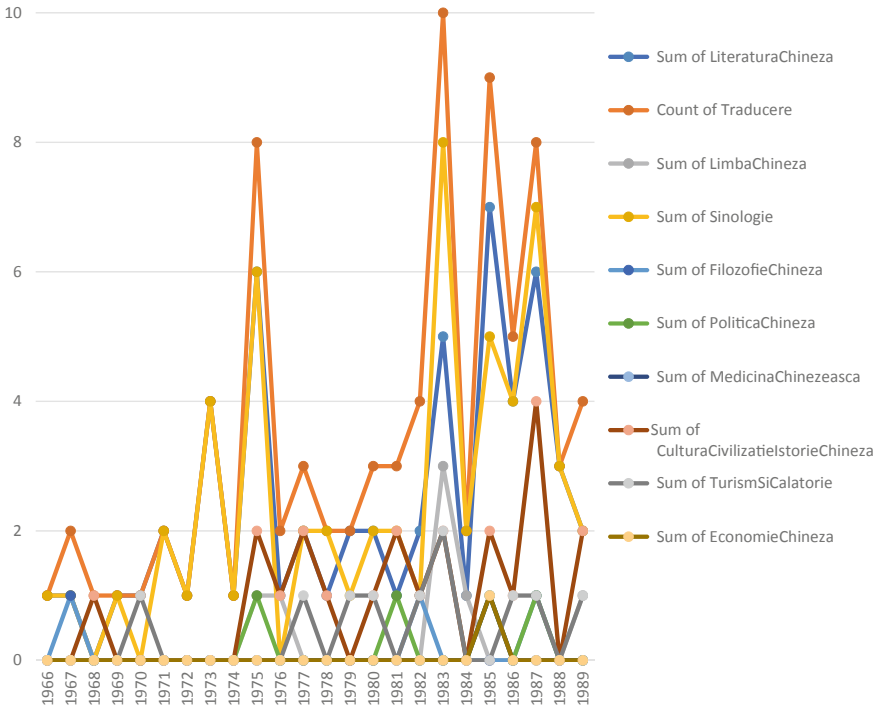


Fig. 3 Categories of book and their evolution for the period 1966–1989

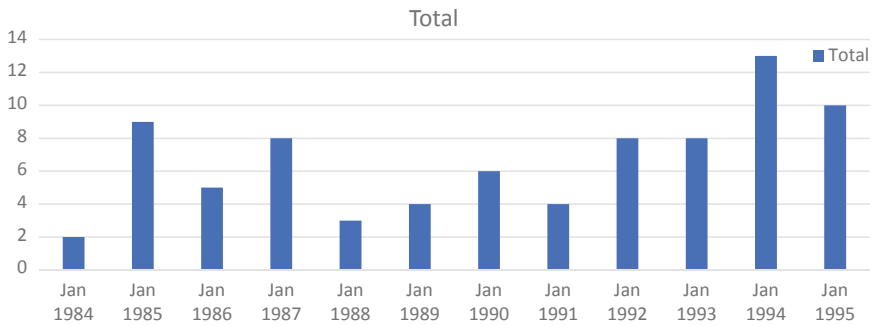


Fig. 4 Comparison between the last 6 years of the communist regime and the first 6 years of democracy in Romania

time, among which most active are Toni Radian, Ileana Hogeia Veliscu, and Mira and Constantin Lupeanu, the latter recalling in an interview in 2016:

After 1974, we made a real invasion of the Romanian market with the most important books of ancient, classical and modern Chinese literature. The purpose of this approach? I mentioned it more than once. Enriching our literature, offering new coordinates and ways to fulfill Romanian culture. There are almost three dozen books, my dear friend, published by Mira and Constantin Lupeanu - for decades an emblem of work, quality and artistic value (Constantin Lupeanu, *Românii de pretutindeni*, No. 09 /September 2016).

In direct comparison with Fig. 2—representing the categories published during 1950–1965, Fig. 3 shows a much richer range of categories of works during 1965–1989, works that presented Chinese language, traditional Chinese medicine, tourism and travel in China but also Chinese economy. However, the category of translated literary works, and of the Chinese novel, remains predominant, among which we mention *Ciudatele povestiri ale lui Liao Zhai* (Strange Tales from Liaozhai (Liáozhāi zhì yì 聊斋志异) from 1983 but also anthologies of classic short stories, such as *Nuvela chineză medieval* (Chinese Medieval Short Stories), 1989, both translated directly from Chinese by Toni Radian.

The beginning of the 80s became the ramp of descent in the Sino-Romanian relations, motivated, for the most part, by the opposite evolutions between the two states, but also by the major internal changes of China. Romania's ambassador to Beijing, Florea Dumitrescu, transmitted to Romanian authorities from Bucharest on July 25, 1980 “some difficulties in Romanian-Chinese economic relations” and the fact that soon “China will no longer import trucks, computers, locomotives from Romania” (Budura 2015, 1840). China's better economic situation, and the increasingly fierce closure of Ceausescu's policy, make the Chinese pay more attention to product quality, no longer accepting anything from Romania, being able to start a market economy, and creating a very favorable market for foreign investment by large Western states. Thus, the volume of trade with Romania decreased from one year to another.

On the other hand, historians note, China saw in Romania (as does nowadays) a gateway to the Western market. The ambassador conveyed in the country that the intention and desire of the Ministry of Economic Relations and Foreign Affairs of Beijing to take into account that P.R. China wanted “to be taken as a subcontractor in some businesses initiated by Romania, regardless of the field, with the Federal Republic of Germany, USA, etc. Romania will take over its production capacity, which, afterward China could fulfill instead” (Idem, 1982). In addition to trade intentions, China still had an interest in Bucharest, wanting the same equidistant attitude toward the controversies with the USSR.

The attitude of Bucharest, however, was beginning, at least in essence, to be distant from China's reformist ideas, Ceausescu even beginning to “censor the positive information coming from China, appreciating it as harmful to the new Romanian citizen” (Buzatu 2005, 125). On the surface, without actual results to be noticed, diplomatic relations continued in the same friendly tone, with mutual visits (1984, 1986, 1987, Romania hosting the new leaders in Beijing).

The inevitable brought that in December 1989, the Ceausescu regime, warned by Deng Xiaoping through a subtle message not to “irritate the Romanian people,” and collapsed. The event did not fracture, however, the support relations from China, which after a short period of settlement of the state of Romania, but also of returning from the state of panic, transmitted, on December 27, through the Ambassador to Bucharest, Wang Jinqing (1987–1991) “respect for the right of the Romanian people to choose their political regime, as well as the hope of maintaining and developing bilateral friendly relations, based on the five principles of peaceful coexistence” (Buzatu 2005, 128).

5 Evolution of Romanian Publishing Activity Concerning China During 1990–2007

The next segment of time places us in an area unknown to the Romanian people, a period governed by change, democratization, but also by a certain chaos and insecurity. A turbulent period between external influences, literally, between East and West, a period in which Romania sought its political orientation and economic allies. As an obvious and natural reaction, from all points of view Romania tried to orient its gaze, its beliefs, and its alliances toward the West, toward a democratic world in the direction of which it sees its success. But the road from the distant communist bloc is difficult and clumsy, but especially long, the adoption and implementation of democracy taking longer than we expected, because the change of a nation that lived for four decades under the odious regime had to first start with the mentality, that of the common man, but especially that of the public people, of the political class. This did not remain indifferent to literature, where we can clearly “read” the evolution of Romanian thought and social life.

Based on the new political and social changes, there is also a reconfiguration of the map of Romanian publishing relations, the book market also undergoing considerable changes. Coming out of the censorship of the “July Theses,” but also of the state circuit and of the verification commissions, it manages to expand considerably. The replacement of state departments with free-market demand has led to significant increases, not only in domestic book production, but also in foreign book translation, which have increased not only in number, but especially in the diversity of topics addressed. This change can also be seen in Romania’s relationship with China.

Figure 4 shows a significant, unexpected increase—at a first consideration based on the simple logic of the Western orientation that patronizes the period. Thus, analyzing the last and first six years of the two intervals we can observe an increased value even in the first year, and no value under the last year of the communist regime.

Quickly after the 1989 revolution and the beginning of the new political regime, the new political class naturally had a detached attitude, including toward the Beijing authorities, with diplomatic, trade, and economic relations declining significantly—a fact also felt in cultural life, where, comparing with the values reached during the

1990s and 2000s, and not with those of the previous regime, we observe the lowest values in the first years of the post-communist regime.

The first part of 1990 was marked by suspicions about a possible secret flight of the Ceausescu couple to China, by protests in front of the Chinese embassy in Bucharest, by authorities' reluctance and even fear to cultivate relations with China or respond positively to messages received from the Chinese authorities, and only in the light of a possible labeling as anti-democratic and communist. China continues, however, to show the same availability and understanding in relations with Romania, so that in January 1991 relations are easily resumed, through the official visit of the President of Romania to Beijing and the 1994 working visit to some of the most prosperous economic regions of China. There are also visits of Chinese officials to Romania, in 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, and 2004 (Buzatu 2005, 129), on which bilateral protocols and agreements were signed to officially establish the new direction of collaboration, **devoid of ideology and oriented toward mutual economic benefits**. In this context, visits of the Romanian delegations in 1997, 2002, 2003, 2004 follow, resulting in the creation of a legal basis, through official conventions, for the advancement of "Romanian-Chinese relations, anchored on mutual respect and advantage and mutual observation of keeping each other's options in terms of their domestic and foreign policy objectives and priorities" (*Evoluția relațiilor româno-chineze după Revoluția din decembrie, 1989*, Năstase, November 27, 2013).

In the period 1991–1996 alone, 12 cooperation agreements were signed, 4 of them targeting the economic field; 3 on legal matters, regarding legal assistance in civil and criminal matters, consular relations or extradition; 1 agreement for cooperation in the field of tourism; 2 declarations of friendship and mutual collaboration; 2 agreements on the fields of culture, education and science (M.A.E Archive, File: Romania—China bilateral relations). Of special significance for the field of culture is the Cooperation Convention between the Romanian Academy and the P.R.C. Academy, signed in July 1994, and the Agreement on Scientific and Technical Cooperation, signed in 1996.

In the following years, Sino-Romanian relations continue on an upward trend, but not without small diplomatic conflicts, mainly on China's internal affairs, and on Romania's alignment with the Western values, and China's lack of consistent support compared to the past regime; which makes the Chinese consider the authorities in Bucharest as "unstable and opportunistic" (Buzatu 2005, 136).

The beginning of the second millennium finds the two nations in a sustained partnership, as the Chinese, overcoming the ideological, pragmatic disappointments, see in Romania, the easiest gateway to Europe. Located on an economic upward trend, China is starting an increasing export of Chinese products, so transportation is becoming an important factor in trade relations with Europe, and the shortest and especially cheapest way to bring goods to Europe is the one through Constanța—Romania's port to Black Sea.

This period is thus a prolific one for Romania's economic relations with China, a period that brings large Chinese investments in the country, ranking 18th in the hierarchy of investor countries in Romania, implicitly bringing a considerable number of Chinese residents in the country. Romania "becomes China's most important partner

in Europe,” according to then-President Jiang Zemin. The volume of trade has new values, but it remains with a deficit balance, for the Romanian side, of –164.2 million USD in 2001, with a number of approximately 6000 Chinese companies in Romania and only two Romanian companies in China (Buzatu 2005, 137).

In 2004, new cooperation actions are initiated, and a “Broad Partnership of Friendship and Cooperation” (beijing.mae.ro) is signed on the occasion of President Hu Jintao’s visit. In the same year, the Office of Romania’s Tourist Reception in China opens in Beijing, in the presence of the Romanian delegation, and Romania is granted the status of tourist destination for Chinese. Also, during this visit, several bilateral agreements are concluded, and the construction of the Romanian pavilion at the Shanghai Exhibition in 2010 is established, which, after closing the exhibition, serves as the headquarters of the Romanian General Consulate in Shanghai (idem). As a premiere for Sino-Romanian relations, in the same period, direct relations between Romanian and Chinese cities developed through the twinning of 19 cities and counties (romanian.cri.cn, 2009). This period was also the beginning of collaborations that go beyond the governmental sphere, by setting up non-governmental associations and organizations, such as the Romanian-Chinese Friendship Association (Bucharest), the Chinese-Romanian Friendship Association (Beijing).

New scientific, sports, and tourism relations are initiated through cooperation programs, which provide mutual mobility of students and experts in various fields. Collaboration agreements are also made in the new field of mass media, through the work of several permanent Chinese press correspondents to Romania, but also through visits of some press delegations and bilateral programs between Romanian Television and CCTV (*Raport de activitate 2015 Societatea Română de Televiziune.*, (2015) media.tvrinfo.ro).

Cultural relations are also legislated by the Cooperation Convention between the Romanian Academy and the P.R.C Academy, in 1994, by the Agreement between the Government of Romania and the Government of P.R.C. on cooperation in the fields of culture, education, science, and sports, also signed in 1994 and the Agreement on scientific and technical cooperation, signed in 1996 (beijing.mae.ro), the effect of which can be seen in Fig. 5- since 1994 there are annual values that exceed the maximums from both previous time intervals, 13 titles in 1994 and 20 in 1996. The years 2004, 2005, 2006, moreover, reach new maximum values—21, 22 published works—obviously caused by legislation and initiation of new cooperation actions at state level.

During this period, 265 volumes are published, a triple number compared to the previous period (83 titles, during the Ceausescu regime), without even considering that the actual period of time is shorter with 7 years than the communism one (Fig. 6).

The new political situation and the new bilateral relations also reconfigure the map of the categories of published works, starting from this time segment we have in the country all the topics introduced in the present research, thus signifying an increasing and diversified consumption of fictional and non-fiction literature. There are, therefore, works from two new categories, compared to the previous period, those of *Feng Shui*, *Zen* practices but also works that present and explain the Chinese zodiac, in addition there is a larger volume of categories considered “exotic” in the segment of

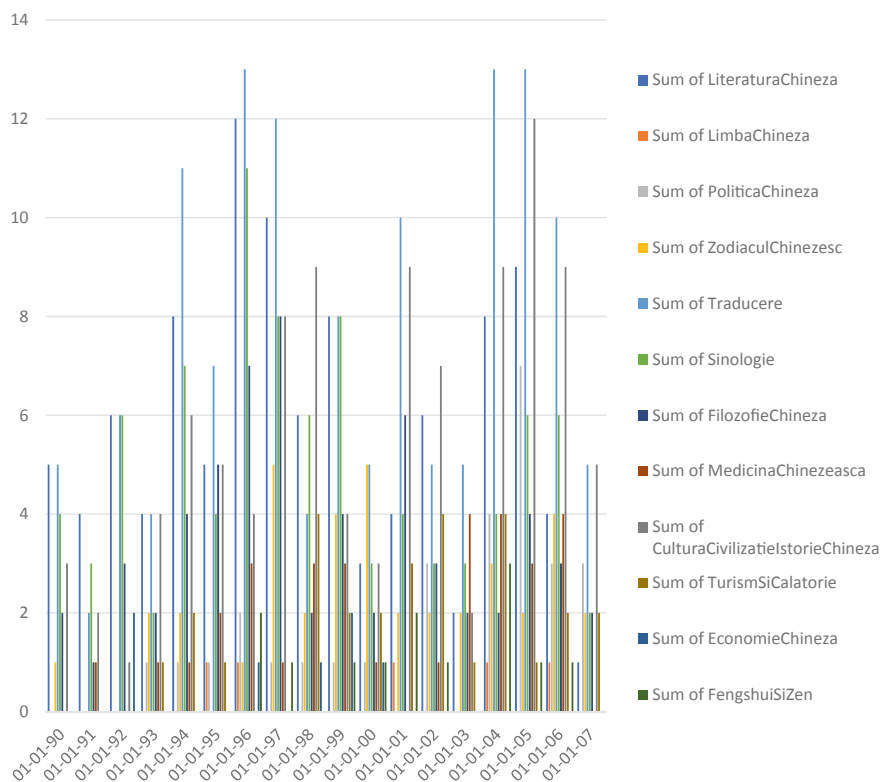


Fig. 5 Mapping of the categories of books on China for the period 1990–2007

previous time, such as traditional Chinese medicine, Chinese philosophy and tourism in China. The Romanian reader, coming out of the constraints of Communism, is now more open to the spiritual knowledge of Asian culture, in general, and Chinese in particular, between the new categories present there is a clear link involving an exploration of the self, spirituality.

Regarding the translation of Chinese literature, it remains the most numerous category, with a total of 87 literary translations, the Chinese novel, through its privileged relationship with events in the reality of the nation, remains the favorite literary genre through which Romanian culture, in full change after a turbulent revolution, opens its horizons to finding answers in various social, spiritual, political, or philosophical spheres of China.

Translation, as a social act, the result of the interpretation given by social agents in different spatial and temporal contexts, as the theory of the sociology of translation shows us, is now mediated differently. It is important to note the difference in mediation of translations from the post-revolution period to the previous ones, in which more and more works, especially in the field of literature, are translated by translators—sinologists, trained both in the Chinese language department from Bucharest,

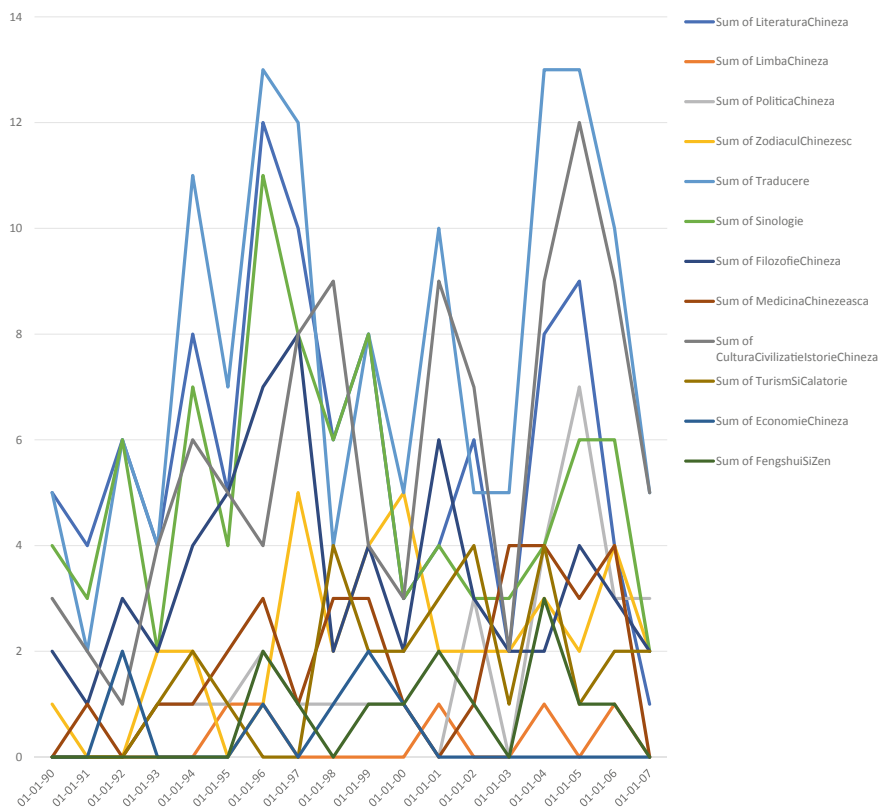


Fig. 6 Categories of book and their evolution for the period 1990–2007

as well as through the increasingly frequent scholarships and mobilities offered bilaterally by China and Romania. During this period, there are sinologists who bring the Romanian reader closer to Chinese culture and civilization, such as Florentina Vișan, Dinu Luca, Ioan Budura, Eufrosina and Ion Dorobanțu, or Chinese scholars of Romanian, Ding Chao, Zhang Henshui, who learned Romanian language and culture during exchange mobilities in Romania, creating now a more faithful link between the two cultures. Among the masterpieces translated during this period, worth mentioning are: *Cartea schimbărilor* (The Book of Changes) (trad. Lupeanu Mira, Lupeanu Constantin 1997), *Dao. Calea ca o curgere de apă* (Tao. The Watercourse Way) (trad. Dinu Luca 1996), *Adevărata poveste a lui A Q* (The True Story of Ah Q) (trad. Eufrosina și Ion Dorobanțu 2005), *Ultima împărăteasă* (The Last Empress) (Eufrosina și Ion Dorobanțu 1995), *Ceainăria: [piesă în trei acte]* (Teahouse) (trad. Ding Chao 2004). *Rinocerul îndrăgostit: [teatru]* (Rhinoceros in Love) (trad. Ding Chao 2005), *Rogojina de rugă a cărnii* (Lupeanu Constantin și Mira 1996), *Lin cel Mare și Lin cel Mic: [povestire]* (*Lin the Little and Lin the Big*) (trad. Florentina Vișan 1992), *Măslinul: roman* (The Olive) (trad. Li Jiayu și Elvira Ivașcu 2002), *Trepte de*

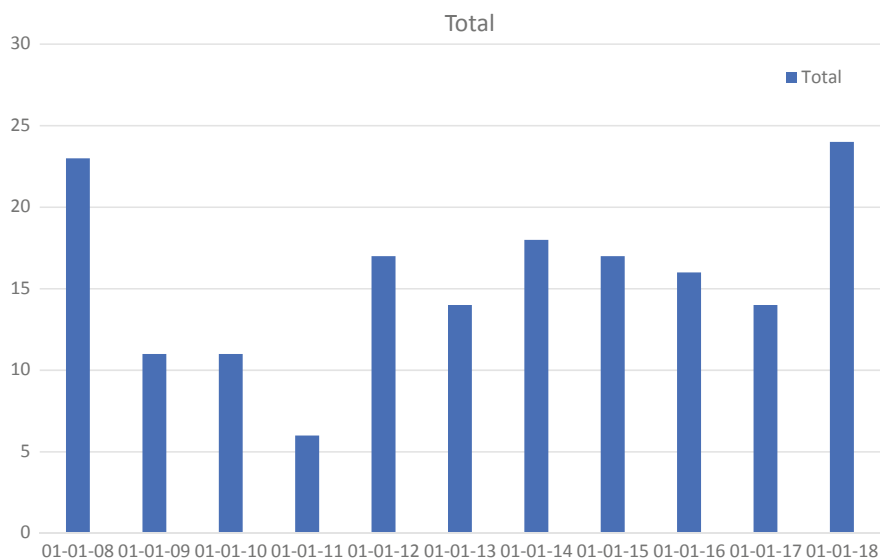


Fig. 7 Mapping of the number of books on China for the period 2008–2018

jad. Antologie de poezie chineză clasică (The Jade Steps, a Chinese Antology of Classical Poems) (trad. Florentina Vișan 1990) (Fig. 7).

Figure 8 also shows an increase in the category of works on Chinese **history, culture, and civilization**, during this period between 1989 and 2007, 104 titles were published. These include: *China clasică* (Classical China) (2002), *Religia chinezilor* (Chinese Religion) (2004), *Filozofia chineză* (Chinese Philosophy) (1995), *Triumful dragonului* (Dragon's Triumph) (2007), *Istoria Tibetului: Dalai Lama și*

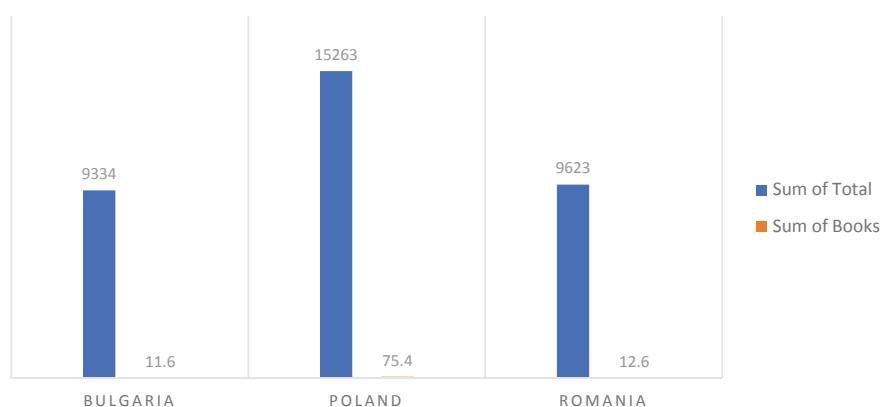


Fig. 8 Average expenditure of a household for cultural good and services for the year of 2010, according to EUROSTAT

Panchen Lama—mit și realitate (The history of Tibet: Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama) (2006), *China: ghid complet* (China: complete guide) (2002), *China: calea prin milenii, eseuri despre identitatea culturii chineze* (China: road to millennial, essays on Chinese cultural identity) (2001), *Mistici și magicieni in Tibet* (Mystical and magic in Tibet) (2001), *Scurt tratat de istorie a Chinei* (Short treaty on Chinese History) (1997). In the category of folklore, there are published work such: *Povești cu animale* (Stories with animals) (1994) *Pățaniile hazlii ale Dragonului Leneș* (The funny stories of Lazy Dragon) (1995), *Grădina zeiței de jad: povești chinezești* (The Jade Goddess' Garden: Chinese stories) (1995), *Lupta dragonilor: povești chinezești* (Dragons' Fight: Chinese stories) (2001), *Fabule și anecdote chinezești* (*Chinese Fables and Anecdotes*) (2001), *Cei opt nemuritori* (The Eight Immortals) (2005).

A more developed category in this period is that of **Chinese philosophy**, a study that, moreover, underwent a basic restructuring in Romania after 1989. Thus, works are presented to the Romanian reader and philosopher, especially from Confucian philosophy, such as: *Cartea despre Tao și virtute* (The Book on Tao and Virtue) (Constantin și Mira Lupeanu 1991), *Lao Zi: cartea căii și virtuții* (Lao Zi: The Book of the Way and Virtue) (Bratila Florin 1992), *Doctrina lui Confucius sau cele patru cărți clasice ale Chinei* (The Doctrine of Confucius or the Four Classical Books of China) (Vlad Cojocaru 1994), *Filozofia chineză* (Chinese Philosophy) (Florentina Vișan 1995), *Confucius—Analecte* (Confucius—Analects) (Florentina Vișan 1996); *Lao Zi și Confucius* (Lao Zi and Confucius) (Constantin și Mira Lupeanu 1997), *Textele fundamentale ale taoismului și confucianismului* (The Fundamental Texts of Taoism and Confucianism) (Constantin și Mira Lupeanu 1997), *Valori morale universale în filozofia clasică chineză* (Universal Moral Values in Classical Chinese Philosophy) (Tatiana Segal Livada 1998), *Cartea despre Tao și virtuțile sale* (The Book of Tao and Its Virtues) (Serban Toader 1999), *Calea vidului desăvârșit* (The Path of the Perfect Void) (Florentina Vișan, Irina Ivașcu 2000), *Istoria gândirii chineze* (The History of Chinese Way of Thinking) (Florentina Vișan, Viorel Vișan 2001), *Calea guvernării ideale* (The Path of Ideal Governance) (Luminița Bălan 2004), *Gândirea chineză* (Chinese Thought) (Mircea Iacobini 2006), *Ce ar face Confucius?: sfaturi înțelepte pentru dobândirea succesului* (What would Confucius do?—Wise Advice for Success) (Nagai Berthrong Evelyn, Bozintan Octav 2007).

The category of **tourism and travel** begins to be well represented during this time, also: *La umbra mănăstirilor tibetane* (In the shadow of Tibetan monasteries) (Iorga Florin 1994), *Răsăritul galben: reportaje din China: Beijing, Xian, Canton, Shanghai, Hong-Kong* (The yellow sunrise: reports from China: Beijing, Xian, Canton, Shanghai, Hong-Kong) (Ștefan Naciu 1998), *Poarta lumii. Jurnal în China* (The Gate of the World. Journal in China) (Ioan Holban 1999), *Dincolo de marele zid chinezesc* (Beyond the Great Wall of China) (Marian Teodor 2001), *Un Li pe drumul mătăsii: [jurnal chinezesc]* (A Li on the Silk Road: [Chinese Journal]) (Vasile Dan 2002), *Însemnările unui botanist român dintr-o călătorie în China* (Notes of a Romanian botanist from a trip to China) (Alexandru Borza 2002), etc.

During this period, **Chinese medicine** became a unique reading category for the Romanian cultural space, 32 works being published, of which: *Manual de acupunctura tradițională chineză* (Manual of Traditional Chinese Acupuncture) (1991),

Yoga și destinul nostru: tehnici de presopunctura și elemente de medicină energetică chineză (Yoga and Our Destiny: Acupuncture Techniques and Elements of Chinese Energy Medicine) (1993), *Metode terapeutice tradiționale chineze* (Traditional Chinese Therapeutic Methods) (1994), *Tehnici secrete din Shaolin* (1995), *Masajul chinezesc pentru nou născuți și copii* (Chinese Massage for Newborns and Children) (1996), *Fiziologie și fizioterapie energetică chineză* (Chinese Physiology and Energy Physiotherapy) (1998), *Presopunctura și alte remedii naturale* (Acupuncture and Other Natural Remedies) (1999), *Medicina tradițională chineză: tehnici de prevenire și tratament* (Traditional Chinese Medicine: Techniques of Prevention and Treatment) (2004), *Medicina tradițională chineză: cartea pacientului* (Traditional Chinese Medicine: The Patient's Book) (2006).

Noticing the wide range of books and the variety of the titles, we can thus conclude that the post-revolution period was a favorable one for the development of the reception of literature about and from China. The political constraints of previous periods were set aside, and the pedagogical and cultural function of the published works was sought. This situation makes the volumes debating topics related to China seen as a way to inform about most aspects of Chinese culture and civilization, with a wide range of categories available to the reader of this period, whose tastes and motivations for reading now differ. The socialist and communist periods were some constraints, which established a pressure and a cultural barrier even between friendly countries, between which cultural exchanges were much dominated by party indications and geo-political tendencies. The few volumes published in previous periods were limited to certain categories, such as Chinese literature, culture and civilization or Chinese politics, after the Revolution, the emancipated Romanian reader now has the freedom to dictate the market, a relatively free book market, whose trends are dictated by the demand of readers, the categories of works being very diverse.

The way the Romanian, post-revolution audience reads is directly related to the defining features of its social group, to which it belongs, (Escarpit as qtd in Tilea 2014), which shows us that Romania, although it is during this period, from the ideological and political point of view, farther from China, the publishing activity of the Chinese people, based on the pedagogical and cultural functions, is in a much higher proportion than in previous time segments.

And perhaps the most important aspect is the sociological one, of a growing number of Romanian sinologists, Chinese language experts, and skilled connoisseurs of Chinese culture, whose work and dedication have left a considerable mark on this phenomenon.

6 Evolution of Romanian Publishing Activity Concerning China During 2007–2018

In the next period, of a Romania that joined NATO (2004) and the European Union (2007), we notice a continuation on an ascending trend of Sino-Romanian relations.

In addition, a new framework, the EU-China Strategic Partnership, offers the two countries new opportunities for multilateral cooperation. As initiated in the previous period, bilateral relations are supported by frequent and varied high-level political contacts, but also by signed agreements and partnerships that legislate the terms of collaborations.

Thus, a series of meetings between the heads of state, prime ministers, or official delegations of the two countries continues, of which the most representative are the meeting of the President of Romania, Klaus Iohannis, from New York, with the Chinese President, Xi Jinping, at the UN General Assembly, in September 2015; as well as Xi Jinping's visit to Romania in 2009, as vice-president in the context of celebrating 60 years of Romanian-Chinese diplomatic relations. Meetings at the level of prime minister took place in Romania in 2013, and in China in 2011, 2013, and 2014. A communiqué of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Romania (February, 2019) presents other meetings at the level of heads of government, which had place December 2014 in Belgrade, November 2016, in Riga and July 2018 in Sofia (Direcția Asia-Pacific, www.mae.ro 2019).

The good evolution of political relations begins to have consequences in the development of economic cooperation, which “recorded steady growth amid a substantial deficit of the Romanian side: compared to 2000, when the total value of trade was USD 258.7 million, at the end of 2017, the estimated total volume of Romanian-Chinese trade was USD 5.07 billion [...], of which Romanian exports to the PRC were USD 827 million [...], and Romanian imports from China was worth USD 4.25 billion” shows a press release from March 2018 of the Romanian Embassy in China (beijing.mae.ro).

On the occasion of the official visits and discussions, a series of agreements and partnerships were adopted, targeting the fields of economic and commercial, but also cultural interest. Thus, on the occasion of the Chinese Prime Minister's visit in 2013, the Joint Declaration of the Government of Romania and the Government of the Republic of China on the deepening of bilateral cooperation was signed, appreciating the 64 years of diplomatic relations as “registering fruitful results in all areas of cooperation. The two countries have always had a strategic vision on the development of bilateral relations, considering each other as good friends and good and sincere partners, who cooperate for the benefit of both parties” (Declarația comună a Guvernului României și Guvernului Republicii Populare Chineze privind aprofundarea cooperării bilaterale în noile circumstanțe, gov.ro, November 25, 2013). The same statement also stipulates the strengthening of cultural and educational relations, increasing “efforts to support direct collaboration between organizations and relevant structures in order to intensify and diversify cultural and educational relations, especially in higher education, technical and scientific research” (idem). Also in November 2013, with a special resonance, the China-Central and Eastern Europe Economic and Trade Forum (known as the 16 + 1 Cooperation) was organized in Bucharest, in its third edition, where Li Keqiang and counterparts from the 16 countries together with representatives of the companies discussed on several topics of common interest. Romania was present at all editions of the 16 + 1 summit, where the delegation had meetings with the head of the Chinese government. Thus, the year

2014, a year with a special significance for the Romanian-Chinese bilateral relations, in which 65 years of diplomatic relations were celebrated, the Prime Minister of Romania paid an official visit to China, followed by the participation in the fourth edition of the “16 + 1” Summit.

Compared to the previous period there can be seen a difference in Romanian-Chinese bilateral relations in report to EU regulations and strategies in such that all objectives of 16 + 1 cooperation are adapted to the partnership between the European Union and China. Therefore, it is important to follow the regulations of the EU-China cooperation, which had the most recent summit in July 2018 in order to strengthen the global strategic partnership. Among the many amendments to the Joint Declaration there is only one, quite vaguely worded, aimed at cultural cooperation, on which we focus in the present study, and which provides that both parties are dedicated to broadening and improving cooperative exchanges in education, mobility of researchers in the fields of culture, media, youth, and sport through the High-level People-to-People Dialogue (HPPD) mechanism (Joint statement of the 20th EU-China Summit, 2019 <http://europa.eu>). In terms of economic relations, the EU is China’s largest trading partner and China is the EU’s second-largest trading partner, with total trade between the two reaching 1.5 billion euros per day in 2018 (JC Juncker 2018, Speech 18/4541).

At the Romanian level, trade relations with China are carried out under the regulations of agreements such as: Additional Protocol to the Agreement on the Promotion and Mutual Protection of Investments of 2007, the Agreement on Economic Cooperation signed in 2009, the Agreement on the Elimination of Double Taxation on Income Taxes, prevention of tax evasion and tax avoidance signed in 2017 (Romanian Embassy in China, March 2018, beijing.mae.ro). China is currently the most important Asian trading partner of our country, both in terms of exports and imports and the nineteenth foreign investor in Romania, at the beginning of 2018, according to ONRC data, there are 12,636 companies with Chinese capital, its total value amounting to \$ 403 million (0.67% of total foreign investment in Romania) (idem).

In terms of cultural relations, they have also been legislated by several framework agreements, including the Intergovernmental Cultural Agreement of July 1994, on the basis of which the Cultural Cooperation Program for 2013–2016 was signed in 2013 between the governments of the two countries, motivated by “the desire to develop and strengthen relations of friendship and collaboration [...] in the fields of culture, education, science and sport.” In September 2017 the Cultural Cooperation Program between the Government of Romania and the Government of the People’s Republic of China was signed for the years 2017–2022. These agreements provide a series of concrete actions for the development of Romanian-Chinese cultural relations—among them: engaging in mutual exchange mobility, supporting “collaboration between Romanian and Chinese creative unions (writers, artists, musicians, actors), art associations and cultural centers, through the exchange of documentary materials and specialists.” Also of major importance is the amendment which provides for “supporting collaboration between the national libraries of the two states, through mutual exchanges of books, publications, audiovisual materials and through reciprocal visits by specialists” (ibid.). Explicitly, this agreement also stipulates “the

mutual encouragement of **mutual translations of specialized works and fiction**, as well as exchanges of translators, publishers, book restorers” (ibid.), But also “the mutual invitation and participation of international book fairs and exhibitions organized in both countries, following that after the end of the exhibition, as the case may be, to be offered, partially or totally, the exhibits to some cultural institutions from the host state” (idem).

With a significant impact is also the article dedicated to support the “establishment of **direct contacts and exchanges between major publishers in the two states**, in the fields of publishing and copyright protection” (ibid.).

The fields of theater, cinematography, music, and dance are also supported by this agreement, which provides for mutual information on international events in the field, “promoting in this regard direct exchanges between specialized institutions, creators’ unions, ensembles and professionals and amateurs bands” (idem), specifically stating that “during the validity of this program, the parties will facilitate the exchange of two artistic bands [each with a maximum number of thirty members], on the basis of reciprocity, on a period of maximum twelve (12) days” (idem).

The Romanian Academy, the Romanian Cultural Institute and the Chinese Federation of Literary and Artistic Circles, but also the Chinese Academy of Sciences, and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences are stipulated as the binder for achieving “exchanges of good practices between cultural and artistic circles [...] by organizing the Romanian Culture Festival in China and vice versa, in the capital city or in other cities in the province” (idem).

Also based on the agreement, reciprocal cultural exchanges between the counties and cities of the two countries, and the organization of mutual festivals and camps are expected. Currently, at the level of local authorities there are direct exchanges based on 45 twinning agreements (16 twinning counties in Romania and provinces in China, and 29 twinning cities). Again, explicitly, the organization of one-two art exhibitions in both states is mentioned in the agreement.

The *One Belt, One Road* initiative in the field of culture is another means of supporting “the participation of theaters, museums, libraries and art galleries in the Silk Road profile platforms (International League of Theaters, International League of Museums, League International Library and Art Gallery League”), and the participation of the “International Silk Road Festival, Dunhuang International Cultural Fair, International Maritime Road Festival” (legeaz.net/monitorul-oficial-905-2017/omae-program-cooperation-and-cultural-romania-china).

Other normative acts that legislate and financially support Sino-Romanian cultural relations are the Protocol of collaboration in the archival field between the National Archives of Romania and the State Directorate for National Archives of the People’s Republic of China, signed in 2000 and the Joint Declaration between the Ministry of Culture and Heritage National Council of Romania and the State Administration for Cultural Heritage of the People’s Republic of China 2011.

The Inter-ministerial Agreement on cooperation in the field of education for the period 2015–2018 was signed in 2015; of special significance are the activities of Romanian and Chinese non-governmental, cultural organizations operating in both states. Thus, in June 2015, the opening of the Romanian Cultural Institute in Beijing

and the Chinese Cultural Center in Bucharest was inaugurated, along which 4 Confucius Institutes operate in Romania—in Sibiu, within the Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu (since 2007), in Bucharest, since 2013, at the University of Bucharest, in Braşov, at the Transylvania University (2012) and in Cluj, at the “Babeş-Bolyai” University (2009). Within the bilateral relations, there are also lectureships in Chinese language and literature at the universities of Bucharest, Braşov, Cluj and Sibiu and Romanian language and literature at the Universities of Foreign Studies, the University of International Studies in Beijing, the University of International Studies in Xi’an and Tianjin University.

Concerning the publishing activity on China, we find, contrary to the rich diplomatic activity, the new collaboration bodies, and the new strategic partnerships, that in the period of 2008–2018 there was an almost 50% decrease compared to the time segment 1990–2007, i.e., 171 published volumes. The period of decline was 2009–2011, when only 28 publications were registered, of which 10 volumes of translations of Chinese literature, 8 works of Chinese philosophy, 10 works on Chinese politics.

One reason, probably regardless of the Chinese book and culture, is the onset of the big economic crisis in Romania in 2008, which had prolonged effects during 2008–2010, with a clear impact on the market in general, and the book market until 2011. Thus, according to Eurostat (General government deficit/surplus, ec.europa.eu, 2018), Romania starts in 2008 a budget deficit, which shows the economic situation of the country, of -5.4 , followed in 2009 by a deficit of -9.1 and -6.9 in 2010, so that from 2011 the economic situation to adjust slowly, toward a deficit of -5.4 , respectively, -3.7 in 2012. We observe, therefore, that **the slope of the budget deficit in Romania correlates perfectly with the deficit of publications in that period**; amid declining incomes, book consumption also declined, and publishers reacted by releasing a small number of works. Following the measures to reduce expenditures, from 2010, the budget deficit was gradually reduced, and from 2012 the activity of Romanian publishing houses resumes its volume of publications before the economic crisis, maintaining their number on a slightly ascending slope until 2018.

According to Eurostat data (*Mean consumption expenditure of private households on cultural goods and services by COICOP consumption purpose*, appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu 2019) in 2010 the consumption of a Romanian household for cultural services and products is 9623 PPC (purchasing power parity), of which 12.6 PPC for spending on the purchase of books, which then, in 2015, when the country’s economic situation recovered and recorded economic growth, with a deficit of only -0.7 , consumption increased to 11422 PPS, of which 23.2 PPC for books. The increase, especially in the case of expenditure on books, is very large, almost double (Figs. 9 and 10).

Comparing the data with those of the states economically close to Romania, we notice that in the case of Poland, which in 2010 had a consumption of 15263 PPS, of which 75.4 PPC for books, in 2015 the values increased to 18436 PPC in total, and 66.7 in the case books. The total increase is similar to Romania (which recorded an increase of 1.18, compared to 1.21—Poland), but in the case of book consumption, Romania registers an increase of 1.84, and in Poland there is a decrease of -1.13 .

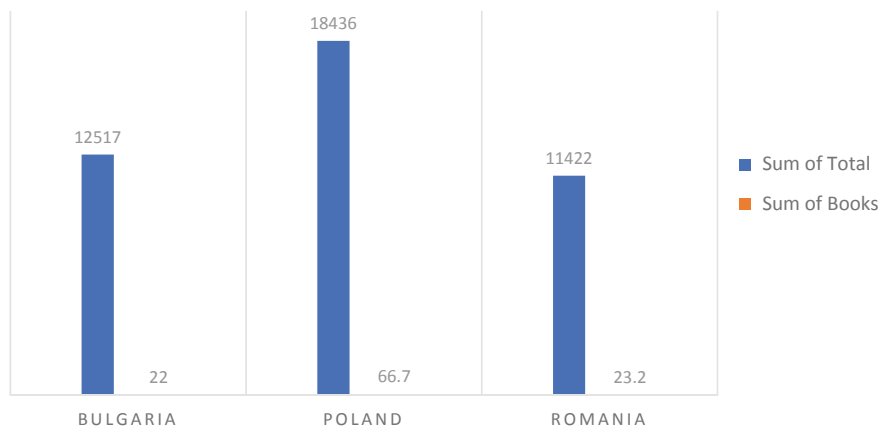


Fig. 9 Average expenditure of a household for cultural good and services for the year of 2015, according to EUROSTAT

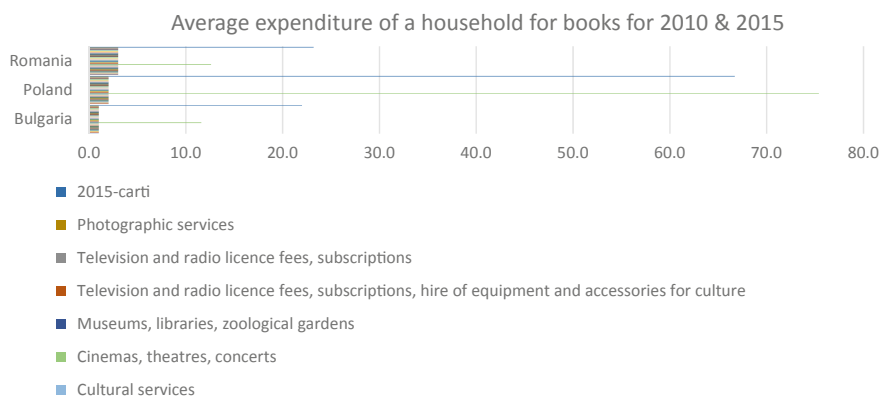


Fig. 10 Average expenditure of a household for books, according to EUROSTAT

In the case of Bulgaria, with a total volume, in 2010, of 9334 PPC and 11.6 PPC for books and in 2015 of 12517 PPS, respectively, 22 PPC for books; we notice a higher increase than in the case of Romania, both in terms of the total volume and that of the one intended for the purchase of books (Figs. 11 and 12).

For an overview, compared to the average of the European Union, the expenditures for the consumption of cultural services and products was, in 2010, 2.4 times lower in Romania than in the average of the European Union countries, and in 2015, the difference decreased to 2.16 times lower. In terms of book consumption, Romanians allocated 7 times less money than the European Union average, in 2010, and in 2015 the difference was substantially reduced to 3.63 times, the EU average decreasing while in Romania the value doubled (see Figs. 13 and 14).

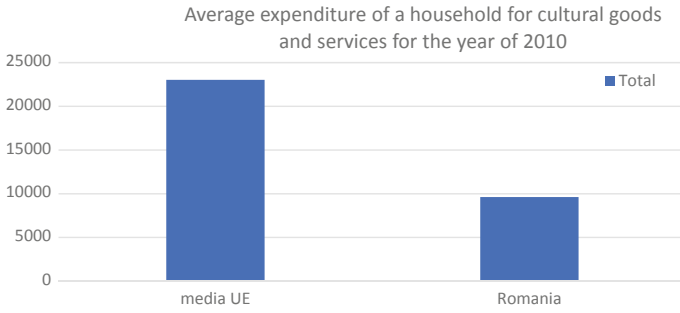


Fig. 11 Average expenditure of a household for cultural goods and services for the year of 2010

Fig. 12 Average expenditure of a household for cultural goods and services for the year of 2015

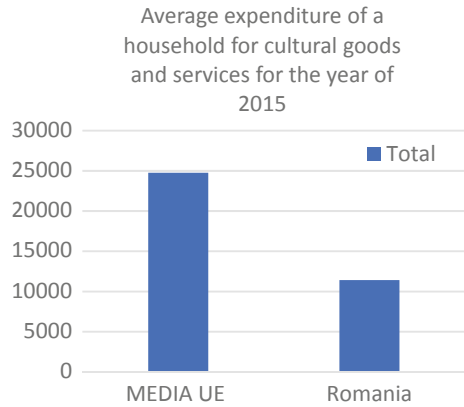


Fig. 13 Average expenditure of a household for books—year 2010

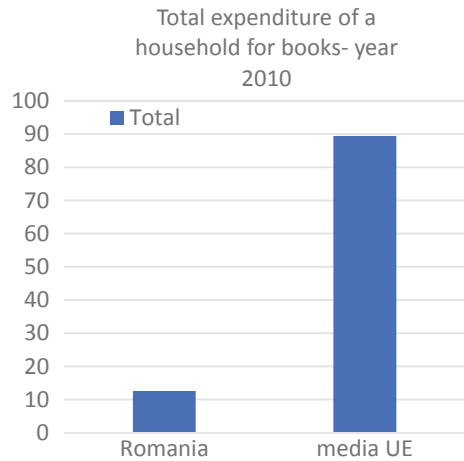
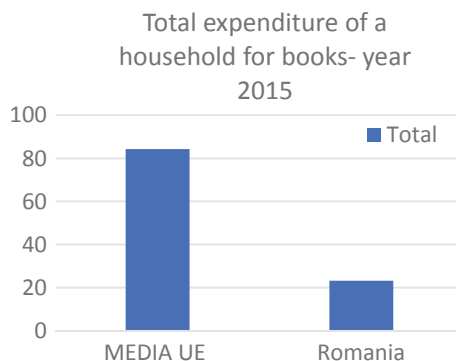


Fig. 14 Average expenditure of a household for books—year 2015



Figures 12 and 14 from above suggest that Romania is beginning to be a market with growth potential for the sale of books, cultural products, and services in general. Comparing the expenses of a Romanian household for books, with the net annual income, we notice, according to Eurostat (Annual net earnings, appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu 2018), that in 2010 the net annual income of an average employed person is 6781.66 PPC, of which only 12.6 PPC are intended for the purchase of books, which represents 0.18%. In 2015, out of a net annual income of 9869.66, 23.2 PPC are allocated to books, respectively, 0.23%. These proportions, although apparently very small, are realistic, given that in compiling the database, Eurostat took into account the average employee with average annual income, from all social spheres and geographical areas. It is noteworthy that, simultaneously with the increase of income, standard of living, and purchasing power, the availability of funds for personal development through reading, to books, increased by a significant percentage of 0.5%.

The most eloquent conclusion that these economic statistics bring us to is the fact that in the time segment 2008–2018, not excluding the previous period (to a lesser extent, however), the literary reception, be it a translation of Chinese literature, or the original literary works, changed their **factor of political influence into that of economic influence**. Now, high-level meetings, political statements, or diplomatic efforts have a lesser influence than the economic factor, which dictates both the choices made by the publisher and those made by the buyer, the reader. Sapiro (2003) notes that the distribution, but also the creation of cultural goods and international exchanges of literature can be located between two extremes: one with a high level of political constraints or influences, and the other with a high level of commercialization. Thus, in the communist period, when the economic environment was subordinated to politics and cultural institutions were governed by state instruments, the production and distribution of cultural goods was heavily politicized. On the other hand, in the last segment of time analyzed, in a democratic political regime, cultural exchanges are governed by the logic of the market, where volumes of books are seen, first of all, as commercial products that must obey the laws of profit.

Thus, we note a Romania between these two influences, with historical periods in which the importance of political and economic factors vary depending on the needs of culture, the national market, and the level of involvement of culture for ideological purposes. Among all these influences, especially in the democratic period, there is a large proportion of works whose publication was motivated by the pedagogical and cultural function, the ability to inform about the culture and civilization of a country (Figs. 15 and 16).

In terms of the topics addressed by the volumes published in the period 2008–2018, Fig. 17 presents the same variety and wide range of areas of interest published in the volumes on the Romanian market as in the previous period. Chinese translations, non-fiction and fiction, maintain a prime place, having even the largest increase, after the recession. We notice a strong boost in translations, after 2011, and in 2018 it will be the main form of a book about China published in Romania. Of these, just over half are literary translations, from Chinese literature, which in recent years has enjoyed an increasingly better reception among Romanian readers.

Among the translated works, which had a great impact on the recent reception of Chinese literature in the Romanian cultural sphere, and which benefited from translations and notes from Chinese by renowned Sinologists, members of the Romanian academic life, we mention: *Tăiței chinezești* (The Noodle Maker) (Ma Jian, trad. Roxana Rîbu 2009), *Cuvinte nescrise* (Without a Word) (Zhang Jie, Alin Bucă,

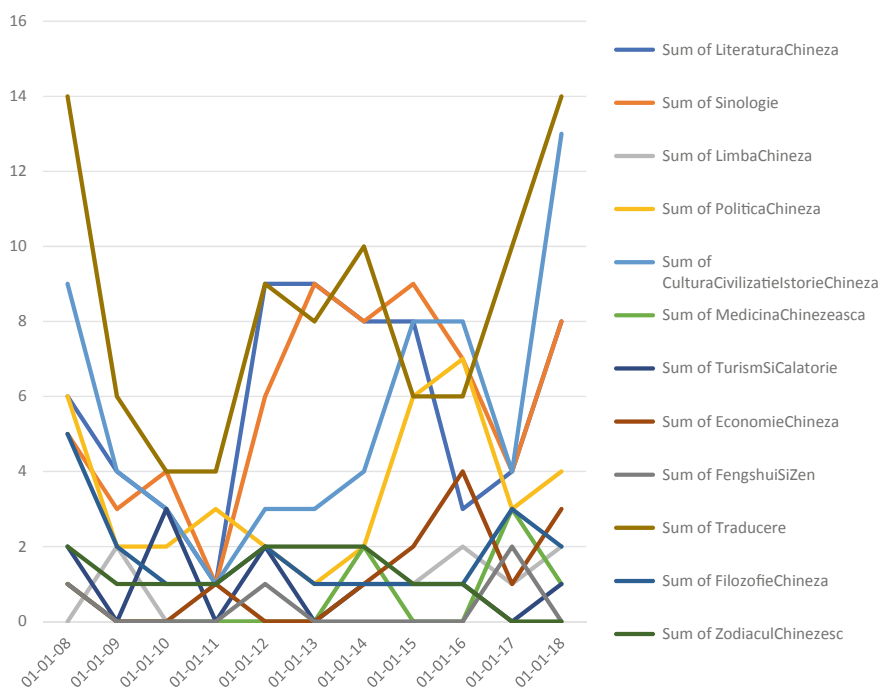


Fig. 15 Mapping of the categories of books published for the period of 2008–2019

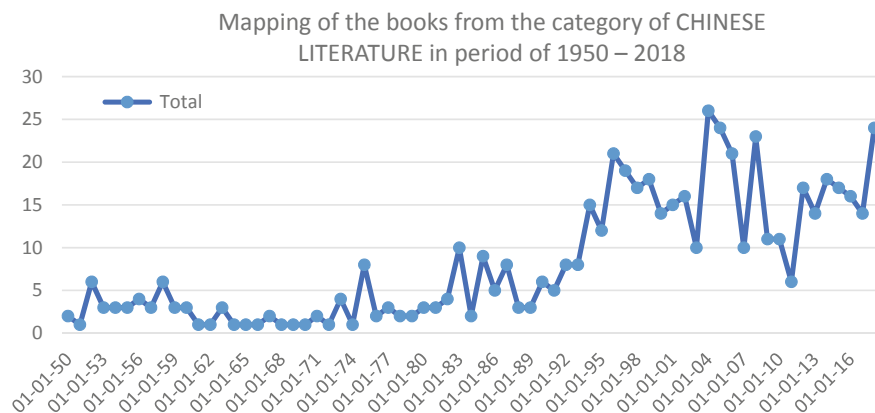


Fig. 16 Mapping of the books from the category of Chinese literature in the period of 1950–2018

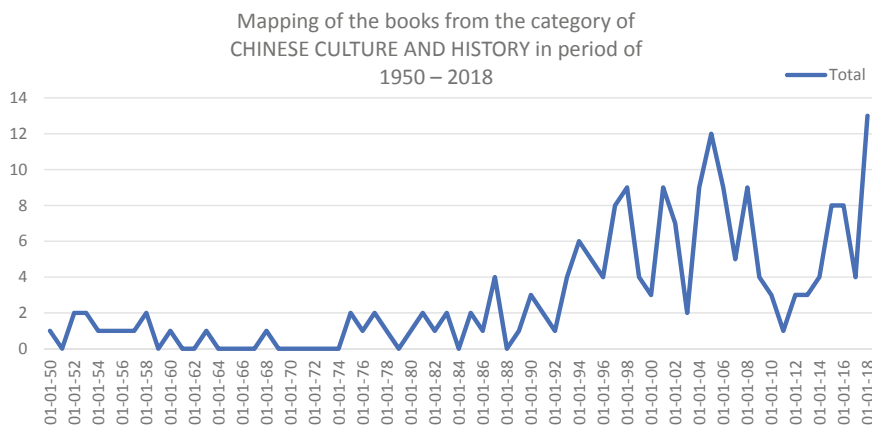


Fig. 17 Mapping of the books from the category of Chinese culture and history in period of 1950–2018

Andreea Chiriță 2009), *Schimbară (Change)* (Mo Yan, trad. Bogdan Perdivară, Florentina Vișan 2012), *Sorgul roșu (Red Sorghum)* (Mo Yan, trad. Dinu Luca 2012), *Baladele usturoiului din paradis (The Garlic Ballads)* (Mo Yan, trad. Luminița Bălan 2013), *Țara vinului (The Republic of Wine)* (Mo Yan, trad. Luminița Bălan 2014), *Broaște (Frog)* (Mo Yan, trad. Florentina Vișan 2014), *Lumea de orez (Rice)* (Su Tong, trad. Dinu Luca 2015), *Criptograful (Decoded)* (Mai Jia, Paula Pascaru 2015), *În viață (To Live)* (Yu Hua, trad. Mugur Zlotea 2016), *Femeia cu buchetul de flori și alte povestiri* (Big Breasts and Wide Hips) (Mo Yan, trad. Luminița Bălan 2016), *Obosit de viață, obosit de moarte (Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out)* (Mo Yan, trad. Dinu Luca 2017), *Cronica unui negustor de sânge (Blood Merchant)* (Yu Hua, trad. Luminița Bălan 2017), *O undiță pentru bunicul meu (Gěi Wǒ Lǎoye Mǎi Yúgān)*

(Gao Xingjian, trad. Irina Ivașcu 2017), *Marea literatură a Chinei* (China 100 Topics Series: Land of Literary Glory) (Ma Xiaodong, trad. Ionela Voicu 2018), *Zile, luni, ani* (Days, months, years) (Yan Lianke, trad. Irina Ivașcu 2018), *China în zece cuvinte* (China in ten Words) (Yu Hua, trad. Mugur Zlotea 2018), *Cei trei regi* (Three Kings) (A Cheng, trad. Florentina Vișan, Luminița Bălan 2018).

There is an increase in the interest of Romanian publishers for the publication of **contemporary Chinese literature**, with a predominance of authors of contemporary prose, who primarily enjoy a very high international recognition, such as Mo Yan, Su Tong, Yu Hua. Thus, naturally, in recent years, there is an increased curiosity of Romanian readers and publishers to learn more about the Chinese authors who are increasingly more present on the international stage of literary awards, including the Nobel Prize.

The next category in the period 2008–2018, from a numerical point of view, is that of works on Chinese culture, history, and civilization, which reached a total of 52 works, half, however, compared to the period 1990–2007. In comparison, however, there is a double increase in works on the Chinese economy, especially after 2011, when Romanian economists became interested in the secret of the Chinese economy, in the context of the global economic crisis. Thus, we find on the Romanian book market works such as *Expansiunea Chinei: cum Alibaba, Huawei, Lenovo și alții schimbă regulile* (China's Expansion: how Alibaba, Huawei, Lenovo, and others change the rules) (Edward Tse, trad. Bianca Zbarcea 2017), *Managementul afacerilor: Calea chineză* (Business Management. The Chinese Way) (Shengzhe Nie 2018), *Tranziția și dezvoltarea economică a Chinei* (China's Transition and Economic Development) (Ermicioi Natalia 2014), *Secretele Chinei: ascensiunea unei noi superputeri mondiale* (China's Secrets: The Rise of a New World Superpower) (Farndon John, trad. Gabriela Grigore 2008).

A category that maintains the same trend as in the previous period is that of works on Chinese political relations, and Romanian-Chinese bilateral relations. The category of works on Chinese philosophy is maintained at a high ratio compared to other categories, during this period, 19 books inspired by Chinese philosophy were published, in particular, maintaining, as in the previous period, those of Confucianism. Comparable to that of the previous time segment, the publications in the field of *Fengshui* techniques, *Zen* but also Astrology and Chinese Medicine were numerous (24 publications), phenomena that have grown considerably in recent years in Romania, thus, the market expects an increase for these categories of works in the following years.

7 Evolution and Mapping of the Categories of Genres Published During 1965–2018

In the following subchapter we will briefly analyze the mapping of the fields in which works about China were published in the period of time 1950–2018, to observe

the evolution of certain genres directly related to the political regime, international influences, or Romania's economic situation.

As for the Chinese literature, fiction, unlike the other categories, it enjoyed a presence on the Romanian publishing stage throughout the entire period analyzed, with a much faster evolution, after the end of the Communist regime, followed by a decrease, along with the entire book industry, during the recession of 2008–2011, and an upward trend in 2018.

Volumes from the broader category of Chinese culture, civilization and history had one of the most continuous evolutions in Romanian publishing stage, similar to literary works, which, again, experienced new values, after the liberalization of the book market and publishing activity, with small regressions influenced by the country's economic situation (Fig. 18).

Books on Chinese Linguistics were missing completely from the socialist-communist period, with only 5 works published during Ceausescu's regime. Unfortunately, the following segments of time did not show a major evolution either, but the trend was a continuous one, of 1–2 works, without major interruptions. One of the explanations for the lack of books dedicated to Chinese language until 1975, is that Chinese language studies, founded in 1956 in Romania, gave birth to sinologists, who after study and training in the field of sinology, two decades later, began to write themselves studies which understood the Chinese language from the perspective of a Romanian speaking scholar. *Curs practic de limba chineza, texte din presa* (Practical Chinese language course, texts from newspapers) is thus the first published work on Chinese linguistics for Romanian readers. Later, during 1989–2018, Romanian sinologists Ileana Hogeă Velișcu, Florentina Vișan and later, Luminița Bălan started

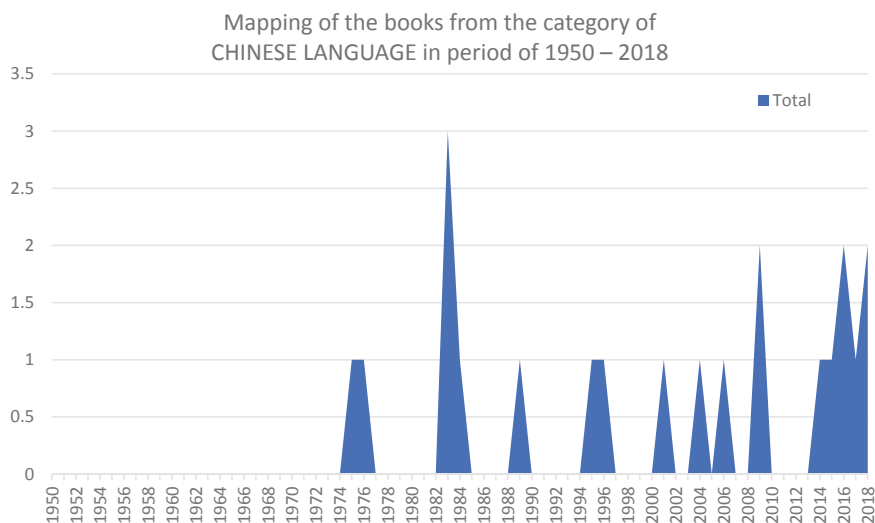


Fig. 18 Mapping of the books from the category of Chinese language in period of 1950–2018

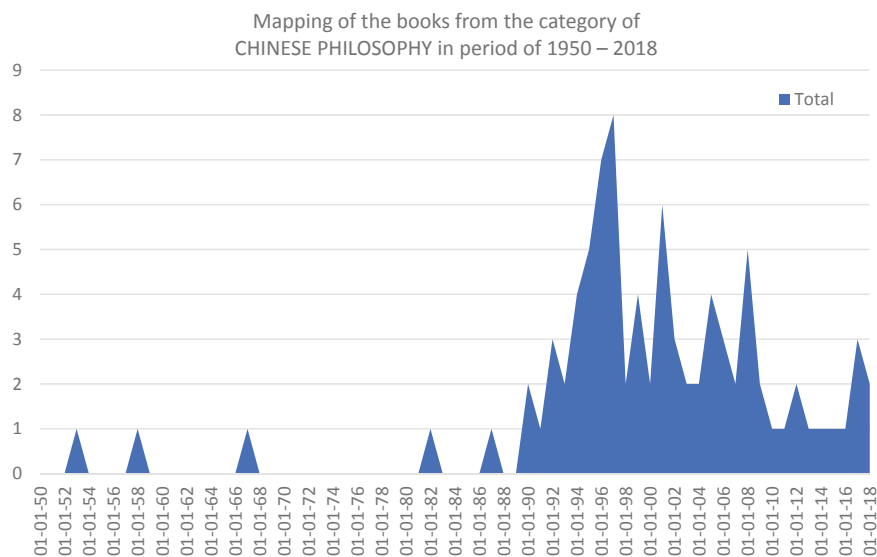


Fig. 19 Mapping of the books from the category of chinese philosophy in period of 1950–2018

publishing original works about the linguistics and the study of the Chinese language (Fig. 19).

A very explicit phenomenon occurs in the case of works from the category of Chinese philosophy, which in the socialist and communist period were almost non-existent, but which, immediately after the Revolution, since 1990 began to have a steady and significant growth, reaching a peak in 1996, but slightly losing the publishing scene after 2009. The lack of Chinese philosophical works in the pre-revolution period is not at all out of the ordinary, as communist ideology persecuted even Romanian philosophers, thus having no openness to Chinese, Confucian or Taoist philosophy. In addition, the Chinese themselves of the time (1919–1976), under Mao’s leadership, carried out serious campaigns of denigration and prohibition, calling Confucius a “regressive and feudal pedant” (tribuneindia.com, 2017). In this way, the Romanian leaders—Gheorghiu-Dej and Ceausescu—had no reason to accept the publication of Chinese philosophers blamed even by the people they belonged to. Fortunately, after 1990, a series of translations and original works written by Romanian authors were published, making Chinese principles and philosophies, but especially the Confucian ones known to the Romanian reader, who comes to have a deeper knowledge of Chinese civilization and culture (Fig. 20).

A phenomenon similar with that of philosophical works happens in the case of those in the categories of Chinese medicine, and the practices of Fengshui, and the Chinese zodiac, the charts representing both being almost equal. The works in these categories were published in Romanian publishing houses, during the democratic period, when the Romanian cultural reception opened up to new ways of knowledge, to elements of the ancestral Chinese tradition. We notice that the two categories

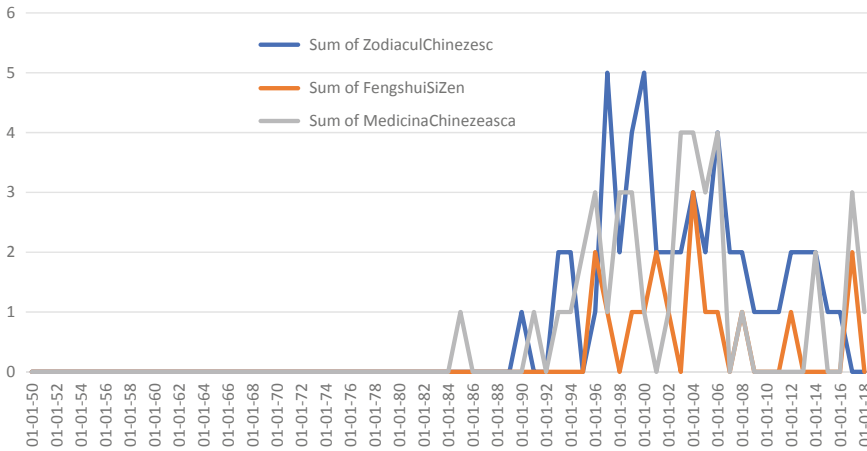


Fig. 20 Evolution of the books from the categories of Chinese astrology, Fengshui and traditional Chinese medicine in period of 1950–2018

develop at the same pace, although they belong to two different areas. They intersect certain principles in common points, the purpose of which is to heal the human being spiritually and physically (Fig. 21).

In a small number of works, however, China’s economy was addressed again only after the Revolution, with one exception, in 1985. However, an increase interest in this field was noticed after the economic crisis, after 2011, when China aroused the interest of Romanians, and the whole world, for its economic success, despite the global recession. Thus, in the last period of time, China is a topic of interest in the financial and economic discussions at the global level, the focus shifting from

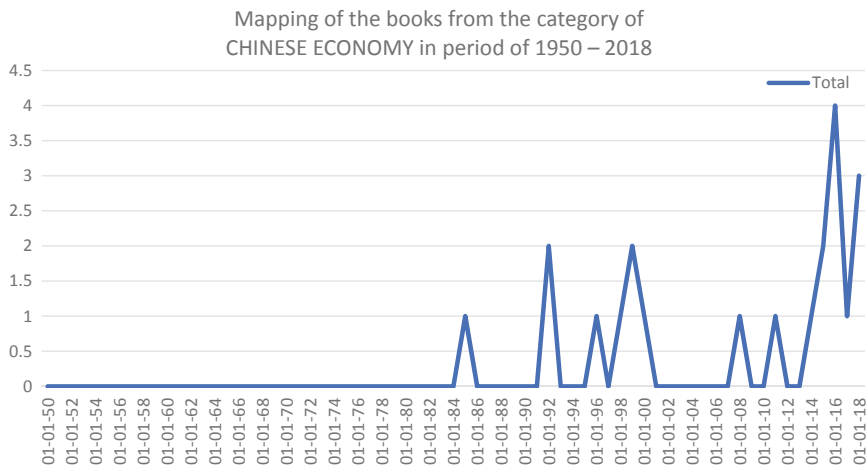


Fig. 21 Mapping of the books from the category of Chinese economy in period of 1950–2018

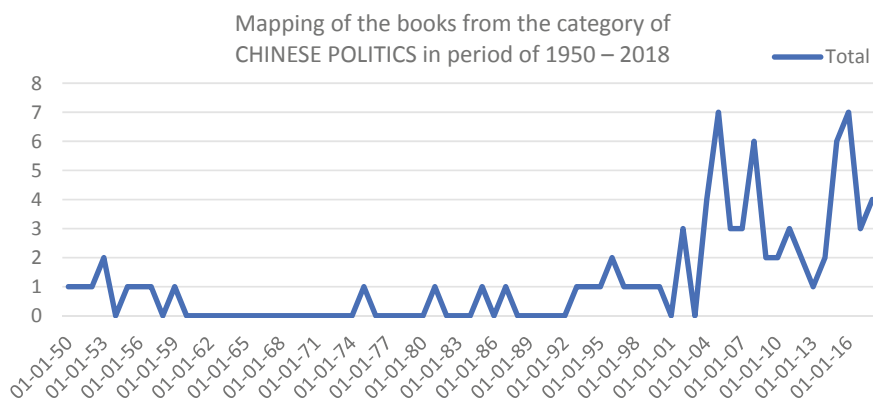


Fig. 22 Mapping of the books from the category of Chinese politics in period of 1950–2018

its political system, to its economic development techniques; thus, naturally, the attention of Romanian economists turned to the study of China (Fig. 22).

The works dedicated to the political system, although present since the beginning of the analyzed period, from 1950, experienced an increase between the 90s and 2000s, during the communist period being published only a few titles of Chinese leaders or translated works about the Chinese communist political system. The democratic period brings a greater number of works on politics, but which debate Chinese diplomacy, the country's governance, or China's international relations with Romania (Fig. 23).

Travel diaries in China had a timid journey, however, they were among the first works that made China known to Romanians, the opening of borders after '89, naturally facilitating tourism in China, which led to the publication of a slightly larger number of travel diaries and tourist guides in China, but the difference between the communist and the democratic period is not as deep and striking as in the case of other categories, mentioned above (Fig. 24).

In terms of Chinese translation and Chinese literature, we notice an almost overlapping intersection between the two coordinates, suggesting that the vast majority of titles about or from Chinese literature are translated works (a total of about 220 translated literary works), the other a small part (approx. 30) being literary, sinological studies of Romanian authors about Chinese literature works. The evolution of translations from Chinese literature followed, as shown in the previous sections, the course of political and diplomatic relations between Romania and China, and subsequently changed its sphere of influence to the economic one. In this, the law of the book market dictated the number of translated works, the trend of literary genres but also of authors, proving, once again, that **translation, located at the border between cultures, is exposed to a combination of connotations, contextualization, and influencing factors such as power, domination, national interests, and agents involved in the translation process.**

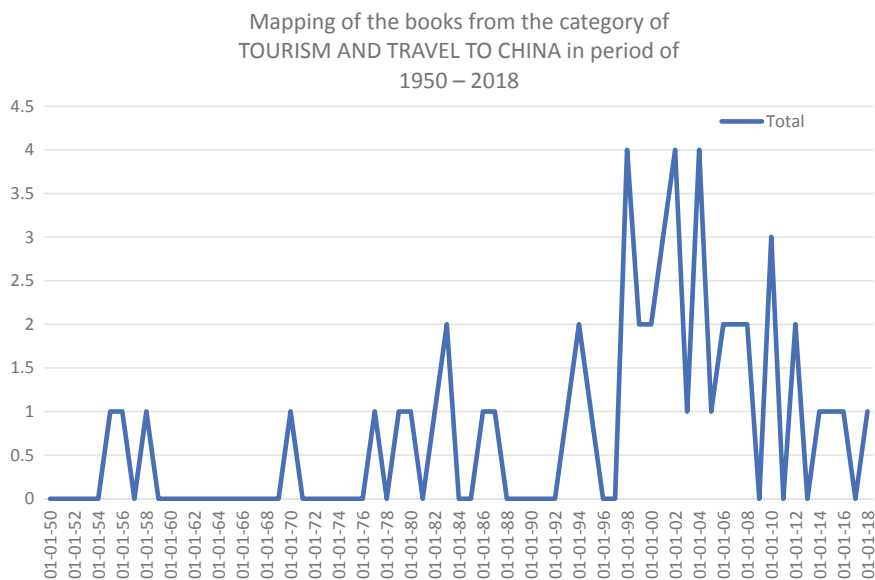


Fig. 23 Mapping of the books from the category of tourism and travel to China in period of 1950–2018

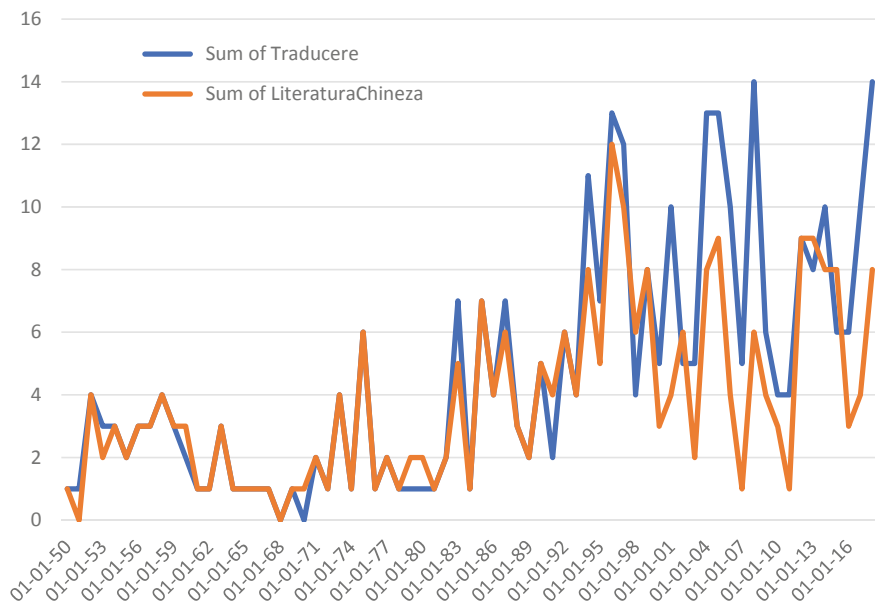


Fig. 24 Comparison of the evolution of publishing activity in the categories of translations and Chinese literature

8 Forecasting of the Evolution of Romanian Translations of Chinese Literary Works

Analyzing the data collected for the period 1950–2018, the influencing factors examined in the previous sections, starting from the statistics presented above and using the SPSS analysis method, we can objectively predict that over the next 20 years, the Romanian book market will have a **slight, steady increase** in the publication of books regarding China, with an average number of 25–30 volumes published annually (Fig. 25).

If we look only at the literary translations of Chinese literature in Romanian language, whose fluctuation was higher, we forecast a slight decrease in the next period, followed by a timid but steady increase, to an average of 7–8 volumes translated and published annually (Fig. 26).

If, however, we consider only the democratic period of Romania, starting with 1990, anticipating a **greater similarity of political, economic, and social influences**, between 1990 and 2018 and the next 20 years, we observe a more positive forecast, which does not provide for a decrease in the number of translations in the coming years, but a very slight increase, and a maintenance around the number of 8–9 annual publications until 2038 (Fig. 27).

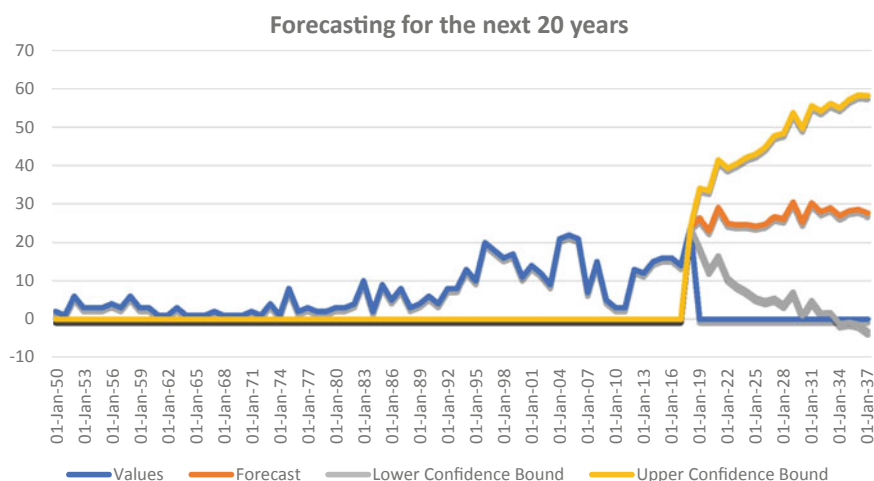


Fig. 25 Forecasting of the evolution of publishing activity on China from Romania for the next 20 years

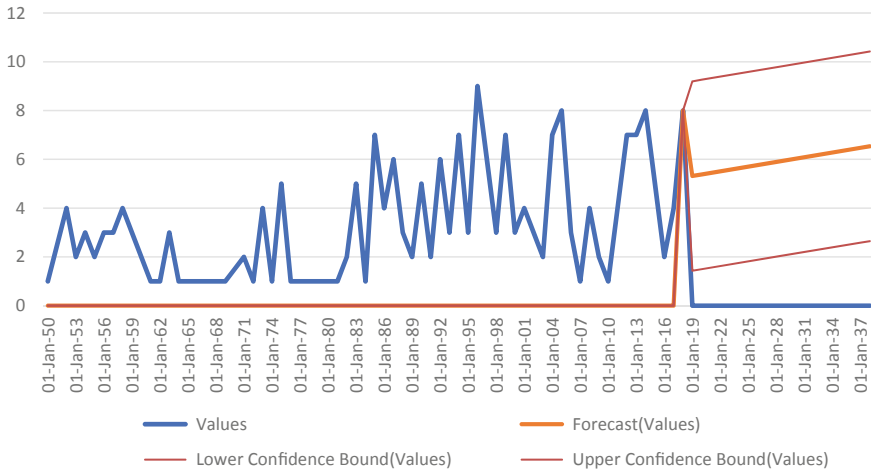


Fig. 26 Forecasting of the evolution of Romanian translation of Chinese literature for the next 20 years

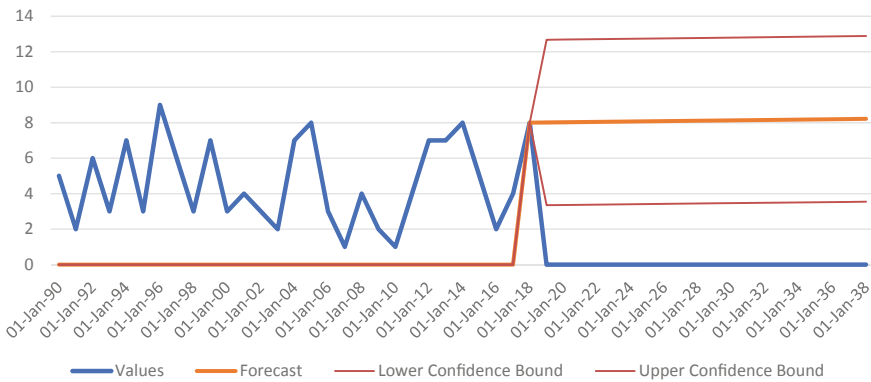


Fig. 27 Forecasting based only on the democratic regime in Romania (since 1990) of the evolution of Romanian translation of Chinese literature for the next 20 years

9 Concluding Remarks

This quantitative research provides some answers to the question concerning the global circulation of books and the role of sociological theory in the study of literature and especially translations, proving that in the cultural exchange between China and Romania diplomatic, political and economic relations played a defining role, especially during the communist regime.

The present study was also motivated by the need for further investigations for new principles and methods to address the cultural aspects of translations, socio-cultural,

and literary meanings in the text substratum, but also the analysis of the macro-context in which literary texts are created. Thus, in order to obtain a clear image, as accurate as possible of the literary relations between Romania and China, of the Romanian reader's interest in Chinese culture, we conducted a quantitative research of all works, regardless of literary genre, which debated topics related to China. Although quantitative research has a generalizing method aspect, in the case of the present research project, this method proves to be vital in mapping Sino-Romanian relations, both in terms of literature, culture, but also political, diplomatic and economic relations; helping to present and highlight the evolution of the reader's interest, but also of the Romanian authorities for China, in distinct periods of Romania's political life.

The study was designed to research the functions of literature and translation in the context of its reception and distribution in the target culture. We focused on specific sociological questions, on the interest and functions of translation, the agents and institutions involved, the space in which it is located, but also on political and economic constraints around them. The literary relations between Romania and China were proven to have been much influenced by the international exchange between the countries, publishing activity and translation, the result of the interpretation given by social agents in different spatial and temporal contexts.

It is important to note the difference in the mediation of translation in the rapport between the same countries, but found in different stages of their development. In the segments of time included in the research, we observe a Romania between two influences, with different historical regimes in which the importance of political and economic factors varies depending on the needs of culture, the national market and the level of involvement of culture in ideological purposes. Among all these influences, especially in the democratic period, there is still a large proportion of works whose publication was motivated by the pedagogical and cultural function, the ability to inform about the culture, and the civilization of a country.

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A Corpus-Based Cognitive Study of the “Rustic Literariness” of Translated Chinese Fiction



Yesheng Tan

Abstract This paper is a corpus-based cognitive study of Anglo-American sinologists’ English translation of Chinese fiction during the last four decades. With a domain analysis of the semantically tagged corpus data, it shows that animals and plants are key concepts in the corpus of Chinese Fiction Translation in the four decades (CCFT), in sharp contrast with the reference corpora, that is, OTC, the Other-source-language Translational Corpus of Fiction, and EFC, the English Fiction Corpus of Balanced Selection. Data shows that the “rusticness” embodied in the construction of animal and plant images not only exists in the four periods, but also has no diminishing tendency in the translated Chinese Fiction. An analysis of the concordance-line corpus of animal and plant words reveals a variety of key cognitive domains like Emotional, Sensory, People, and Relationship, in the proximate surrounding contexts, clearly indicating the existence of metaphors, and further analysis is conducted on metaphors embedded in “as...as” construction. The diversified metaphors with animal and plant images are constructed along the Great Chain of Being, and fully reflect the rich imagination of the authors and translators. It is argued that the animal and plant concepts are not simply indexes of the rustic environment, but are essential in the construction of the literariness of translated Chinese fiction. Therefore, any criticism that neglects or denies the “rustic literariness” of Chinese Fiction and its translation is partial. The study has implications for introducing new theoretical models and empirical methods into literary translation studies.

Keywords Rustic literariness · Great Chain of Being · Corpus-based studies · Cognitive linguistics

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The general impression of modern and contemporary Chinese fiction is that artistic imagination is insufficient and “rusticness”(Xiangtǔ Qì 乡土气) is too heavy, which leads to poor literary performance. This is basically an impression based on the examination of translated Chinese novels before 1990s, especially made by Duke (1990). Duke (1990, 198) echoed Ou-fan Lee’s chastisement of contemporary Chinese writers for their excessively pedestrian social realism and lack of literary imagination, and he agreed with C. T. Hsia’s conclusion that “the work of these writers does not evince great imaginative power or technical brilliance; the intrusive presence of utilitarian ideals precludes the disinterested search for excellence”(Duke 1990, 201).

Duke’s primary assumption is that the international reputation of modern and contemporary fiction written in Chinese anywhere in the world is chiefly dependent upon English-language translations of that fiction (Duke 1990, 200), and he was concerned only with the fate of Chinese fiction when translated into English and read by people who do not understand the Chinese language, but who are avid and knowledgeable readers of serious English-language fiction. He presented the problems of modern and Contemporary Chinese fiction in relation to the “implied readers” as follows: the fact remains that the overwhelming bulk of their works, even when read in Chinese, appear to the contemporary reader as overly parochial, excessively topical, and lacking in artistic distinction (Duke 1990, 201).

In Duke’s critique, “overly parochial” (Duke 1990, 201) is in more specific terms “overly rustic.” Duke (1990) especially relates rural themes or setting to the lack of artistic distinction. As he later pointed out, “the modern Chinese novel became an increasingly rural-based panorama of social realism in which humanistic and ideologically engaged writers attempted to depict the desperate problems of poverty, ignorance, cruelty, and backwardness that cried out for solution at the time. This shift from individual to social concern and from urban to rural setting was one symptom of a striking urban-rural polarity that emerged for the first time in Chinese social history in this century.... modern Chinese fiction became predominantly concerned with rural life, or with the contrast between rural and urban China, and it has remained so on the mainland into the 1990s.” (Duke 1991, xiii).

There are universal values in literary expression, and there is also social-culturally distinctive literariness. Defamiliarization effect, emotional and aesthetic function, and the experience of characters that can resonate with or even entertaining ordinary readers (McDougall 2007) may be universal literary values. But there are obvious differences in the concept of literariness between China and the West. And we would argue that rusticness may be considered a special feature of the literariness of Chinese fiction, rather than a belittling feature as viewed from a eurocentric perspective, or from the perspective of Duke’s implied readers. In *Xiangtǔ Zhōngguó* (《乡土中国》) (Fei Xiaotong 费孝通 1984), a set of essays written shortly after World War II, Fei Xiaotong, the world-renowned sociologist and anthropologist, clarifies the meaning of the title in the book’s first sentence, “Chinese society is fundamentally rural.” He is using *xiangtǔ* 乡土 to modify *zhōngguó* 中国 (China), and conveying a subtle meaning to his readers that Chinese society has grown out of its ties to the land (Fei 1992, vii). The translators Hamilton & Wang Zheng (Fei 1992, vii)

explained the translation of the Chinese title in their foreword: the book’s title is usually rendered in English as “rural China,” but this rendering is inexact. *xīang* 乡 means “countryside” and *tǔ* 土 means “earth”; but the combination, *xīangtǔ*, is a set phrase meaning “one’s native soil or home village.” Rusticness is closely related to the literariness of Chinese fiction, given the social-historical significance it carries for China. Therefore, we coin the term “rustic literariness” to discuss how Chinese fiction is different from western ones in this respect.

Given the impression or critique above-mentioned is mainly about Chinese fiction produced and translated before 1990s, it is inviting to wonder whether the rusticness remains in the English-translated Chinese fiction after the reform and opening-up till the present, and it is necessary to further explore whether the rustic feature of English-translated Chinese novels hinders its emotional and aesthetic functions. If we examine the literariness of Chinese fiction, especially the literariness of translated Chinese fiction in the English world, a more holistic study is needed and a diachronic perspective is essential.

Therefore, the questions of this research are: in the 40 years since the reform and opening up, has Chinese fiction as presented in English translation gradually changed, and is it still rustic and insufficient in literary imagination in front of foreign readers?

To answer these questions a holistic and diachronic study of the rusticness of translated Chinese fiction is to be conducted, and we resort to corpus-based methods for the purpose. A corpus is constructed of Anglo-American sinologists’ English translation of Chinese fiction during the last four decades, and for a corpus-based study, linguistic indexes of rusticness should be identified for automatic processing. Rusticness is related to the countryside or land, and the first things or images that come to mind when thinking of the countryside are plants or animals, hence the corpus-based analysis will focus on animals and plants, which are basic in the rural environment, and in close interaction of the characters. As the interaction between the people and the environment is, in light of the theory of embodied cognition and cognitive linguistics, essential to the social-cultural cognition and as the close link between land and Chinese spirit is embraced by previous sociologists and anthropologists, it is meaningful for us to examine how the prominent environmental marks of rusticness are related to literary expression. The structure of the paper will be arranged as follows:

Section 1 will be a description of the target corpus, reference corpora, and tools for analysis. Section 2 will make a statistical analysis of the corpus data of animal and plant concepts. Section 3 will analyze the animal and plant metaphors in light of cognitive linguistics and discuss the rustic literariness of Chinese fiction as related to animal and plant metaphors, and Sect. 4 is the conclusion with implications for literary translation studies.

Table 1 Statistics of the target corpus CCFT

Text file	Tokens used for word list	Types (distinct words)	Type/token ratio (TTR)	Standardized TTR (STTR)	STT std.dev.
1979–2018	14675525.00	92436.00	0.63	42.27	57.30
1979–1989	1815849.00	39040.00	2.15	43.07	57.09
1990–1999	3385371.00	49421.00	1.46	42.23	57.53
2000–2009	4760136.00	53961.00	1.13	43.19	56.37
2010–2018	4714169.00	47397.00	1.01	41.07	58.28

1 Target Corpus, Reference Corpora, and Tools of the Research

The target corpus of the research is the Corpus of Chinese Fiction translated into English by Anglo-American Sinologists in the four decades (1979–2018) (CCFT). CCFT is a L2-L1 translational corpus, rendered by over 30 influential sinologist translators and consisting of over 130 works¹—some are translated volumes composed of more than two novels or short stories, and some are co-translated works. Table 1 is the statistics of CCFT, showing the number of word tokens, TTR and STTR.

Three reference corpora are used in the research, namely, BNC-Sampler Written Corpus, an equipment of Wmatrix, 968,267 words (Abbreviated as BNC-SW; OTC (the Other-source-language Translational Corpus of Fiction), and EFC(English Fiction Corpus of Balanced Selection). According to the help files of Wmatrix, written texts were selected for inclusion in the BNC-SW corpus according to three independent selection criteria: domain, time, and medium. Target proportions were defined for each of these criteria. As to domain, 75% of the written texts were to be chosen from informative writings: of which roughly equal quantities should be chosen from the fields of applied sciences, arts, belief and thought, commerce and finance, leisure, natural and pure science, social science, world affairs. 25% of the written texts were to be imaginative, that is, literary and creative works.

Written texts for EFC were selected based on the ranking list of four institutions or websites, namely, (1) The Top 10 Novels by the Top 10 For Everything (top10for.com); (2) Best Novels of All Time by The Top Ten (<https://www.thetop10.com/best-novels>); (3) The Books of the Century 1900–1999 by UC Berkeley; and (4) The bestselling novels by Ranker. The data were selected and balanced based on the following criteria:

- a. Balanced across four periods: 1980–1989, 1990–1999, 2000–2009, and 2010–2018, each period account for 1,200,000–1,500,000 words.
- b. Balanced across six themes for each period, which are romance, science fiction, fantasy, west adventures, detective, and general (Table 2).

¹For the name list of sinologist translators and title list of translated Chinese fiction, please contact the author. The research is funded by National Social Sciences Foundation, PRC (Project No. 20BYY023).

Table 2 Statistics of EFC

Text file	Tokens used for word list	Types (distinct words)	Type/token ratio (TTR)	Standardized TTR (STTR)	STT std.dev.
Total	5754279.00	82877.00	1.44	44.51	55.72
1980–1989	1428261.00	37195.00	2.60	43.70	56.59
1990–1999	1474909.00	37791.00	2.56	45.05	54.94
2000–2009	1490928.00	44584.00	2.99	45.20	55.31
2010–2018	1360181.00	40112.00	2.95	41.84	58.17

Table 3 Statistics of OTC

Languages	Tokens
Russian	2569617
French 2053021 Italian:154294 Spanish 478439	2685754
Japanese	306828
German	323750
	5,915,621

OTC is a reference corpus of translated fiction from source languages other than Chinese. Written texts were selected based on the ranking list of 2 institutions or websites, namely, (1) Best Novels of All Time, selected by the Top Ten (<https://www.thetoptens.com/best-novels>), and (2) The Books of the Century: 1900–1999 by UC Berkeley (Table 3).

The corpus analysis is mainly conducted with Wmatrix (<https://ucrel-wmatrix4.lancaster.ac.uk/>), a research platform developed by Paul Rayson, Lancaster University. The knowledge-based Wmatrix 4.0 include POS tagger CLAWS and Semantic tagger USAS (UCREL Semantic Annotation System). USAS can automatically tag semantic domains/fields) (Rayson 2008, 519–549). Its semantic tagset is based on Longman Lexicon of Contemporary English, including 21 general domains and 212 secondary domains, 94 tertiary domains, for example: emotion, food, law, time, etc. With a reference corpus, Wmatrix 4.0 can produce key words, key pos, and key concept/domains of a target text.

An example of Wmatrix 4.0 output data line is as follows:

```
Item o1 %1 o2 %2 LL LogRatio
Z8 29552 12 72023 7.44 + 4.45 0.69 Pronouns
```

Item is the grammatical or semantic item, Z8 is the Wmatrix marker of Pronouns

O1 is observed frequency in target corpus

O2 is observed frequency in reference corpus

%1 and %2 values show relative frequencies in the texts (frequency per 100 words)

+ indicates overuse in O1 relative to O2,

– indicates underuse in O1 relative to O2

The table of output data is sorted on log-likelihood (LL) value, an indicator of keyness. The cut-off value is 6.63, i.e., the item is statistically significant if the LL is above 6.63. With cut-off value set within Excel, key terms or concepts can be extracted and insignificant terms or concepts can be filtered out.

It is assumed that reference corpus is essential for revealing or filtering the key features of the target corpus. For our study, three types of reference corpora have been constructed and used. To reveal or filter characteristics of the CCFT or the English translation of Chinese novels, our basic assumptions as to the use of different reference corpora are:

- (1) BNC-SW is representative of general English written texts, thus with BNC-SW as a reference, the key literary and translational features of the target corpus text, can be revealed.
- (2) with EFC (original fiction corpus) as a reference, some if not all features of the fictional style of CCFT can be filtered out, but its features as translated fiction will be highlighted.
- (3) with OTC (translated fiction corpus from other source languages) as a reference, some common features of fictional translation can be filtered out, thus presenting the unique characteristics of translated Chinese fiction.

Some preliminary tests are conducted to verify the assumptions. Below is a brief test with CCFT as the target corpus (only the first four data lines shown).

Referencing BNC-SW

Item	o1	%1	o2	% 2	LL	LogRatio	
Z8	1741538	12.74	72023	7.44	+ 23712.43	0.78	Pronouns
Z99	730219	5.34	22165	2.29	+ 20408.86	1.22	Unmatched
B1	224688	1.64	5489	0.57	+ 8703.71	1.54	Anatomy and physiology
S4	137344	1.00	4002	0.41	+ 4115.21	1.28	Kin

Referencing EFC

Item	o1	%1	o2	% 2	LL	LogRatio	
S4	137344	1.00	14503	0.38	+ 16268.82	1.41	Kin
Z99	730219	5.34	162228	4.23	+ 7582.84	0.34	Unmatched
F1	64365	0.47	10432	0.27	+ 3074.17	0.79	Food
L3	38728	0.28	5437	0.14	+ 2710.18	1.00	Plants

Referencing OTC

Item	o1	%1	o2	% 2	LL	LogRatio	
------	----	----	----	-----	----	----------	--

N1 206915 1.51 32067 0.63 + 26324.74 1.27 Numbers
 S4 137344 1.00 24611 0.48 + 13206.43 1.06 Kin
 Z1 213446 1.56 45537 0.89 + 13153.39 0.81 Personal names
 Z99 730219 5.34 216737 4.25 + 9088.70 0.33 Unmatched

With BNC-SW as the reference corpus, the statistics show that Pronoun is the highest in keyness among all concepts of CCFT. The value of RF is above 12, which is very remarkable, for it indicates that there are 12 pronouns on average in 100 words. The data lines verify the assumption (1), as the use of Pronoun is a key feature of literary narratives. Out of the need of narrative plot, especially plot coherence, literary works tend to use pronouns to refer to the environmental elements, characters, and events mentioned above, thus playing a role of textual cohesion. Francis & Kucera (1982), Biber (1985), and Tuldava (2005) share the view that one of the stylistic features of typical narrative articles is the “greater use of personal pronouns.” Fang Mengzhi (1988) compares the PB report of the US Business Publishing Bureau with the corpus of English short stories and finds that the number of pronouns in the novel is more than ten times that in the report.

However, when referencing OTC and EFC reference corpus, Pronouns didn’t occur in the key concept list of the target corpus or has not reached the critical cut-off value. And that verifies the assumptions (2) and (3), that is, some if not all features of the fictional style of CCFT can be filtered out. With BNC-SW as the reference corpus, the frequency of pronouns in the CCFT (Chinese fiction translation corpus) reaches the critical value with a high LL. However, relative to OTC and EFC, the critical value is not reached. OTC and EFC help us filter out this feature of literary narrative.

As statistics show, the keyness of Personal Names are critically high when referencing OTC, but the concept or domain of Personal Names doesn’t occur in the key concept list when referencing EFC, which reveals or highlights a remarkable feature of translated Chinese fiction translation texts. And this finding verifies the assumption (3).

Our purpose of using multiple reference corpora is to reveal more. OTC can help filter out some common features of literary translation, like the use of Pronouns, but it will certainly obscure some features, such as the Anatomy and Physiology domain revealed by BNC-SW. We use the three reference corpora together to reveal comprehensively and objectively the distribution characteristics of the key semantic domains of the target translated text, and to distinguish the key features of each 10-year period.

2 The Rusticness of Translated Chinese Fiction

As mentioned above, plants and animals are the prominent rustic images. Therefore, in this section we will focus on the distribution of animal and plant concepts or domains in CCFT (1979–2018), with BNC-SW, EFC, and OTC as reference corpus, respectively. The data lines will be listed and analyzed below.

Referencing EFC

Item	o1	%1	o2	%2	LL	LogRatio	
L2	70221	0.51	13500	0.35	+ 1757.8	0.55	Living creatures: animals, birds, etc.
L3	38728	0.28	5437	0.14	+ 2710.18	1	Plants
F4	12681	0.09	1847	0.05	+ 812.66	0.95	Farming & Horticulture

With EFC as reference corpus the concepts of plant and animal are obviously highlighted in CCFT, and the LL (log-likelihood) values, which reflects the keyness, is in the 812-1758 interval, which rank the fourth and ninth in the list of key concepts (to save space, the irrelevant concepts are not listed). Farming and Horticulture concepts related to plant domain ranks 17.

Referencing OTC

Item	o1	%1	o2	%2	LL	LogRatio	
L2	70221	0.51	14773	0.29	+ 4510.77	0.83	Living creatures: animals, birds, etc.
L3	38728	0.28	6771	0.13	+ 3923.55	1.09	Plants

Referencing BNC-SW

Item	o1	%1	o2	%2	LL	LogRatio	
L2	70221	0.51	3225	0.33	+ 661.58	0.62	Living creatures: animals, birds, etc.
L3	38728	0.28	2439	0.25	+ 32.7	0.17	Plants

With OTC as reference corpus, the concepts of plant and animal are even more prominent. The LL values, which are in the 3923-4511 interval, and are far higher than that referencing EFC, rank 6 and 7, respectively, in the list of key concepts. When referencing BNC-SW, the concepts of animals and plants have also reached a critical level, much higher above the cut-off value, 6.63.

In sum, when referencing the three corpora BNC-SW, OTC, and EFC, animal and plant domains of CCFT reached a highly critical prominence, and most prominent when referencing OTC, and then EFC. As statistics show, the two domains represent the specialty of CCFT.

To further explore the historical change of this specialty, we will examine the situation of each period separately.

Statistics of animal domain in the four periods of English translations of Chinese fiction, referencing EFC, BNC-SW, and OTC, respectively, will be listed below.

Animal domain in 1979–1989

Animal domain is not a key domain referencing EFC and BNC, hence no data output here, and a little above the critical value when referencing OTC. Its relative frequency is 0.31, LL is 17.89.

Referencing OTC

Item o1 %1 o2 %2 LL LogRatio

L2 5136 0.31 14773 0.29 + 17.89 0.1 Living creatures: animals, birds, etc.

Animal domain in 1990–1999

Referencing EFC

Item o1 %1 o2 %2 LL LogRatio

L2 13728 0.44 13500 0.35 + 350.27 0.33 Living creatures: animals, birds, etc.

Referencing BNC-SW

L2 13728 0.44 3225 0.33 + 220.18 0.41 Living creatures: animals, birds, etc.

Referencing OTC

L2 13728 0.44 14773 0.29 + 1250.85 0.61 Living creatures: animals, birds, etc.

Animal domain in 2000–2009

Referencing EFC

Item o1 %1 o2 %2 LL LogRatio

L2 31031 0.7 13500 0.35 + 4885.94 1 Living creatures: animals, birds, etc.

Referencing BNC-SW

L2 31031 0.7 3225 0.33 + 2010.55 1.08 Living creatures: animals, birds, etc.

Referencing OTC

L2 31031 0.7 14773 0.29 + 8537.13 1.28 Living creatures: animals, birds, etc.

Animal domain in 2010–2018

Referencing EFC

Item o1 %1 o2 %2 LL LogRatio

L2 19925 0.45 13500 0.35 + 451.81 0.34 Living creatures: animals, birds, etc.

Referencing BNC-SW

L2 19925 0.45 3225 0.33 + 251.25 0.42 Living creatures: animals, birds, etc.

Referencing OTC

L2 19925 0.45 14773 0.29 + 1592.36 0.62 Living creatures: animals, birds, etc.

Through data comparison, we can find that the animal domain in the first period is relatively less prominent than the other three periods. The RF of the third period is the highest, with LL values in the 2010-8538 interval, then the fourth period with LL values in the 251-1593 interval, and then the second period with LL values in the 220-1251 interval.

Plant domain in the four periods

Below is the Plant domain data of CCFT with BNC-SW, EFC, OTC as reference corpora, respectively:

Plant domain in 1979–1989

Referencing BNC-SW

Referencing EFC

L3 4717 0.28 5437 0.14 + 1188.62 1.01 Plants

Referencing OTC

L3 4717 0.28 6771 0.13 + 1518.04 1.1 Plants

Plant domain in 1990–1999

Referencing EFC

L3 7920 0.25 5437 0.14 + 1133.75 0.85 Plants

Referencing OTC

L3 7920 0.25 6771 0.13 + 1550.77 0.94 Plants

Referencing BNC

not statistically significant

Plant domain in 2000–2009

Referencing EFC

L3 12861 0.29 5437 0.14 + 2163.88 1.04 Plants

Referencing OTC

L3 12861 0.29 6771 0.13 + 2922.47 1.14 Plants

Referencing BNC-SW

L3 12861 0.29 2439 0.25 + 46.53 0.21 Plants

Plant domain in 2010–2018

Referencing EFC

L3 12788 0.29 5437 0.14 + 2027.86 1.01 Plants

Referencing **OTC**

L3 12788 0.29 6771 0.13 + 2754.33 1.11 Plants

Referencing **BNC-SW**

L3 12788 0.29 2439 0.25 + 33.72 0.18 Plants

Through the statistical data, we can find that plant domain is a key domain in each of the four periods. Even in the second period with the lowest saliency, the LL value reached 293.05. The plant concept is the most prominent in the fourth period (2010–2018), LL value reaching 2470.19.

With a domain analysis of the semantically tagged corpus data, it is found that animals and plants are key concepts in the corpus of Chinese Fiction Translation in the four decades (CCFT), in sharp contrast with OTC, the translational fiction corpus of other source languages, and EFC, the Balanced Corpus of English Original Fiction. In terms of relative frequency and log-likelihood, the animal domain is the most prominent in the third period (2000–2009), and the plant domain is the most prominent in the fourth period (2010–2018), i.e., the “rustic atmosphere” embodied in the construction of animal and plant images not only exists in the four periods, but also has no diminishing tendency in the translated Chinese Fiction.

In order to clarify the framing effect of animal and plant concepts on the “rusticness” of translated Chinese fiction, we will examine the distribution of specific animal and plant words, respectively. EXCEL is used to obtain the target words from the concordance lines of the CCFT, and then Antconc is used to retrieve the word forms, and the distribution data of top target words are shown in Table 4.

As the table shows, 10 of the 20 most frequent and prominent animal words in CCFT are HORSE, DOG, GOAT, CHICKEN, PIG, EGG, BARK, DONKEY, OX, and MULE, accounting for 35.4% of all animal words. They are all obvious signs of family and agricultural production in traditional Chinese rural society. Among them, pigs, cattle, sheep, horses, chicken, and dogs constitute the group of “Six Domestic Animals” (六畜) in rural China, accounting for 30.21% of all animal words. Cattle, horses, donkeys, and mules are closely related to the production and transportation of the Chinese agricultural society, accounting for 16.17% of all animal words. Sheep, chicken, pig, and egg are the main sources of protein food in rural areas, accounting for 13.84% of all animal words. Statistics show that the animal words that account for the largest proportion of all animal words in CCFT are clear markers of the Chinese rural society.

Next, we will examine the specific distribution of plant words (Table 5).

By observing the keyword data in the above table, we can find that tree, flower, grass, leaf, bamboo, garden/vegetable garden, (generally) plant, seed, willow, and root are the top ten plant words that mark rural scenes. As mentioned above, the Farming & Horticulture domain of rural agriculture has also reached a high degree of keyness, with a LL value of 812.66 when referencing EFC.

Based on the above data analysis, it can be concluded that the English translation of Chinese fiction from 1979 to 2018 is characterized by “rusticness” embodied in

Table 4 The top 20 animal words in CCFT

N	Word	Freq.	%	Lemmas
1	HORSE	228	11.59	horse [127] horses[101]
2	DOG	106	5.39	dog[64] dogs[42]
3	GOAT	104	5.29	goat[85] goats[19]
4	CHICKEN	68	3.46	chicken[27] chickens[41]
5	ANIMAL	66	3.36	animal[25] animals[41]
6	PIG	55	2.8	pig[29] pigs[26]
7	SHELL	55	2.8	shell[17] shells[38]
8	BIRD	52	2.64	bird[20] birds[32]
9	TIGER	47	2.39	tiger[41] tigers[6]
10	EGG	45	2.29	egg[14] eggs[31]
11	BARK	40	2.03	bark[21] barked[7] barking[12]
12	INSECT	39	1.98	insect[6] insects[33]
13	DONKEY	33	1.68	donkey[18] donkeys[15]
14	OX	33	1.68	ox[26] oxen[7]
15	FISH	32	1.63	fish [32]
16	BUTTERFLY	30	1.53	butterfly [30]
17	CROW	29	1.47	crow[11] crowed[6] crowing[4] crows[8]
18	TAIL	29	1.47	tail[24] tails[5]
19	MULE	24	1.22	mule[12] mules[12]
20	CAT	22	1.12	cat[14] cats[8]

the images or concepts of animals and plants, which is in sharp contrast with English original fiction (EFC) and translated English fiction from other source languages (OTC). Moreover, according to the relevant data of the four periods, this remarkable feature does not show a gradual weakening trend with the changes of history and with the influence of different incoming western literary movements—sometimes dominant.

3 The Rustic Literariness of Translated Chinese Fiction

In Chinese fiction translated into English as presented by sinologist translators, the images of animals and plants provide the “rustic” scene of literary narrative, or engage it with rustic atmosphere.

Then, what is the specific role of these animal and plant words in literary narrative? Are they just offering a “rustic” scene where a story takes place? What role do they play in the construction of literariness? To answer these questions, we need to further

Table 5 The top 20 Plant words in CCFT

1	2632	TREE-TRUNK	tree	1544	trees	1088				
2	1607	FLOWER	flower	658	flowered	16	Flowers	933		
2'	812	BLOSSOM	blossom	172	blossomed	26	Blossoming	21	blossoms	593
2''	213	BLOOM	bloom	98	bloomed	40	Blooming	51	blooms	24
3	1039	GRASS	grass	984	grasses	55				
3'	412	STRAW	straw	406	straws	6				
4	714	LEAVE	leaves	714						
4'	306	LEAF	leaf	305	leafs	1				
5	736	GARDEN	garden	688	gardens	48				
6	518	BAMBOO	bamboo	496	bamboos	22				
7	456	PLANT	plant	154	planting	4	Plants	298		
8	374	SEED	seed	110	seeds	264				
9	366	ROOT	root	120	rooted	50	Rooting	8	roots	188
10	340	WILLOW	willow	262	willows	78				
11	231	POTATO	potato	88	potatoes	143				
12	224	STALK	stalk	48	stalked	18	Stalking	3	stalks	155
13	212	ROSE	rose	144	roses	68				
14	176	LOTUS	lotus	176						
15	169	PINE	pine	169						
16	169	REED	reed	52	reeds	117				
17	165	APPLE	apple	75	apples	90				
18	157	GROVE	grove	144	groves	13				
19	156	WEED	weed	16	weeds	140				
20	146	ALMOND								

explore the context of these animal and plant words in relationship with other domains or domain matrices.

3.1 *Rusticness and the Great Chain of Being*

In light of cognitive linguistics, the matrix of life domain constituted by the animal and plant concepts is, more importantly, a link in the Great Chain of being, which ranges over the full gamut of forms of being in the universe, and which provides a cognitive framework for literary narrative (Lakoff and Turner 1989).

The Great Chain is a scale of forms of being—human, animal, plant, inanimate object—and consequently a scale of the properties that characterize forms of being—reason, instinctual behavior, biological function, physical attributes, and so on. Commonly, the Great Chain of Being is taught as background to literature and

the history of ideas, as essential to an understanding of the worldviews of classical authors. In a larger sense, the Great Chain of Being is a cognitive model that we use to make sense of, and impose order on, the universe. It is a cognitive framework for literary construction and has a powerful influence on the construction of literary images and literary expressions (Lakoff and Turner 1989, 170–176).

e.g.,

He is a fox. (human-animal)

He is iron-hearted. (human-inanimate object)

In the two examples, metaphors are constructed along the scale of forms of being, and with the mappings between human and animal and between human and inanimate object constructed, respectively, we are able to understand the human characters in terms of the features of animals and inanimate objects.

Based on the Great Chain of Being, sometimes we also understand and recognize those low-level forms of existence from the perspective of human beings. For example, food can be understood as having a certain character, such as “unpretentious” wine, “tempting” dessert, “bold” perfume, etc. Animal life domain is one of the most complex cognitive domains for us to understand the non-human existence form from the human point of view. We usually use human characteristics to describe and understand animal characteristics metaphorically. For example, the animal schema about pigs contains dirty, chaotic, and rude features, which are metaphorical elements.

Examples above are conventional examples of metaphors involving the Great Chain of Being, in the expressions of which human attributes can be used to understand the attributes of lower-order things in the chain.

With the Great Chain of Being, we can place Chinese fiction and its translation works in the common field of world literature, observe the image construction along the hierarchy of the chain, and conduct comparative studies across languages and cultures based on a common cognitive model or framework. Next, we will explore the characteristics of the cognitive construction of animal and plant images in the CCFT (Chinese fiction translation corpus) within the framework.

3.2 Metaphors in the Surrounding Context Corpus of Animal Words

For examining the metaphorical construction of animal and plant images, we need to look at the surrounding context. The surrounding context corpora of animal and plant words, which consist of concordance lines of animal and plant words (80 characters on the left and right), respectively, were uploaded to Wmatrix 4.0 for further analysis. The Wmatrix platform enables us to look into the variety of key cognitive domains in the surrounding context.

With BNC-SW as reference corpus, the key surrounding domains of animal concepts in the CCFT were revealed and listed as follows:

(1) Emotional domains in sequence of saliency

Item	o1	%1	o2	%2	LL	LogRatio	
E3-	778	0.31	1647	0.17	+ 167.63	0.85	Violent/Angry
E5-	402	0.16	757	0.08	+ 119.04	1.01	Fear/shock
E5 +	74	0.03	134	0.01	+ 24.05	1.07	Bravery
E5 ++	20	0	0	0	+ 6.28	3.93	Bravery
E4.1-	330	0.13	979	0.1	+ 14.64	0.36	Sad

(2) Physiological domains in sequence of saliency

Item	o1	%1	o2	%2	LL	LogRatio	
B1	4461	1.75	5489	0.57	+ 2878.38	1.63	Anatomy and physiology
B2-	476	0.19	1275	0.13	+ 40.34	0.51	Disease
B4-	8	0	2	0	+ 16.04	3.93	Dirty

(3) Social domains in sequence of saliency

Item	o1	%1	o2	%2	LL	LogRatio	
S2	1093	0.43	2896	0.3	+ 98.04	0.52	People
S2.1	494	0.19	1364	0.14	+ 35.36	0.46	People: Female
S3-	2	0	0	0	+ 6.28	3.93	Relationship
S3.2	221	0.09	508	0.05	+ 36.35	0.73	Relationship: Intimacy and sex

(4) Other domains

Item	o1	%1	o2	%2	LL	LogRatio	
X3.2	999	0.39	1271	0.13	+ 615	1.58	Sensory: Sound
X3.4	1280	0.5	2795	0.29	+ 250.46	0.8	Sensory: Sight
A1.1.2	324	0.13	815	0.08	+ 37.23	0.6	Damaging and destroying
L1-	769	0.3	1585	0.16	+ 179.25	0.88	Dead

An analysis of the surrounding context corpus of animal words reveals a variety of key cognitive domains like Emotional, Sensory, People, and Relationship, which are mostly abstract domains associated with human beings, and lead us to speculate that the target corpus may contain mappings along the Great Chain, especially mappings from animals to human beings. To further verify this speculation, specific

metaphorical expressions need to be extracted from the corpus, and for this purpose metaphorical triggers need to be identified with corpus tools.

It is found that in the key concept list of the surrounding context corpus referencing BNC, Degree ranks the 7th, which is very prominent. The data line is as follows:

Item	o1	%1	o2	%2	LL	LogRatio
A13	270	0.11	0	0.00	+	847.57 11.00 Degree

In the Degree domain, “as...as” is the most frequent item as compared to “more...than” etc., which is a conceptual metaphor trigger or signal (Tan 2016, 99). With an analysis of the “as...as” construction in the Degree concordance lines based on the metaphor identification procedure developed by Pragglejaz Group (2007, 3), a variety of animal metaphors in CCFT can be identified.

First, there are image metaphors that refer to the color, appearance, speech, hardness, weight, etc., with animal features mapping onto the inanimate features of things or human beings.

(1) Color metaphors

E.g., as pale as a fish’s belly/as red as a monkey’s ass/His hair had been as red as pig’s liver

(2) Layout or appearance metaphors

E.g., as closely arrayed as fish scales or swarming bees/as coarse as pig bristles/as crooked as the tail of the Mongol ox/as jagged as scattered dog’s teeth/as filthy as a pig/and I never cleaned/as lousy/as filthy as a pig/as matted as a magpie’s nest/as bare as a newly plucked chicken/as gaudy as a butterfly/as weather-beaten as bark/as hoarse as tree bark/as messy as a birds nest/as neat and tidy as a groom/The yellow plateau resembles a wind-dried skeleton/and its insides are as pitted as an ants’ nest/as swollen as spring silkworms about to spin their cocoons/they looked like they would burst if you touched them/as tiny as a fly’s legs/as minute as fine animal hair

(3) Speed metaphors

E.g., as fast as a trotting horse/Time limped by as slowly as a decrepit ox pulling a broken cart

(4) Hardness and weight metaphors

E.g., as hard as hog bristles/as hard as a mule’s hooves/as light as a feather/as light as a sparrow/as light as the wings of a cicada/as lightly as a little bird

Second, along the Great Chain of Being, there are emotional metaphors, which endow animals with human emotions.

(1) Anxiety metaphors, using the images of ants, dog, pig, rabbit, fish, etc.

E.g., as anxious as an ant in a hot pot/as anxious as an ant on a hot frying pan/as anxious as ants in a hot wok/As restless as a sow in heat/Wufu was as restless as a

sow in heat and kept muttering to himself/as restless as an ant on a hot frying pan/As flustered as a dog who has lost his way home/As flurried as a fish who has escaped the net/as nervous as a rabbit/He felt as desperate as an ant trapped in a hot wok

(2) Fear metaphors, using the images of rat/mouse, sheep, chicken, etc.

E.g., as frightened as a little mouse/as frightened as the rats/as terrified as a mouse/as timid as sheep/as timid as sheep or chickens they find/But the real proof was in the eyes/which darted around as if wanting to take in everything while daring to look at nothing/like those of a cornered rat/the girls and their clients must have been as startled as a flock of sheep suddenly encountering a pack of wolves./

(3) Happiness metaphors, using the images of fish and clam, etc.

E.g., as happy as a clam/as happy as fish in water/Yang gave her his word/and they were as happy together as two fish sporting in the water

(4) Loneliness metaphors

E.g., as lonely as a caged dog

Third, there are a variety of physiological metaphors.

E.g., Strangely enough, however, those concubines, who in other homes were as fertile as hens and ducks/as barren as spayed sows or bitches/as strong as a calf/as mighty as leopards/as powerful as a galloping horse/as strong as a calf/as strong as a leopard/as strong as a young ox/as limp as a dying rabbit/Whenever he returned home/he felt as frail and vulnerable as a silkworm that had just shed its cocoon

Fourth, there are personality metaphors.

E.g., as fierce as tigers or eagles/as docile as a lamb/as stubborn as a donkey/as stubborn as a mule/as stupid as pigs/as sturdy as those of a workhorse

Fifth, there are social relationship metaphors.

E.g., as coquettish as monkeys/sweet dates as inseparable as fish from water

Sixth, there are generic-specific metaphors.

E.g., those who become men among men are as rare as phoenix feathers and unicorn horns/they would catch him as easily as a turtle in a jar/as easily as an eagle grabbing a chick/when I was in the army I could kill a man as easily as an ant/as busy as a mule pulling a millstone

Lastly, there are a variety of perception and mental metaphors.

(1) mapping visual and tactile features of animals

E.g., he was as shiny as the horns of an old bull/as slippery as live fish/as skinny as a monkey/as skinny as a praying mantis/as slender as a water snake swayed past/as slippery as an eel/as slippery as live fish/a young man with a pimply face and a nose as flat as a calf's/covered with sweat.

(2) mapping auditory features of poultry, kitten, fish, cat, ox, mosquito, etc.

E.g., as noisy as a poultry farm/as peaceful as a kitten/as quiet as a cat/as silent as a school of fish, as silently as a fish he leaves me/Her voice became as soft as a little chick's/in a voice as soft as a mosquito/Five said in a voice as faint as a mosquito/in a voice as steady as an ox/as cacophonous as a chicken farm/

(3) mapping olfactory features onto abstract human characters

E.g., not as chaffly as common goose, more sedate than cat, more nutritious than rat, less demonic than weasel, and more common than lynx. Our meat tops the charts

(4) mental metaphors

E.g., as carefully as a circus goat on a tight wire/as meticulously as a bird building its nest/It seemed like only yesterday, but now, suddenly, Huzhu had become as enigmatic as a river turtle./You're accountable for everything you say, so don't start going after people as indiscriminately as a mad dog!

3.3 *Metaphors in the Surrounding Context Corpus of Plant Words*

The surrounding context corpus of plants does not form valuable conceptual connections like that of animals. However, when referencing BNC-SW, we still find that Degree is a prominent concept/domain, ranking sixth in the key concept list of the surrounding context corpus of plant domain:

Item	O1	%1	O2	%2	LL	LogRatio
A13	219	0.12	0	0.00	+	802.12 11.16 Degree

The same exploration procedure is repeated with the plant domain, and no lesser variety of metaphors is found.

Based on the Great Chain of Being, metaphors triggered by "as...as" map plant images to various aspects of human characteristics, including physical, physiological, emotional characteristics, appearance and temperament, life and perception features, etc. Examples are as follows:

(1) Using plants to metaphorically describe human body features

E.g., his head was as big as a willow basket/His withered body was as thin as a straw swaying in a whistling wind/as thin as winter twigs/he was as skinny as a bamboo shoot/She extended her slender fingers, as fine as mist-wreathed bamboo shoots pointing to the heavens/The city mayor's face appeared as small as an apple,/he becomes as fat as a pumpkin/Her form as lithe as a willow and in a breeze

(2) Using plants to metaphorically describe facial features

E.g., his face turned as red as the pumpkins/as red as a blossom in spring/his face was now as green as a spring bud.

(3) Using plants to metaphorically describe the human perceptual features

E.g., as smooth as sesame-seed glutinous rice dumplings/As stiff as dried mushrooms/Chen Di’s face was as rough and pale as hemp paper./

(4) Using plants to metaphorically describe the beauty, alluring and pure temperament of a woman

E.g., The girls are as pretty as flowers/a daughter who is as fair as jade and as pretty as a flower./Without leggings, they would be as unsightly as a flower with no leaves around it/As captivating as a flower/As lovely as a flower or a piece of jade/Her face as lovely as a petal on a stream/As graceful as a tall narcissus/saw the face of Fenghuang, as pure as an apricot blossom/What would be the fate of a girl—as pure and delicate as a flower pistil/the girls... had to be as clean as a flower/as clean as a magnolia blossom, not a hint of anything unclean./they want to help them make their characters as beautiful as gardens/closer scrutiny revealed that she was as faded as her flowers.

(5) Using plants to metaphorically describe human vitality and motion features

E.g., as ephemeral as a delicate flower/Tiankuan turned fifty, though he couldn’t figure out how he’d managed to live this long/what kind of guts filled his belly. He was as lively as a tree stump/In the glow of dawn her smile was as fresh as a new leaf./My legs felt as light as grass, and every step bounced up as if the ground were a spring/As feeble as a piece of straw/You were as free as a dandelion in a field/He could be as still as a tree or float motionless like a cloud in his room./

(6) Using plants to metaphorically describe people’s perception, emotion, and ethical characteristics

E.g., Genzhu’s smile grew as thick as tree bark./That backward glance, as she was walking away—a glance as rich as a garden overflowing with sensory delights—made their hearts flutter and kept them up at night./he looked as pitiful as a leaf caught in the wind/You shore people are as rotten as your potatoes.

In the above four cases, smile is compared to thick bark, people’s glance to gardens, person to a leaf and people to rotten potatoes, forming complex metaphors, which map human perception, ethics, and emotional experience onto plants.

Examples of auditory perception metaphors are: in a voice as rough as tree bark/in a voice as hoarse as tree bark/You listen to the voices floating around you, as enviously as a tree trunk staring at falling leaves.

Here, the tangible plant features are used to describe the invisible voice, which can be said to be an ingenious application of the traditional rhetoric—synesthesia.

Finally, there are examples of specific-generic metaphors, that is, using specific instances to metaphorically explain general or natural laws, such as:

E.g., As for the chances of my family ever returning to Ding Village, it was about as likely as a pile of leaves hopping back on to the tree they had fallen from./Exactly! We'll soon have him in our power! And as another old saying goes, he'll be as helpless as falling flowers and running streams./Because when a person from the lowliest class of all performs the noblest deed of all, it is fully as remarkable as a magic mushroom growing out of a dunghill, and it deserves to be publicized./The women gathered together as easily as pine nuts.

All in all, we can find diversified cross-domain mappings of animal and plant images with corpus data extracted from the CCFT. The corpus-based analysis is far from being exhaustive, yet we can see colorful metaphors based on the Great Chain of being, which fully reflect the rich imagination of the Chinese fiction as presented by sinologist translators. Therefore, it is argued that the animal and plant images or concepts are not simply indexes of the rustic environment, but are essential in the construction of the literariness of translated Chinese fiction. Based on the cognitive framework of Great Chain of Being, the metaphorical construction of the animal and plant images in the English translation of Chinese fiction can be interpreted in a broader sense of literariness. When the Chinese folk culture endows animals and plants with such human characteristics as intelligence, loyalty, courage, rudeness, beauty and changeability, and when the authors put the endowment into practice in their literary creation, the readers are led to metaphorically understand the attributes and behaviors of animals and plants in terms of human attributes, and also conversely. In this sense, any criticism that neglects or denies the literariness of Chinese Fiction and its translation is partial. If the rustic literariness presented in translation is not appreciated by the English readership, then we could only say that there is no universally appreciated literary values, or universally appreciated literary values need to be found elsewhere.

4 Conclusion

McDougall (2003, 30–31) pointed out that few literary specialists seem to have acknowledged the huge conceptual gap between Western critical methodologies and non-Western literary texts. Despite the indisputable influence of Western literature on twentieth-century Chinese literature, the position of literary texts in the previous two thousand years of Chinese history is unique to China, and even today it continues to enjoy a significance which is almost incomprehensible in the West. McDougall (2003, 38) urged western scholars to be alert to the way in which modern Chinese literature and its criticism might inform world literary theory and criticism. In this paper, we have used empirical methods to prove that the old impression of rustiness of the translated Chinese fiction is still true to the fact, but the associations of rustiness to bad literariness are problematic or eurocentric. Borrowing from eco-translatology, we may consider to change the term from “rustic literariness” to a more positive one,

that is, “eco-literariness”, which proves to be a special feature of Chinese fiction as presented by sinologist translators.

Finally, there are some implications of the present research for future Cognitive Translation Studies and corpus-based translation studies. Cognitive Translation Studies can and need to be related to other approaches or fields of translation studies, which may lead to insightful findings as to important notions or core models in translation studies broadly defined. Literary translation is surely an important field for cognitive exploration, and corpus-based methods can be more cognitively revealing or no less revealing than other empirical methods. In this research the corpus-based methods enable a diachronic perspective and a holistic study of the rustic literariness of the Chinese fiction translation. Via an adequate variety of reference corpora and the semantic tagging tool of Wmatrix, the holistic and salient cognitive features of the target corpus are revealed. The advantage of corpus-based methods lies in that by using big data and text mining methods we can focus on the prominent or even unique features of a translation text, avoiding repetitive research around non-prominent and minor features in case studies, and thus avoiding over-generalization and too subjective deductions.

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Interpreting Studies

Pause in Sight Translation: A Longitudinal Study Focusing on Training Effect



Jing Fang and Xiaomin Zhang

Abstract Pause is often found among interpreters, especially among student interpreters, and could be an indication of a stressful cognitive process during interpreting. Research in sight translation has shown that syntactic and lexical difficulties in the source texts could cause hesitation pauses, but how training would impact student interpreters' pauses during sight translation has not received focused attention. In this project, we aim to gain insights into the training impact on trainee interpreters, in particular, on their pauses during sight translation. The paper reports the findings of a longitudinal study over a period of two semesters, comparing the salient pauses (2 s or longer) during sight translation by a group of interpreting students with that of a control group. Participants were asked to sight translate texts containing nominal groups of varying complexity, which have been identified as a challenge in translation from English into Chinese, while their voice data were recorded and later assessed by independent markers. Salient pauses of varying lengths are identified and grouped as dependent variables. Syntactic complexity, Experiment time, and Group are identified as independent variables. Mixed-effects modeling was used to investigate if students majoring in translation and interpreting (T&I) show a different pause pattern from their non-T&I counterparts, and if training has had an impact on the occurrence of pauses. Furthermore, the grammatical positions of the over-long pauses (5 s or longer) have been analyzed to explore possible explanations behind the occurrence.

Keywords Sight translation · Pause · Training effect · Syntactic complexity · Grammatical pause

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1 Introduction

Sight Translation (ST) involves a dichotomous rendition of a text from source language to target language and from a written to an oral format (Čeňková 2010). ST has been recognized as a type of simultaneous interpreting (SI) as they both have the component of simultaneous oral output (Herbert 1952). Thus, the sight translator as a public speaker is required to “instantly and smoothly deliver the contents at a speed appropriate for natural oral production” (Čeňková 2010, 320) or as recommended by Angelelli (1999), s/he should sound like reading a target language document. The requirement of fluent delivery is one of the critical criteria in quality¹ assessment of the interpreting performance (see Rennert 2010; Viezzi 1996). For example, in the Certified Interpreter test in Australia (NAATI),² fluency is included in the marking rubrics (ST is one of the task components in this test, see NAATI 2020). Experimental study has shown that lower fluency even cause audience to doubt the accuracy of an interpretation and thus question the quality of it (Rennert 2010). Even though the concept of fluency is elusive without widely accepted definition (Pradas Macías 2006; Rennert 2010), it could be generally described as a prosodic feature of spontaneous speech complexed by a variety of factors which relate to the impression of fluency (Rennert 2010). These factors include pauses, vowel and consonant lengthening, false starts, repetitions, and other types of disfluencies. Delivering a smooth flow of speech does not mean speak without any pauses and disfluencies. A monotonous interpretation is by no means welcomed by the audience even if it is equipped with high accuracy (Cecot 2001). Politi (1999, 200, cited in Cecot 2001) expressed a similar idea that intonation and pauses are “oral punctuation” that neutralize the orality of discourse and help to attract audience’s attention. Therefore, the interpreters must be “duly conversant with the use of oral speech, first and foremost intonation and pause management” (Viaggio 1992, 311). Pauses are believed to not only have positive effect on audience’s reception but also alleviate the stress of interpreters by providing time for discourse planning (Hargrove and McGarr 1994), if used strategically.

As one of the compositions of fluency, pauses could pose negative effect on the evaluation of fluency when their occurrences are not normal. Goldman-Eisler (1968) considers pauses hinder reception when “a large proportion of pauses in spontaneous speech does not fit in with the linguistic structure and does not seem to serve communication” (Goldman-Eisler 1968, 14). Pauses over 2 s (2 s) are perceived as salient as they are more likely to have negative influence on the assessment of fluency and quality of a SI (Lee 2012; Pradas Macías 2006). If a pause is too long, for instance, over 5 s, then it risks of losing attention from the audience (Aguilar 2000).

In addition to these rhetorical and communicative aspects, pauses reflect cognitive activities of the speaker. In speech, “time of vocal action and time of silence” alternate (Goldman-Eisler 1968, 11). During this silent period, cognitive effort demanding

¹Needless to say, quality is an elusive concept in interpretation, see Viezzi (1996, 96).

²<https://www.naati.com.au/certification/certification-testing/certified-interpreter/#>

activities such as syntactic and lexical planning are carried out (Goldman-Eisler 1961).

ST also has its own features, which differentiate itself from SI and consecutive interpreting (CI): the existence of visual material. Even though the delivery speed is not pressured by a speaker and could be more self-paced, the written source text, instead of fading away after the speaking out as in the SI and CI, constantly presents in front of the interpreters' eyes. This ever-present source text could play a dual role in performing the ST task (Chmiel and Lijewska 2019). For one thing, it may reduce short-memory load for interpreters since they can always revisit the source text whenever they want to. For another, this visually available material might pose additional difficulties to interpreters due to interference. "It should be more difficult to retain only the meaning of the message when the words that carry it are in black and white in front of one's eyes," as said by Brady (1989, 182). This visual source language interference is presumed to be significant as it requires for attention division between written source text and verbal target text (Chmiel and Lijewska 2019). Therefore, ST "requires more effort to be put into attaining independence from the source language text than is the case with written translation and interpretation" (Martin 1993, 404) and particularly so when the tasks involved are syntactically complex. For example, sight interpreters "may need more time and effort to understand complex written sentences with embedded clauses while translating aloud at a smooth pace," as proposed by Agrifoglio (2004, 46). On top of that, grammatical and syntactical differences between languages, more often than not, pose challenges to interpreters (Wang and Li 2015) as they may get entangled in syntactic restructuring. These cognitive struggles could be reflected in pauses. Following this line of reasoning, it seems reasonable to assume that in ST, interpreters may pause more frequently and more saliently when confronted with syntactically complex structure.

However, little has been known about how texts of different syntactic complexities affect student interpreters' pause patterns, and whether and how training would make a difference to these patterns. This research thus aims to answer these questions by conducting a longitudinal study to investigate the situation of a group of participants' salient pauses pre- and post-training. Section 2 starts with a general review of current studies on pauses in interpreting as a form of spontaneous speech with a focus on the taxonomy of pauses (Sect. 2.1). This section also briefly discusses the relationship between pauses and hesitation phenomena. Section 2.2 gears the discussion to pauses in interpreting and ST. Section 2.3 deals with syntactic processing and ST training, pointing out the possibility that pauses could be used to investigate training effect tested in different syntactic complexity. Methodologies of this study are discussed in Sect. 3, where research questions will be introduced, based on which details of the experimental design are described. Section 4 reports the findings and discussion. Conclusion, limitations, and future avenues are summarized in Sect. 5.

2 Pauses in Spontaneous Speech, Interpreting, and ST

2.1 Taxonomy of Pauses

Spontaneous speech is characterized by pauses and other non-fluencies (see Cecot 2001). Defined by Hargrove and McGarr, pauses “are physically represented as a period in time in which no acoustic signal occurs for at least 200–270 ms” (Hargrove and McGarr 1994, 109). However, pauses could be vocalized, such as “umm” and “ahh.” Čeňková’s (1989) perception of pauses also includes noticeable changes in intonation and rhythm or the conjuncture of semantically unrelated items (cited in Tissi 2000). The way of defining and measuring pauses could be different among researchers (Rennert 2010). In this study, pauses have been perceived as interruptions of the flow of speech following Stuckenberg and O’Connell (1988).

Pauses in spontaneous speech have been widely studied as reflected in the heterogeneous categorization of pauses. Simone (1990) differentiates two types of pauses in spontaneous speech, namely, individual pauses and functional pauses. While individual pauses occur as occasional silent moments carrying communicative value, functional pauses locate at grammatical junctures (also called grammatical pauses by Pichler 1995, cited in Cecot 2001). However, there is this type of pauses, which are not intention-driven nor occurring at grammatical junctures. They are interrupting elements for audience. They can take the form of silent moments or filled with vowel or consonant lengthening. While grammatical pauses follow a hierarchy distribution and pauses at the end of major elements are longer than within elements, hesitation pauses are more spontaneous and have no distribution rules (Pichler 1995, cited in Cecot 2001).

Taking a psycholinguistic approach, Godman-Eisler studied speech production in 1950s and distinguished between breathing pauses and hesitation pauses. Breathing pauses are related to the speakers’ need to breath and hesitation pauses are often caused by cognitive effort required by linguistic production. They are the consequences of lexical or syntactical on-line planning difficulties in linguistic production. Moreover, hesitation pauses indicate the unexpected increase of information in speech (1958). The two types of hesitation phenomena (filled pauses and unfilled pauses) reflect different internal activities. According to Goldman-Eisler (1961): “cognitive activity being accompanied by an arrest of external activity (speech or non-linguistic vocal action) for periods proportionate to the difficulty of the cognitive task, while emotional attitudes would be reflected in vocal activity of instantaneous or explosive nature” (1961, 25). Hieke (1981) also studies the phenomena of hesitation in speech production from an integrated perspective. In his view, hesitations are “an integral part of speech production in the positive sense” (Hieke 1981, 150). They serve the purpose of error prevention. Hesitations could be categorized into “stalls” and “repair” in correspondence with the functions of forestalling and committing errors. Stalls include silent pauses, filled pauses, prospective repeats, and syllabic prolongations; repair includes false starts, retrospective repeats, or bridging.

In line with Godman-Eisler, Maclay and Osgood (1959) categorize pauses into filled and unfilled pauses, and since then enormous attempts have been accumulated on this ground. For instance, Magno Caldognetto et al. (1982) propose a taxonomy of fluency interruptions referred to as “non-fluencies.” Non-fluencies are divided into unfilled pauses and disfluencies. Unfilled pauses could occur at initial décalage with the source text (initial pause), at grammatical junctures (juncture pause) or ungrammatical junctures (clause-internal pause). Disfluencies are further categorized into filled pauses, parenthetical remark and interruptions. Filled pauses denote hesitations while parenthetical remarks signal corrections. Repeats, restructuring and false starts are included as utterance interruptions. Duez (1982) also talks about silent and non-silent pauses in spontaneous speech such as political interviews and casual interviews, and carefully prepared speech such as political speeches. Focusing on the stylistic function of pauses, that is, drawing audience’s attention to what is going to be said, Duez (1982) classifies pauses into silent pause, filled pause, false start, repeat, lengthened syllable, and articulated sequence.

While filled pauses are more related to hesitation, the triggering sources of silence vary. Based on Grosjean’s (1980) assumption of the motivating source of silence, namely, discourse organization, physiological needs of the speaker and the cognitive processes, Avesani and Vayra (1992) categorize pauses into pauses at syntactic boundaries, breathing pauses, and hesitation pauses.

In sum, the categorization could be various according to different aspects of pauses: occurring position, appearing form and functions. Cecot (2001) summarizes all these classifications and proposes a comprehensive and systematic categorization of pauses in SI, as follows in Table 1:

In this classification, Cecot (2001) allocates attention to rhetorical pauses which are missing cases in Magno Caldognetto et al.’s (1982).

Table 1 Cecot’s taxonomy of pause (Cecot 2001)

Non-fluencies		
Unfilled or silent pauses		Disfluencies
Communicative pauses	Non-communicative pauses	Filled pauses, glottal clicks, audible breaths, vowel, and consonant lengthening
Initial décalage	Hesitation pauses (non-grammatical pauses)	Parenthetical sentences
Segmentation pauses		Utterance interruptions:
Rhetorical pauses (grammatical and non-grammatical pauses)		Repeat Restructuring False start

2.2 *Pauses in Interpreting and ST Studies*

In interpreting research, apart from studies on the intricate relationship between pause and fluency or pause and quality assessment as mentioned in Sect. 1 (see Pradas Macías 2006; Rennert 2010), studies on pauses in interpreting are often taking comparative approaches. Some of them are interested in the characteristics and motivations of pauses in the target text in comparison to the source text (Ahrens 2005; Alexieva 1988; Lee 1999; Pöchhacker 1995; Tissi 2000; Wang and Li 2015). Findings yielded from these studies seem to be rather contradictory in terms of the frequency and duration of pauses. While Alexieva (1988) finds fewer and shorter pauses in student interpreters' interpretation of short texts, Ahrens's (2005) study shows that the fewer pauses in the target texts actually take larger portion of the total target text time. This is in line with the views of Lee (1999), who finds the speech portion (the ratio between speaking time and total SI time) of interpreters is smaller than that of speakers in the source text, leaving more space for pauses. Lee (1999) explains that interpreting is a cognitively demanding process involves listening comprehension, "converting, uttering, and monitoring" SI output, all requiring processing capacity (Lee 1999, 264). In a descriptive analysis, Tissi (2000) categorizes non-fluencies in target text and source text according to his proposed taxonomy and finds that non-fluencies in the source text and target text don't follow a systematic correspondence, but are certainly related. Silent pauses in target texts occur less frequently but altogether longer than in source texts, confirming the findings of Ahrens (2005) and of Lee (1999). Furthermore, source texts contain marginally more occurrences of grammatical pauses, while the distribution of pauses across different duration intervals in source texts and target texts show a parallel tendency: both of them have higher number of pauses in the intervals between 0.25 s and 1.25 s than from 1.25 s to 2.50 s. From 2.50 s on, only target texts have a remarkable incidence of pauses, which could be ascribed to SI-specific constraints and students' unbalanced attention sharing and poor comprehension. Supportive evidence also stems from Chinese-English SI performed by expert and trainee interpreters (Wang and Li 2015). Wang and Li (2015) compare pauses in the source original text and participants' interpretation to explore the characteristics of pauses in this specific SI task. Participants are asked to recall the motivations of pauses in a retrospective interview so as to unveil the motivations of pauses, another goal of this study. The average number of pauses in target texts is smaller than that in the source speech, in line with Alexieva (1988) and Tissi (2000). The mean duration of pauses in Chinese-English SI is longer in the target texts than in the source texts, confirming the findings of Ahrens (2005) and of Tissi (2000). Also, it is found that pauses follow a hierarchical distribution in correspondence to syntactic complexity. That is to say, the majority (about 50%) of pauses occur at sentence junctures, either before sentences or before clauses (Cecot 2001; Grosjean and Collins 1979; Yang and Deng 2011) while 22.5–25.7% of the pauses occur inside phrases and are deemed as unnatural pauses. From the retrospective interviews with participants combined with bilingual transcripts, the different pause patterns in source texts and target texts are ascribed to SI-specific

motivations, mainly waiting (waiting for certain input before output), formulating (searching for appropriate expressions), and restructuring (restructuring of output due to grammatical and syntactic incongruence between Chinese and English).

Wang and Li (2015) also focus their attention on the differences between novice and expert interpreters' pause patterns. In this study, compared with trainee interpreters, experienced interpreters are better at the control of pauses and more proficient in avoiding long pauses that may jeopardize communication. As a consequence, their pauses tend to be fewer and shorter. Moreover, with the development of expertise, pauses tend to occur at major syntactic junctures. In terms of the reasons priming pauses, experts have more pauses resulting from monitoring production and applying strategies whereas trainees have more pauses related to formulating, waiting, conceptualizing, and attention splitting (Wang and Li 2015). Comparison of fluency of pauses has also been conducted between traditional consecutive mode and Consec-simul interpreting model with notes (Orlando 2014). Orlando (2014) finds improved fluency in the latter model, indicating that interpreters are less pressured and more comfortable in performing in this mode. Mead (2000) compares trainee interpreters' control of pauses as a manifestation of fluency in their language A and B in CI. The findings show that filled pauses and the total number of pauses are significantly higher in B language (English) than A language (Italian). Participants' explanations of their pauses concern not only language-related difficulties, but also note-reading problems and logic doubts. Mead (2000) concludes that fluency depends on both linguistic knowledge and extralinguistic competence, such as how to use note and listen analytically. Cecot (2001) compares interpreters' personal perception of their non-fluencies including pauses with the results from target text analysis and finds that interpreters are only aware of the use of hesitation pauses since they denote difficulties they have experienced. The majority of the participants don't remember they have used segmentation and rhetorical pauses while segmentation pauses are the most frequently used ones in their target texts. This study raises the importance for interpreters to pay attention to their delivery in order to find their weaknesses.

Research on pauses in ST is relatively smaller in number compared to that in the other interpreting modes. Interested in the differences on comprehension and production between ST and written translation, Dragsted and Hansen (2009) compare keystroke logging, eye movements, and output quality produced by professional interpreters and translators in these two modalities. Fundamental behavioral differences are found between interpreters and translators in their pauses³ and eye movements. Interpreters are found to be more confident in delivering and produced less pauses whereas translators are found to hesitate more and pause more frequently, even before each word. In a similar vein, Shreve et al. (2011) propose to use speech disfluencies as a window of cognitive processes in ST analogous to keystroke loggings in written translation. Disfluencies measures include unfilled pauses, filled pauses, repetition, and repair. Disfluencies data indicate visual interference of the source text as disfluencies in the second half of the target text increased after the midpoint.

³In Dragsted and Hansen's (2009) study, pauses have been defined as interruptions in the writing or speech process lasting 2 s and more, to facilitate the comparison between written and oral output.

Disfluencies are also related to syntactical complexity, but this effect is hard to tell due to the masking effect of visual interference. And disfluencies may also signal lexical transfer and syntactic shifts as well as problems of choosing appropriate translation strategies. Similar findings are extracted from Wu's (2019) investigation of university-level students' ST performance in relation to source text characteristics and perceived difficulty. Correlation analysis shows sophisticated lexis and complex syntax are strongly correlated students' difficulty perception, accuracy, and fluency. Analysis of students' reflective journal tells that complex lexical and syntactic features of the text can cause decoding difficulties and cognitive overload, which consequently lead to inaccuracy and disfluencies.

Another eye-tracking study on ST is Ho's (2019). Ho (2019) reports an integrated eye-tracking and corpus-based study investigating how experience influence interpreting behavior during different stages of ST, namely, reading ahead, pausing and oral output. Major differences are found in the oral output stage: experts have less and shorter pauses than trainees and have a more balanced percentage of hesitation and juncture pauses whereas student interpreters have significantly more hesitation pauses than juncture pauses. It implies that interpreters with expertise need less time to retrieve information and produce target texts.

In order to discover the skills that student interpreters need to learn for ST, Lee (2012) examines the differences between student and professional interpreters' ST performance in terms of reading speed, delivery, accuracy, and target text quality. The frequency of pauses is identified as one of the measurements of delivery qualities. Results show that student interpreters generally have longer pauses (≥ 2 s) than professional interpreters and because of this, their delivery time is prolonged. Furthermore, silent pauses and voiced pauses are found to be negatively correlated.

Yang and Deng (2011) investigate novice and experienced interpreters' decision-making process in ST and SI with texts. As one of the four "phrase marks" investigated in this study, pauses and their occurring positions in the output have been compared between the two groups. The tendency is that experienced interpreters pause at appropriate positions, while novice interpreters pause at ungrammatical positions. In terms of pauses over 2 s at syntactic positions (before sentence, before clause, between subject and predicate, between phrases, between predicate and object, within phrase), novice interpreters are found to outnumber experienced interpreters. However, the distribution of these pause positions across "before sentence," "before clause," and "within phrase" show similar patterns between the two groups indicating that with the gaining of professionalism, these three types of pauses will "proportionally" decrease. The major difference between the two groups occurs at the distribution of "between subject and predicate" position. The authors explain that this is because experienced interpreters always get ready before they open their mouth so that they don't pause in the middle.

2.3 *Syntactic Complexity and ST Training Effect*

When working between languages with similar syntactic structures, syntactic processing might be less difficult and more efficient than when the two languages are typologically very different, because interpreters are more frequently forced to resort to restructuring in the latter case (Gernsbacher and Shlesinger 1997; Maier et al. 2017). Ruiz et al.'s (2008) study has shown that in reading for translation, reading times are facilitated when the source and target text have a congruence in syntactic structure. More information has been retained after ST between languages sharing more morphosyntactic features (Viezzi 1989). In interpreting, cognitive load increase when engaged in syntactically asymmetrical language structures, such as from verbal-final constructions in German to verbal-initial language (English) in Seeber and Kerzel's (2011) study, where they find the mean of pupil dilation, the measure of cognitive load, is larger than in structures (verbal-initial constructions) syntactically symmetrical with English. However, Shreve et al. (2010) find no syntactic complexity effect in their study. Fixations (both count and duration) and regressions in their study fail to show overall significant differences between simple and complex sentences. Moreover, efficient processing of syntactic complexity requires interpreting experience (Chmiel and Lijewska 2019; Timarová, Čeňková and Meylaerts 2015). In another project conducted by Chmiel and Lijewska (2019), trainee and professional interpreters were asked to sight translate sentences with different syntactic complexity and their data of translation accuracy, eye movements, and translation time were collected. Results show that object-relative clauses are more difficult to translate than subject-relative clauses as the former contain structures requiring reformulation in the target text. They also find that experienced interpreters are better at dealing with interference from the written text containing object-relative sentences than trainees, and trainees tend to spend more time to translate sentences with this complexity but less time on the source text to avoid interference (Chmiel and Lijewska 2019).

In terms of training effect in ST, to the best of our knowledge, Chmiel and Mazur's (2013) study is the only one to date. They recruited two groups of trainee interpreters, one as beginner trainee interpreters while the other advanced trainee interpreters with one-year training experience apart and asked them to sight translate simple SVO and complex non-SVO sentences from Polish into English. However, the cognitive measurements used (fixation count, fixation duration, observation length) reveal no significant group difference, which implies that one-year training is hardly sufficient to bring any changes in trainee's reading patterns. Clearly more studies are needed to further investigate training effect in more well-designed experiments, for instance from a longitudinal perspective and/or with control group receiving no such training and/or in other language pairs using other measurements (e.g., pauses).

As can be gleaned from the literature mentioned above, in ST, pauses have been used as one of many measurements in these studies, while they have not received much focused attention yet. There are very limited experimental studies investigating syntactic processing in ST and even little research focusing on training effects. This

study aims to bring more insight in these regards by comparing pauses in student interpreters' ST performance with manipulated syntactic complexity during two semesters' training with a control group without training.

3 Methodology

The present study aims to explore three research questions:

1. Does ST training distinguish students studying Translation and Interpreting (T&I) from non-T&I students in terms of the frequency of salient pauses⁴ of different lengths in English-Chinese ST tasks that involve syntactic structures of varying complexity?
2. Do two semesters of training have a significant impact on T&I students in terms of salient pauses during ST?
3. In what grammatical environment do longer pauses (over 5 s) occur? What are the implications for the training of ST?

To explore these questions, a longitudinal project was established where two groups of participants were recruited for ST experiments at two different points in time. The details of the project design are presented below.

3.1 Participants

An ethics approval was granted by the authors' university prior to the recruitment of the participants. Altogether two groups of participants were recruited for the study, an experiment group and a control group. The Experiment Group (E Group) was made up of 17 T&I students who just started their first semester of postgraduate T&I course when the first round of data was collected. The average age of E Group participants was 26 years old. All the participants in the E Group met the following criteria:

- be a native speaker of Chinese
- have a most recent IELTS test (or equivalent) overall score at or above 6.5, and IELTS reading score at or above 7.0
- have been educated in a Mandarin-speaking country or region till Year 11 or later before studying at an Australian university
- be aged between 18 and 35
- have just started T&I training as a new student at the time of the first experiment.

At the time of the first experiment, all the E Group participants were around 4 or 5 weeks into their first semester of T&I study and were doing an introductory

⁴'Salient pause' will be defined in Sect. 3.4.

level interpreting practice unit where ST skills were introduced and practised. 14 E Group participants returned for the second experiment, after receiving 8 months of intensive T&I training including training on sight translation.

Nearly the same criteria were adopted in recruiting participants in the Control Group (C Group), which was also made up of 17 students at the time of the first experiment. The major difference in the selection criteria lies in that students in the C Group must be studying a major other than T&I, and they must not have any previous training background in T&I. All the 17 participants in the C Group were students from the same Australian university as the E Group participants, and their average age was 24 years old. Their majors covered a variety of areas including accounting, engineering, applied linguistics, commerce, international relations, speech and hearing, finance, physics, and business management. All of the 17 participants in the C Group returned for the second experiment 8 months later, but due to technical problems, the recordings of 2 of the participants were corrupted.

In the end, the data of 14 E Group participants and 15 C Group participants are used in the current study.

3.2 *Texts for ST*

Four English texts were selected for participants to sight translate into Mandarin Chinese. These texts were originally retrieved from the websites of a few Australian universities, which provide guiding information for new students on topics such as accommodation, enrollment, and campus security. These are topics that all the participants were familiar with, which would control the potential variable of “background knowledge” that might have an impact on the occurrence of pause if not controlled.

During the process of selection, texts were tested in terms of a number of lexicogrammatical features including text length, clause density, syntactic, and lexical complexity. Coh-Metrix, a computational tool which measures a text’s complexity in terms of various linguistic parameters (see Graesser et al. 2011), was used to check if the selected texts were at a similar level in terms of length, syntactic complexity, and lexical frequency.

After the selection of the four texts, they were manipulated in such a way that two of the texts contain complex nominal group structures whereas the other two texts have simplex nominal group structures only. For each of the two texts with featured complex structures (as “Complex texts”), there are four sentences with nominal groups modified by complicated embedded clauses used in different parts of the text. In contrast, nominal groups in the other two texts (as “Simplex texts”) only have simple embedded clauses in the modification structures. The examples below demonstrate the two different types of structures in nominal group complexity:

Simplex

(1) *also, You Should Report Any Lights [Which Are not Functioning]]to Security Services.*

Complex

(2) *Our On-Campus Housing Provides a Vibrant Community* [[[Where Some Friendships [that You Will Keep Lifelong] Are Formed]]].

As shown in the examples, Example (1) contains a nominal group modified by a simple embedded clause, as indicated within [[]], whereas Example (2) contains a nominal group that is modified by an embedded clause that has further embedding within the structure, as indicated within [[[[]]]. It has been found that an English sentence with a complex nominal group structure as Example (2) poses a potential challenge to translators from English into Chinese (Fang and Wu 2010), as very likely the translator has to make a translation shift and presents the nominal group as a separate clause in Chinese. This is because that, unlike in English where a qualifying element realized by an embedded clause typically comes after the Head noun in the structure as a post-modifier (see Halliday and Matthiessen 2014), in Chinese all the modifying elements including the embedded clause come before the Head noun. The modification structure as such in a Chinese nominal group has limited potential to expand to a highly complex level, as the nominal group may appear very awkward if the embedded modifying clause before the Head noun is structurally complex. Therefore, in the English-Chinese translation, such complex structures, which are common in English nominal groups, are usually reformulated in the translation: the part represented by a complex embedded clause in English is often translated as a separate ranking clause in Chinese to avoid awkwardness (see further in Fang and Wu 2010). In comparison, it is common to have a simple embedded clause in a Chinese nominal group structure, which means a reformulation in translation is less likely to occur.

By manipulating the texts with different nominal group complexities, we hope to create a variable of “syntactic complexity” and investigate if syntactic complexity is a strong variable affecting pause patterns in ST, and if training would bring any significant impact on the situation.

After the texts were finalized, they were trialed by a group of second-semester interpreting students as ST tasks. These students were from the same T&I training program but were not included as participants in the formal data collection. During the trial, students were asked to rate the difficulty level of each text after the ST, and also to identify unfamiliar lexical items that they encountered during the ST. The main reason to take this step was to control the potential variable of “difficult words” that might impact a participant’s understanding of the text if not controlled. As participants would not be allowed to access resources such as internet or dictionaries during the experiment, this potential variable needed to be controlled beforehand. By conducting the trial, we were able to identify a group of “difficult words” that might be unknown to the participants, and meaning explanations of these words were provided to the participants before the experiment started.

3.3 *Experiment*

The experiments took place in an eye-tracking lab, and both the eye data and voice data of the participants were collected at the same time. However, it is important to point out that, due to the limited length and the focus of the current paper, only the voice data will be explored for the current study.

The first experiment took place in March 2018 when participants in the E Group just started their first semester of T&I training. Participants went to the experiment individually following exactly the same procedure. Firstly, the participant would be provided with an interpreting brief which specifies the purpose of the ST. Then the participant would go through a list of “difficult words” and get to know the meanings of these words in the texts. After this step, the first ST text was shown to the participants on a computer screen. Participants’ verbal performance was recorded by a Logitech HD camera attached on top of the computer screen, which was transferred into voice data in mp3 format later. After the participants finished the first ST task, they were given a short break before doing the second task. The computer had been programmed in such a way that all the four texts were randomly selected in each experiment and all the participants got to sight translate one simplex text and one complex text in each experiment in a random order. Eight months later, the participants returned for the second experiment, where they completed the other two texts in a random order.

By the end of the second experiment, all the participants had completed all 4 texts in the ST mode.

3.4 *Identifying and Labeling Pauses*

Following the experiments, all the video recordings were exported and converted into mp3 files. Version 2.3.1 of Audacity, a recording and editing software, was used to process the voice data to identify “salient pauses,” which are those pauses that were sufficiently salient by reason of their duration to be identified quite well by the audience of both native and non-native speakers of a language (see Chiappetta et al. 1987, 105). In identifying the “salient pause,” we follow the standard of Lee (2012) and of Pradas Macías (2006) in the identification process: only those pauses that were longer than 2 s were identified as salient pause, and these pauses included both filled pauses and silent ones. Then the identified pauses were coded in Audacity according to duration. Altogether, these pauses fell into three groups as reflected in the labeling, including: (1) pauses that were 2 s and 4 s in length (labeled as “Pause2_4s”); (2) pauses that were between 4 and 6 s (labeled as “Pause4_6s”); (3) pauses that were longer than 6 s (labeled as “Pause6s_over”). After labeling the pauses, they were counted in terms of frequency. Pauses that occurred at the beginning and the end of a ST task were excluded in the tally.

In order to explore the third research question regarding longer pauses, those longer than 5 s were labeled again according to the grammatical positions where they occurred in the target language output. As a result, these long pauses of 5 s or longer were identified and categorized as “grammatical pause” and “hesitation pause.” A detailed explanation of these two categories will be presented in Sect. 4.3.

3.5 *Marking of Voice Data*

Marking was done after the voice data were collected. Altogether 3 markers were involved in the marking of the ST performance based on the voice data. A marking sheet was developed which considered mainly two factors in marking, including accuracy in language transfer and fluency in delivery. Both factors were given the same weight in the assessment, and the marks range from 0 to 20 with 0 being extremely incompetent and 20 representing extremely competent. Also, a marking workshop was provided for the markers, where they group-marked a few participants using the marking sheet. This was to ensure that all markers would follow the same principles in assessing the ST performance. Following the marking workshop, two major markers conducted the marking of all the voice data independently. For those cases where there was less than 1 mark of difference between the two markers, an average of the two marks became the final mark (labeled as “Mark_overall”) for the participant. For those cases where there was more than 1 mark of difference between the two markers, the third marker stepped in to conduct a third marking. The final mark of each controversial case is the average of the two closest marks given by the markers.

3.6 *Data Analysis*

Results of the frequency counts of the three groups of pauses were entered in a spreadsheet and exported to SPSS for statistical analysis (see IBM 2017). To address the research questions 1 and 2, generalized linear mixed models have been developed to analyze the data. To address the first research question on the comparison of the two groups of participants, two factors are identified as independent variables, including Group (E Group vs. C Group), and Text complexity (Simplex vs. Complex). Meanwhile, participants’ marks are used as a continuous independent covariate, and the model tests the effect of the independent variables on three dependent variables, including Pause2_4s, Pause4_6s, and Pause6s_over. To put into consideration the potential random effects brought by individual differences among participants and among the 4 texts, two random variables are included in the model, including Participants and Texts.

To address the second research question, which is on training effect on E Group, a similar model has been developed with the same dependent variables and same

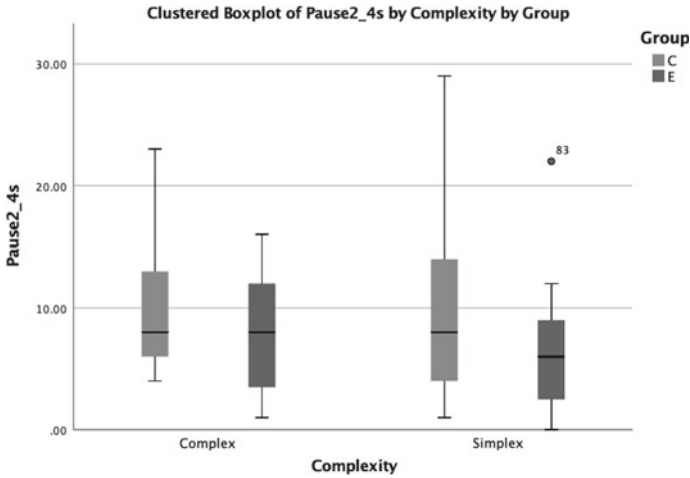


Fig. 1 Pauses between 2 and 4 s by complexity by group

random variables. But the focus this time is on the E Group data and independent variables include Text complexity (Simplex vs. Complex) and Experiment time (1st vs. 2nd).

To address the third research question on the grammatical environment of longer pauses, those pauses longer than 5 s have been coded according to their grammatical positions. Distribution in each category is then analyzed by checking the count in each category out of the total number.

4 Results and Discussion

4.1 Pause by T&I and Non-T&I Students

To answer the first research question, we need to compare various pauses that occurred in the E Group with those in the C Group to see if there is any significant difference in terms of frequency in ST of texts of varying complexity. Using the generalized linear mixed model, we are able to make a pairwise comparison to predict the simple main effect of the independent variable of “Group” on the dependent variables of the pauses in different lengths in the presence of the other independent variable “Group complexity.”

Table 2 Pause2_4s: Pairwise comparison of Group by Complexity

Pairwise comparisons ^a						
Complexity	(I) Group	(J) Group	Mean difference (I-J)	Sig. ^c	95% confidence interval for difference ^c	
					Lower bound	Upper bound
Complex	C_Group	E_Group	0.922	0.619	-2.786	4.630
Simplex	C_Group	E_Group	1.999	0.261	-1.547	5.545

Based on estimated marginal means

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

^aDependent variable: Pause2_4s

^cAdjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni

4.1.1 Pause2_4s

Figure 1 gives a general impression of the situation of pauses between 2 and 4 s as illustrated by a box plot:

As shown in Fig. 1, there does not seem to be any big difference between the two groups of participants, especially in terms of the pauses that occurred in the ST of complex texts, though the gap between the two groups seems to be wider in the simplex texts.

Table 2 presents the results of pairwise comparisons of pauses between 2 and 4 s of the two groups, predicting the simple main effect of the independent variable “Group” on the dependent variable “Pause2_4s” when the covariate “Marks_overall” equals the mean score of all the participants ($n = 116$ observations; Mark_overall = mean score).

As shown in Table 2, although in both the complex and simplex texts participants in C Group are found to have more pauses between 2 and 4 s than E Group (Mean difference = 0.922 in Complex texts and 1.999 in Simplex texts), the difference fails to reach statistical significance ($p = 0.619$ and 0.261). This indicates that, in terms of pauses in this category, T&I students cannot distinguish themselves with non-T&I students.

4.1.2 Pause4_6s

Figure 2 gives an impression of the situation of pauses between 4 and 6 s. Compared with the situation of pauses between 2 and 4 s, the longer pauses between 4 and 6 s start to show a different trend. Participants in E Group present fewer pauses in this category than the C Group participants, and the group difference seems to be obvious in terms of the simplex texts.

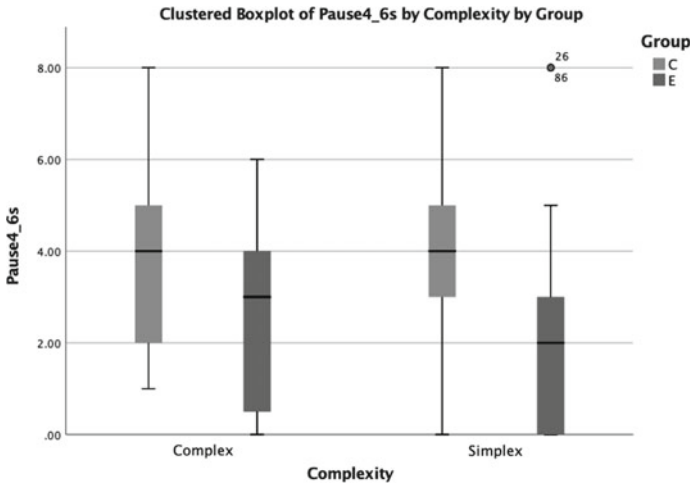


Fig. 2 Pauses between 4 and 6 s by complexity by group

Table 3 presents the pairwise comparison of Pause4_6s and the estimated simple main effect of Group on Pause4_6s when the covariate Mark_overall is evaluated at the value of mean score (n = 116 observations; Mark_overall = mean score).

Results in Table 3 indicate that the gap between the two groups is widened in pauses between 4 and 6 s, compared with the results of pauses between 2 and 4 s. Again, participants in C Group are found to have more pauses of this category than E Group participants in both types of texts (Mean difference = 1.159 in Complex and 1.585 in Simplex). In particular, the group difference in the simplex texts has reached significance (p = 0.021). It indicates that T&I students are much less likely than their non-T&I counterparts to have a pause of this duration when they sight translate a simplex text.

Table 3 Pause4_6s: Pairwise comparison by group by complexity

Pairwise comparisons ^a						
Complexity	(I) Group	(J) Group	Mean difference (I-J)	Sig. ^c	95% confidence interval for difference ^c	
					Lower bound	Upper bound
Complex	C_Group	E_Group	1.159	0.107	-0.259	2.577
Simplex	C_Group	E_Group	1.585*	0.021	0.251	2.918

Based on estimated marginal means

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

^aDependent variable: Pause4_6s

^cAdjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni

4.1.3 Pause6s_over

Figure 3 presents the situation of the long pauses that are over 6 s in length.

As demonstrated by Fig. 3, the group difference between E Group and C Group expands even further in terms of pauses that are longer than 6 s. And such difference seems to be salient in both the complex and simplex texts, with E Group participants generally showing fewer pauses of this type than C Group participants.

Table 4 presents the statistical results of the pairwise comparisons of Pause6s_over across the two groups in both Simplex and Complex texts (n = 116 observations; Mark_overall = mean score).

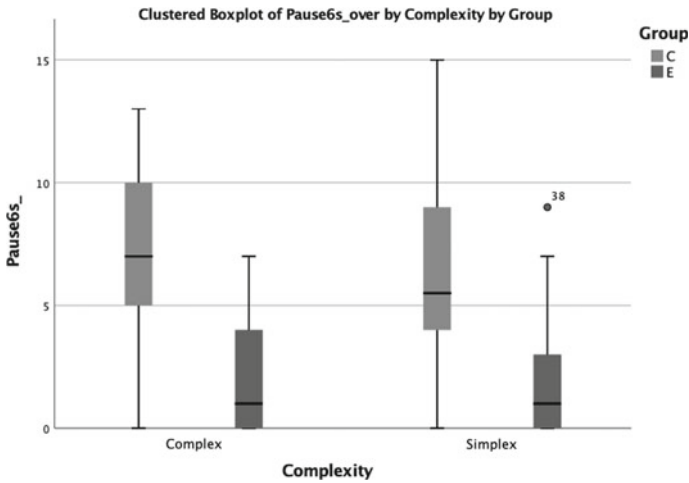


Fig. 3 Pauses over 6 s by complexity by group

Table 4 Pause6s_over: Pairwise comparison by Group by Complexity

Pairwise comparisons ^a						
Complexity	(I) Group	(J) Group	Mean difference (I-J)	Sig. ^c	95% confidence interval for difference ^c	
					Lower bound	Upper bound
Complex	C_Group	E_Group	3.634*	0.001	1.631	5.636
Simplex	C_Group	E_Group	3.338*	0.001	1.457	5.219

Based on estimated marginal means

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

^aDependent variable: Pause6s_over

^cAdjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni

Results in Table 4 show that there is a highly significant difference between the two groups of participants in pauses over 6 s, and such a difference exists in both Complex and Simplex texts ($p = 0.001$ in both Complex and Simplex texts). Participants in C Group are found to have significantly more long pauses over 6s than the T&I students in E Group (Mean difference = 3.634 in Complex and 3.338 in Simplex).

Based on the results shown in Tables 2, 3, and 4, we are able to provide a few possible answers in regard to the first research question: whether T&I students could be distinguished from non-T&I students in pauses. Firstly, T&I students in E Group show a similar frequency level to the non-T&I students in C Group in terms of pauses between 2 and 4 s. However, as the length of the pauses increases, the gap between the two groups starts to emerge. Pauses between 4 and 6 s are much more frequent among the non-T&I students in C Group, and the difference has reached a significant level in Simplex texts. A possible explanation might be that, through training, T&I students in E Group may have become more capable of processing texts of simple syntactic structure, and thus require less time in pause to work out an equivalent in the target language. Another possible reason is that, also due to the training, T&I students have become highly pause-conscious as longer pauses between 4 and 6 s could be viewed as an indication of disfluency. This possible explanation can be further supported by the finding that those very long pauses over 6 s have diminished even further among E Group participants compared with C Group. More specifically, T&I students are much less likely to have very long pauses than non-T&I students even when they have to deal with syntactically complex texts. Generally speaking, pauses over 6 s are not desirable in ST as they usually indicate that the interpreter struggles to work out an equivalent in the target language. It seems obvious that T&I students were aware of this indication and tried to reduce such pauses as much as they could. In comparison, the non-T&I students in C Group seem to be more tolerant of having such long pauses, which can be demonstrated by significantly more frequent long pauses among them. Therefore, it is reasonable to say that, although short pauses between 2 and 4 s seem to be common in both T&I and non-T&I students, training is able to distinguish T&I students from others in frequency of longer pauses over 4 s. In general, T&I students are found to be more careful in pausing, and they try to avoid having too many long pauses in either a simplex or a complex text. It is reasonable to say that training has probably raised students' awareness of possible consequence of long pauses in interpreting, and enabled them to rely on some strategies to avoid over-long pauses.

4.2 Training Effect on Pauses Among T&I Students

In this section, we will explore the second research question: whether two semesters of training could have a significant impact on T&I students in terms of salient pauses during ST. Again, a mixed effect model is used to test the training effect, as indicated by the independent variable of "Experiment_order" on the three dependent variables including "Pause2_4s," "Pause4_6s," and "Pause6s_over." In testing the simple main

effect of “Experiment_order,” the effect of another independent variable “Complexity” as well as two random variables of “Participant” and “Text” are also included. At the same time, participants’ marks will also be analyzed as another potential indicator of the training effect, which will provide a different perspective of viewing the findings in the pause data.

4.2.1 Training and Pause

Table 5 presents the pairwise comparison results of pauses in the three types of lengths made by E Group participants in the 1st and the 2nd experiments ($n = 56$ observations; Mark_overall = mean score).

As shown in Table 5, none of the three types of pauses have changed significantly in the 2nd experiment. In other words, T&I students in E Group didn’t change much in their pause patterns after nearly two semesters of interpreting training. It is also interesting to note that pauses in some categories even slightly increased in the second experiments, including pauses between 2 and 4 s in both types of texts (Mean difference = -0.473 in Complex and -0.293 in Simplex), pauses between 4 and 6 s (Mean difference = -0.205) and above 6 s (Mean difference = -0.890) in simplex texts, but these increases are mild and fail to achieve any significance. Based on the findings, it is clear that training has very limited effects in reducing salient pauses of various durations. However, it is not certain if this means that training has not helped students improve fluency, as fluency can be demonstrated in many ways and not all the pauses are caused by disfluency. Perhaps an analysis of the participants’ marks would bring additional insights into the situation.

4.2.2 Analysis of Marks

To analyze the training effect from another perspective, we will explore the participants’ marks. Such explorations will be carried out in two ways: one the hand, we will compare the group difference in marks in both experiments; and on the other, we will compare the marks of E Group participants between the two experiments. By comparing the group difference in marks across the two experiments, we aim to examine if the gap between the two groups, one with training and the other without training, has widened following 8 months of interpreting study by E Group. Meanwhile, by comparing the marks of T&I students in E Group across the two experiments, we aim to see if they have improved in marks after the training.

Table 6 gives the pairwise comparison of marks between C Group and E Group in the 1st and 2nd experiments ($n = 116$ observations). In this test, “Mark_overall” has been set as a dependent variable whereas “Group,” “Experiment_order,” and “Complexity” as independent variables.

As indicated by Table 6, in the first experiment, E Group participants already showed a significant difference in marks from C Group (Mean difference = -1.598 ; $p = 0.033$), and such a gap further expanded at the time when the second experiment

Table 5 Pauses in various lengths: pairwise comparison by Experiment_order by complexity

Pairwise comparisons		(I) Experiment_order		(J) Experiment_order	Mean difference (I-J)	Sig. ^c	95% confidence interval for difference ^c	
Dependent variable	Complexity	(I) Experiment_order	(J) Experiment_order				Lower bound	Upper bound
Pause2_4s	Complex	1st	2nd		-0.473	0.698	-2.929	1.982
	Simplex	1st	2nd		-0.293	0.818	-2.861	2.274
Pause4_6s	Complex	1st	2nd		0.243	0.672	-0.909	1.394
	Simplex	1st	2nd		-0.205	0.731	-1.408	0.997
Pause6s_over	Complex	1st	2nd		0.067	0.918	-1.239	1.372
	Simplex	1st	2nd		-0.890	0.194	-2.251	0.472

Based on estimated marginal means

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

^cAdjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni

Table 6 Marks: pairwise comparison by Group by Experiment_order

Pairwise comparisons ^a						
Experiment_order	(I) Group	(J) Group	Mean difference (I-J)	Sig. ^c	95% confidence interval for difference ^c	
					Lower bound	Upper bound
1st	C_Group	E_Group	-1.598*	0.033	-3.057	-0.139
2nd	C_Group	E_Group	-1.809*	0.017	-3.268	-0.349

Based on estimated marginal means

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

^aDependent variable: Mark_overall

^cAdjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni

took place (Mean difference = -1.809; $p = 0.017$). As the major difference between the two groups lies in training, the result brings strong implication that training has helped improve the ST competence of the T&I students, as demonstrated in the marks. Such implication is supported by further evidence presented in Table 7 ($n = 56$ observations):

The test results in Table 7 shows that E Group participants had significantly higher marks in the 2nd experiment, which implies that their ST performance has been improved. In fact, results in both Tables 6 and 7 present strong evidence that the T&I students in E Group have become more competent in ST after the training. Therefore, it is reasonable to argue that two semesters of training did have effects on the students' performance.

However, our findings in the marks do not echo the findings in the pause data presented in Sect. 4.2.1, as improvement in marks has not been translated into fewer or more pauses in the second experiment and E Group participants' pause patterns didn't change much. In order to further investigate the situation, it is necessary to

Table 7 E Group marks: pairwise comparison by Experiment_order

Pairwise comparisons ^a						
E Group	(I) Experiment_order	(J) Experiment_order	Mean difference (I-J)	Sig. ^c	95% confidence interval for difference ^c	
					Lower bound	Upper bound
	1st	2 nd	-0.955	0.008	-1.654	-0.256

Based on estimated marginal means

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

^aDependent variable: Mark_overall

^cAdjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni

analyze the breakdown marks so both the marks for accuracy and for fluency could be examined in detail.

A similar test model is used for this purpose, but this time the dependent variable becomes “Mark_accuracy” and “Mark_fluency,” respectively. As introduced in Sect. 3.5, during the marking, two aspects were considered including the accuracy in language transfer and the fluency in target language output. Both aspects were given equal weight in the mark sheet, with each making 10 marks. Table 8 presents the test results of E Group marks in accuracy and fluency across the two experiments ($n = 56$ observations):

As Table 8 shows, E Group participants have improved accuracy marks in both complex and simplex texts in the 2nd experiment, and the improvement in accuracy in simplex texts is highly remarkable (Mean difference = -0.875 ; $p = 0.010$) though accuracy didn't improve much in the ST of complex texts. In comparison, in terms of fluency, the participants in E Group have achieved significantly better marks in ST complex texts, but only a mild progress in marks in simplex texts. The results in Table 8 indicates that training might not be effective enough in significantly improving T&I students' accuracy level in dealing with syntactically complex texts, but training has been very effective in helping students be more accurate in dealing with simplex tasks. Meanwhile, the significant increase in fluency marks in the complex texts indicates that, although participants only improved a little in terms of accuracy, they have become much more fluent when dealing with the complex texts.

If one looks at the findings in marks presented in Table 8 and compare them with the findings of the pause data in Table 5, an interpretation becomes possible in understanding the mismatch between the significant training effect on marks and the insignificant training effect on pauses. Firstly, Table 5 shows that, albeit not significant, in the 2nd experiment E Group participants had higher frequency in all the three types of pauses in dealing with simplex texts. Meanwhile, their marks in accuracy in the simplex tasks are found to be significantly improved as shown in Table 8. A possible explanation is that the participants, through training, became more accuracy-focused and therefore tended to pause even more to process meaning in order to achieve a good accuracy level in the ST. Secondly, Table 5 also shows that, though not significant, participants in E Group are found to have reduced long pauses between 4 and 6 s as well as above 6 s in the complex texts. Meanwhile, results in Table 8 indicate that these participants have significantly improved their fluency marks in the ST of complex texts during the 2nd experiment. It is possible to assume that, through training and practice, participants probably have learned some strategies in dealing with complex texts without taking too many pauses, thus becoming more fluent in the rendering. However, results in Table 8 also show that, although training might be effective in improving students' fluency in interpreting complex texts, it may not be effective enough to improve accuracy when dealing with such type of texts. It looks that more training is needed in helping students become competent in the ST of syntactically challenging texts. Finally, although training has been effective in improving students' performance overall, which can be reflected in the overall marks, two semesters of training cannot bring significant impact on

Table 8 E Group Marks of accuracy and fluency: pairwise comparison by Experiment_order by Complexity

E Group Marks		Complexity	(I) Experiment_order	(J) Experiment_order	Mean difference (I-J)	Sig. ^c	95% confidence interval for difference ^c	
							Lower bound	Upper bound
Mark_accuracy	Complex	1st		2nd	-0.161	0.615	-0.803	0.482
	Simplex	1st		2nd	-0.857*	0.010	-1.500	-0.215
Mark_fluency	Complex	1st		2nd	-0.607*	0.020	-1.114	-0.100
	Simplex	1st		2nd	-0.286	0.261	-0.793	0.221

Based on estimated marginal means

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

^aDependent variables: Mark_accuracy; Mark_fluency

^cAdjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni

students’ pause patterns. And in terms of marks, the training effect is not consistently manifested in terms of accuracy and fluency in texts of different complexity.

4.3 Grammatical Environment of Long Pauses

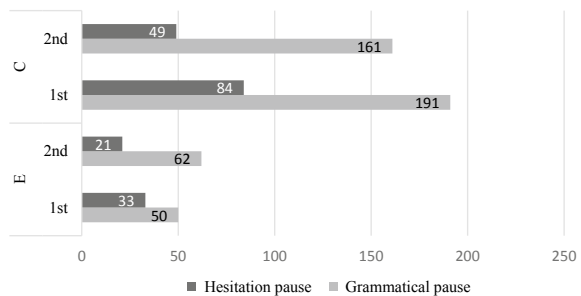
To address the third research question, we will investigate the grammatical environment where long pauses occurred. “Long pauses” in this paper refers to those pauses that are over 5 s long. The reason for setting the cut-off length at 5 s is based on the findings in Sect. 4.1, where the gap between T&I participants and non-T&I students is not significant in pauses between 2 and 4 s, but it starts to clearly emerge in pauses between 4 and 6 s, and the gap becomes wider as the length of pauses increases to 6 s or above. This finding indicates that those longer pauses around 5 s or above would probably be deemed as “too long” by the T&I students and therefore became abstained. This is also indirectly supported by the findings of Aguilar (2000) that pauses over 5 s bring a risk of losing attention from the audience. By investigating the context where these less desirable long pauses are found, we hope to shed light on why these pauses occurred.

To categorize these long pauses, we adopt Cecot’s taxonomy and define the pauses as either “grammatical pause” or “hesitation pause” (Cecot 2001). The former refers to those pauses that are placed at grammatical junctures, typically at clause or sentence boundaries; whereas the latter refers to those pauses that occur at non-grammatical boundaries. And the categorization is based on the interpreter’s verbal output in the target language, where if a long pause occurs at a sentence/clause/phrase boundary, it is labeled as “grammatical” and if it occurs in a non-grammatical juncture, it is labeled as “hesitation.” Both filled and unfilled pauses were counted.

Figure 4 presents the distribution of each type of long pauses among the two groups in both experiments.

As Fig. 4 shows, E Group participants have much fewer long pauses in general than C Group participants, which is consistent with the findings in Sect. 4.1. More importantly, in both groups and in both experiments, grammatical long pauses occurred more frequently than ungrammatical hesitation pauses, which echoes the finding

Fig. 4 Distribution of long pauses: Grammatical pause and Hesitation pause



of Cecot (2001) that pauses occur most frequently on the grammatical junctures. However, in Cecot's project, the focus is on pauses in SI and the researcher finds that interpreters pause at grammatical junctures for breathing and it has a strong communicative function as these pauses give audience time to comprehend the meaning and thus avoid the risks of overloading audience's attention. In the current project, however, it is suspected that the grammatical pauses with such a duration may not carry a communicative motif or simply reflect the interpreter's need for breathing. Instead, it is possible to assume that such long grammatical pauses are related to the interpreters' need for more time to process the next information unit after the pause, which is typically segmented at a grammatical boundary. In other words, interpreters probably had a long pause at the grammatical juncture for comprehending the message that comes next and for planning for a complete output of the meaning in the next sentence or clause. A typical example to support this explanation comes from a participant (P18) in C Group, who had made a total of 22 long pauses, all of which coincided with the clause boundaries in the source text. And following each of these long pauses, the participant produced a smooth rendition of the next clause. This observation indicates that the interpreter probably paused so she could analyze the next clause and plan for a complete and smooth delivery of it as a whole. It is controversial though whether such a strategy should be deemed as appropriate given the duration of the pause is considerably long. A balance between accuracy and fluency seems to be a common dilemma faced by many student interpreters.

It is worth taking a step further to examine the situation of the long hesitation pauses that are placed at a non-grammatical position, which is an indicator that the interpreter is experiencing some difficulty during the process. Figure 5 demonstrates the specific distribution of ungrammatical long pauses in the two groups.

Table 9 presents the frequency of the long hesitation pauses in each subcategory.

Figure 5 and Table 9 show that the top 3 non-grammatical positions where a hesitation pause happened include: positions between subject and predicate, between predicate and object and positions within a nominal group. Below are some examples:

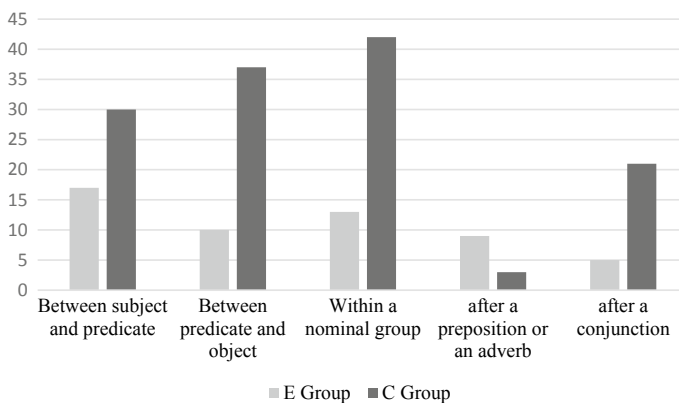


Fig. 5 Distribution of long hesitation pauses

Table 9 Frequency of hesitation pauses in each subcategory

Hesitation pause	E Group	C Group
Between subject and predicate	17	30
Between predicate and object	10	37
Within a nominal group	13	42
After a preposition or an adverb	9	3
After a conjunction	5	21

Example 1: hesitation pause between subject and predicate

Source text:

We recommend you arrive in Sydney well before semester begins, as long-term accommodation which is close to campus and transport are often rent out quickly.

Target text:

(wǒmen jiànyì nǐ dào xīní de shíhòu[...] (1.5 s pause), zài xuéqī kāishǐ zhīqián dào xīní, ránhòu chángqī zhùsù[...] (5.8 s pause), āizhe xuéxiào fùjìn de - huòzhě jiāotōng fāngbiànde (chángqī zhùsù) tōngcháng hènkuài jiùhuì bèi zū chūqù).

我们建议你到悉尼的时候[...] (1.5 s pause), 在学期开始之前到悉尼, 然后长期住宿[...] (5.8 s pause), 挨着学校附近的、或者交通方便的 (长期住宿) 通常很快就会被租出去。

We recommend when you arrive in Sydney [...] (1.5 s pause), arrive in Sydney before semester begins, and then long-term accommodation[...] (5.8 s pause), those (long-term accommodation) close to campus with good transport are often rent out quickly.

Example 2: Hesitation

pause between predicate and object

Source text:

If you are moving out of home for the first time, a great option that makes the transition to independence easier would be to live in a college.

Target text:

(rúguǒ nǐ shì dìyīcì bān chūlái, yīgè hěnhǎode xuǎnzé shì, [en,...] (10.5s pause), zhùzài xuéxiàolǐ, [...] (8.6s pause), zhùzài xuéxiàolǐ huì ràng nǐde shēnghuó gèng jiǎndān)

如果你是第一次搬出来, 一个很好的选择是, [嗯,...] (10.5s pause), 住在学校里, [...] (8.6s pause), 住在学校里会让你的生活更简单。

If you move out for the first time, a good option is, [hmm, ...] (10.5s pause), living on campus, [...] (8.6s pause), living on campus will make your life more simple.

Example 3: Hesitation

pause within a nominal group

Source text:

A vibrant community where many friendships that you will keep lifelong are developed, our on-campus student village is very popular.

Target text:

(yīgè nǐ huì bǎochí, bǎochí yībèizǐ de, [e, ...] (5.9s long pause), yīgè nǐhuì, nǐhuì bǎochí yībèizǐ yóuyì de, [e, ...] (4.6 s pause) de yīgè [...] (3.6 s pause) duōyàng de shèqū de huánjìng, hé zài xuéxiào de xuéshēng sùshè shì hěn shòuhuānyíng de).

一个你会保持, 保持一辈子的, [呃, ...] (5.9 s long pause), 一个你会, 你会保持一辈子友谊的, [呃, ...] (4.6 s pause) 的一个 [...] (3.6 s pause) 多样的社区的环境, 和在学校的学生宿舍是很受欢迎的。

One that you will maintain, maintain lifelong de,⁵ [er, ...] (5.9s pause), one that you will, you will maintain lifelong friendship de, [er, ...] (4.6 s pause), de [...] (3.6 s pause) diverse community environment, and the on-campus student dormitory are very popular.

The three examples above bring further information about hesitation pauses. First of all, long hesitation pauses probably do not come alone in a sentence. As shown in Examples 1, 2, and 3, hesitation pauses over 5 s co-occurred with other hesitation or non-hesitation pauses of varying durations. The multiple pauses in one sentence are indicators of the interpreter's struggling cognitive process.

Also, false starts may trigger long pauses. During the ST task, a false start is often related to the visual interference of the source language (cf. Agrifoglio 2004; Chmiel and Lijewska 2019), under the influence of which the interpreter may start interpreting in the source text syntactic order. As demonstrated in Examples 1 and 3, following a short verbal start in the target language, the interpreter paused to re-consider the current syntactic order. In Examples 1, the interpreter began with a simple nominal group as the subject, but then she probably realized that some further modifying elements had to be included in the nominal group, which triggered a long pause (5.8 s). Following the pause, the interpreter re-started the sentence with the nominal group in a repaired structure. In Example 3, the interpreter was struggling to deal with a complex nominal group in English, and trying in vain to maintain the same structure in Chinese, which triggered three hesitation pauses of different lengths.

Furthermore, although a long hesitation pause gives the interpreter some time to plan for the target language rendition, it may not lead to an acceptable translation. In Example 2, the interpreter had a very long hesitation pauses between the predicate "is" and the object "living on campus" (10.5 s). However, another long pause occurred soon after the object "living on campus" was uttered (8.6 s). The syntactic structure in the source text indicates that the subject "a great option that makes the transition to independence easier" is represented by a complex nominal group, the translation of which requires some restructuring in order to be in line with the target language convention. The interpreter was probably hesitating on how to deal with the structural shift, which triggered the long pauses. However, despite the two very long pauses, a meaning distortion still occurred. Similarly, in Example 3, despite three hesitation pauses (5.9 s, 4.6 s, and 3.6 s), the interpreter struggled with the complex structure of the nominal group presented at the beginning of the sentence, and provided a translation that not only was distorted in meaning but also awkward in syntactic presentation. As the example shows, the interpreter was trying to maintain the same structure as the source text in using a nominal group at the beginning of the sentence. However, this is a complex nominal group, where the head noun has a post-modifier realized by a long and "fully-packed" embedded clause. Without a structure shift, it

⁵*de* is a structural particle in Chinese that typically precedes a head noun, which functions to connect the head noun with its modifiers in a nominal group (see further in Ross and Ma 2014).

is very hard to maintain the same nominal group as English, which the interpreter was trying to achieve but failed despite having a few pauses.

Based on the analysis of the examples, we can see that, to reduce the long hesitation pauses in ST, interpreting trainers need to raise students' awareness of the source language interference so that they, before a verbal output, may become more cautious in deciding how to start a sentence in the target language, and whether it is possible to restructure the message in the target language.

5 Conclusion

Through the exploration of the pause data, we have developed some new understandings about pauses during ST. Firstly, we have found that in this project T&I students and non-T&I students show a similar pattern in the frequency of pauses between 2 and 4 s, but T&I participants start to show a significantly lower frequency in pauses of longer durations from 4 s in simplex texts. And such a difference becomes highly marked in both simplex and complex texts in terms of the frequency of very long pauses over 6 s. The finding indicates that T&I participants are more "pause-sensitive" than non-T&I students, and the low frequency of long pauses is able to distinguish them from the non-T&I participants.

Secondly, in terms of the training effect, we have found that two semesters of training did not bring too much effect on reducing salient pauses among T&I students. However, students' marks have been significantly improved, which indicates that training did help improve students' ST competence overall. Further analysis shows that training has helped students improve their fluency in dealing with texts of complex syntactic features, but it didn't help much in achieving better accuracy of this type. It looks that two semesters of T&I training may not be enough in significantly improving students' overall competence in handling complex texts in ST.

We have also zeroed in on the long pauses that are measured as 5 s or longer in length by examining the grammatical environment where they occurred. We have found that in general these long pauses occurred more frequently in a grammatical juncture than in a non-grammatical position. Participants presenting a long grammatical pause probably wanted to take more time in planning for the translation of the next sentence or clause. In terms of hesitation pauses, we have found that source language interference seems to be an important factor related to these pauses, which could trigger a false start leading to a long pause. Pedagogically, this means that educators need to find ways to raise students' awareness of the source language interference so they could be more conscious in the decision-making process.

This project also has some limitations that must be acknowledged. For example, it might bring more insightful perspectives into the hesitation pauses if other types of data could be included for analysis. These data may come from a retrospective interview after a participant finishes the ST, through which participant might be able to explain what was happening during the hesitation pauses. Alternatively, eye-tracking data could also bring new understandings about why a hesitation pause happens. Also,

although this paper aims to provide meaningful pedagogical implications for T&I educators, due to the limited number of participants recruited in this project, it is not clear whether the findings would be relevant to the ST training in T&I programs in general. Certainly, there are still quite some gaps to be filled up by future projects.

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Modern Interpreting with Digital and Technical Aids: Challenges for Interpreting in the Twenty-First Century



Martin Woesler

Abstract The world is growing in tandem with the Internet, freedom of travel and globalization. Inevitably translation and interpreting are in greater demand, especially online during the coronavirus pandemic. With the beginning of the twenty-first century, interpreting faces new technical and digital challenges requiring new methods of delivery. Technical developments in the course of digitization have been on the rise and are approaching real time use simultaneous capability. The technology supporting the interpreter is becoming more and more effective, while an increasing number of systems, such as artificially intelligent programs, are competing with the human being. The interpreter must now be a technology organizer and adroitly adapt to technologically predefined interpreting situations, such as video conferences with augmented reality, tele-interpreting, etc. The movements of migrants within the EU and the influx of refugees from crisis areas outside of it render community interpreting especially of rare languages in unprecedented demand, often resulting in the unsavory use of non-professional and sub-standard interpreters. Existential problems for the entire profession become apparent. Due to networking via the Internet, unqualified interpreters pour onto the market from low-wage countries: with dumping prices and low-quality services, they discredit the profession of the professional interpreter. Meanwhile remuneration practices have been declining, with payment of interpreting services often being delayed or payment defaulted. All these lead to a devaluation of the profession of the interpreter while digital technology throws into doubt the need for the role of the human as interpreter or translator. The positive side of technological advancement is that communication (including translation and interpretation) becomes digital and therefore can be enhanced with artificial intelligence. This enhancement takes interpreting and translation to a new quality level. Translation and interpretation theory needs to adapt to translation and interpretation in the age of artificial intelligence, the focus, which has moved with the functional approaches to the translator, now moves to the target text audience. The new way of interpreting is a human, but digital-technically determined hybrid form of human-machine interactive interpretation, with due respect for the human participation expressed in the form of professional remuneration.

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1 Literature Review

In 2006, Honegger notes in a survey that most prospective interpreters do not use software in the interpreting booth, but work with paper glossaries which they have created with MS Word or MS Excel. Fantinuoli (2011, 50) states five years later that most interpreters still manage their terminology traditionally with MS Word or MS Excel. In 2015 20- to 30-year-old interpreting students state in a survey by Gacek that “software solutions are not sufficiently known among prospective interpreters and therefore are not used.” (Gacek 2015, 82). A purpose of the present study is therefore to draw attention to the functionality of software for interpreting booths.

The conference interpreter Anja Rütten (2007) presents valuable information in her information-rich overview, *Information and Knowledge Management in Conference Interpreting*, and in her numerous blogs in 2013 and 2014 about experiences with hardware and software in conference interpreting. In this paper, also lists of software and technology from Drechsel’s interpreting practice in 2005, 2013 are used.

Standard works on the craft of interpreting (Pöchhacker 2004; Stoll 2009) also form the basis of the present study. Their suggestions are taken up here and they ought to be reconsidered from the perspective of support by software and technology. In addition, current individual studies are evaluated, such as on distance interpreting (Kalina 2010) and explanations on the use of office programs (Fantinuoli 2011), on web corpora (Gurevych 2010), and on Qtrans (Scholz 2008; Gacek 2015). To compare it with the analogue age, the very early Braun et al. (1999) study on video conferencing is used.

Since software and technology are developing rapidly, a study inevitably becomes outdated quickly. To arrive, nevertheless, at more generally valid statements, the present study focuses on developments and functionality, explaining concrete software and hardware only by way of example, with the knowledge that products are often replaced by others and that only a few can last for a long period of time. In order to get an overview of software and hardware, the current master’s thesis by Gacek (2015) is used. However, it only refers to a small selection of products and does not come to generally valid conclusions. This study also addresses the polarizing discussion on how much technology and software the interpreter needs. While Spitzer provocatively speaks of the “digital dementia” of interpreters in 2012, Conway (2014) has taken a more balanced approach to the question of the cost-benefit ratio of the computer in the interpreting booth.

This paper also introduces special aspects, like problems posed by trendy community interpreting (Andres and Pöllabauer 2009) and cheap competition for interpreters, as well as placing networked communication and work on texts in the context of the development of swarm intelligence and a collective consciousness.

Finally, a new type of interpreting is called for, which expects at least technical competence from the interpreter, and at most a hybrid human-machine working method. In this paper, the thesis, already passionately advocated historically, that the computer or artificial intelligence could never replace the human being in certain functions such as language (Austermühl et al. 2004), is no longer categorically excluded.

2 Simultaneous Technology/Technology Working in Real Time

While in the past technology did not allow simultaneous work support, i.e., it was not possible for translators to work with it during simultaneous or consecutive interpreting, this disadvantage seems to have been largely overcome technically at the beginning of the twenty-first century, although there are still too few apps that make use of these new possibilities.

Arguments against the positive effects of advanced technology include references to over-coding, the abundance of information, etc. These phenomena appear to be a hindrance, especially in connection with the interpreting profession, which requires the highest level of concentration. Spitzer (2012) for example, poses the question of whether computer work causes a mental deterioration of society. Rütten (2014a), on the other hand, refers to Spitzer, pointing out the advantages of the computer, arguing that it has voice output, retrievability through full-text search, spell checking, sorting, categorization, and transmission functions. She suggests as a compromise: “Talking about research, challenging one’s own memory and always asking about what is meant and the context - if we take this to heart, we have a good chance of making the computer a valuable training tool and an excellent assistant.”

2.1 Technology to Support the Interpreter

2.1.1 Preparation

Even if a consecutive interpreter is standing next to the speaker, armed with a stenographer’s notepad and pencil, and interprets him or her in an apparently analogous manner, he or she cannot do without technology these days.

Even during the preparation stage, his/her duty of care requires him/her to take into account the accessible sources, some of which are electronic.

Even more technical possibilities are offered if the interpreter, asked to use his/her own initiative, receives speech manuscripts beforehand. These can be scanned, transcribed and prepared, for example by automatic color coding of verbs and realities, which Stoll (2009, 84f.) also recommends for analogue preparation, as it improves anticipation and simplifies syntactic planning.

In addition to the concrete preparation of the text to be interpreted, more general preparation can also be supported technically.

Drechsel (2005, 16f.) lists, for “preparation for the conference topic and the creation of glossaries, electronic tools such as search engines, web catalogues, topic portals, scientific websites, company or customer websites, library catalogues, online libraries, specialised services for e-publications, online magazines, newsgroups and others are used.”

Online comparison with existing acronyms/abbreviations (Stoll 2009, 85) is also helpful.

Of course, ad hoc knowledge acquisition (Gile 2009) prior to the conference also counts as preparation, such as requesting speech manuscripts and presentations, often in electronic form. Preparation does not only take place in the weeks before the assignment (“advance preparation“, Gile 2009), but also on site a few minutes before the assignments (“last minute preparation“, Gile 2009) and during the interpreting breaks (“in-conference preparation“, Gile 2009). Stoll categorizes the areas of interpreting preparation as “general technical”, “terminological” and “interpreting strategy” (Stoll 2009, 86).

Here, search engines or electronic dictionaries are often faster than paper dictionaries. Moreover, if, for example, the conference program/list of speakers is updated on a website, the interpreter can adjust his or her planning by accessing the website without further consultation with the client.

In principle, all technical aids should meet the requirements of being user-friendly, having a fast or real-time response time and being manageable.

2.1.2 Speech to Text in Real-Time with Low Error Rate

Every smartphone today has a mode or apps with which it records speech and converts it into text in real time with a now justifiably low number of errors.

This simple function alone is valuable for the apparently analogue consecutive interpreter: He/She can put his shorthand pad in a folder in which, for example, the smartphone is inserted on the left and has written down the spoken text as text. While he/she works with his/her notes in interpreting notation on the right, as he/she used to do on the right, and can insert the pen into a holder on the folder if necessary, the transcription on the left enables him/her to find his/her way back into the context at a glance or, at most, with a wiping movement in the event of a hesitation pause (colloquially known as a ‘hang up’) or even a ‘blackout’.

Drechsel (2013) demonstrates the use of the following programs/websites on the Ipad (which helps him to concentrate on individual processes): Documents (manages documents and allows editing), Interplex, LookUp (terminology databases), Wikipedia, Google.

Tablets like the Ipad have the following advantages over the conventional laptop, notebook or netbook in the cubicle: They are lighter, smaller, handier, the battery lasts longer, typing is silent, you can use apps, your work is not interrupted by updates or pop-ups, you can take notes by hand and record things in the background for archiving or follow-up. Of course, due to the data protection regulation, the consent of the client must be obtained before recording.

The disadvantage of not being able to see several windows at the same time appears to be an advantage to Drechsel (2013) from his personal experience, because it allows him to concentrate better on one thing. However, he neither has all the Office applications with him nor his domestic terminology databases. A possible compromise could be a laptop with a touchscreen.

2.1.3 From Text in Source Language to Text in Target Language

Not yet very professional but available as prototypes are transcription systems that offer a translation in a second screen (e.g. translator.google.com, fanyi.baidu.com, for some languages DeepL.com) in addition to the real-time transcription of the source language presented in 1.1.1. On the smart device, for example, an upright screen can be divided into an upper transcription area and a lower translation area. Here, too, constant trial and error is required to improve the quality of the interpretation. It is also individually different how much different information the individual interpreter is able or used to process. If the flow of data is too large, there is a risk that concentration or the flow of production will be impaired.

2.1.4 Keyword Cloud

Helpful for the interpreter's work is the insertion of key terms and their translation into the target language in real time in the form of dynamic clouds, i.e., in real time and the longer a pause before the interpretation of the relevant term lasts. In my opinion, the development of a corresponding app would be a desideratum. It would not be used intensively, but would be conceived as an additional screen for the corner of the eye, which is preferably perceived subconsciously and which one can turn to when one has a hesitation pause and is looking for stimulation. Here, terms that have been interpreted according to the proposal should turn green and others grey. It should be possible to turn back the displayed cloud by fractions of a second in the timeline by pointing and wiping. Of course, it should be capable of learning, i.e., it should be able to memorize frequent non-standard translations and offer them itself.

In the post-processing phase, the program should offer a list of terms to be practiced and has the non-standard translations approved manually by the interpreter.

2.1.5 Effects of Technology

The interpreting profession has changed due to hardware and software development, especially since the 1990s, which has essentially made interpreting easier and better. Whether a technology or an app makes it into the consecutive or simultaneous interpreting situation and even into the interpreting booth is subject to the highly subjective decision-making power of the individual interpreter, just like the interpreting notation, which varies from person to person. New techniques should only be tried out if they bring about a real improvement in use. It is not in anyone's interest to use the latest technology for its own sake if this means a loss of quality in the interpretation. Conversely, an interpreter should be open to accept new techniques and software if they can improve his work.

The Presence of the Interpreter at the Place of Assignment

The interpreter can influence physical and spatial matters by being present at the place of assignment:

- (a) He/she can acquire vocabulary in advance in exchange with the client, compile vocabulary lists, practice them and also physically take them into the booth as paper printouts or on the screen.
- (b) He can request speech manuscripts in advance or speak directly to speakers on site and ask for a copy of their speech manuscripts.
- (c) In case of early contact with the Interpreter Equipment Company, he may be able to influence positioning the interpreting booth so that he can see the speaker and the PowerPoint presentation. In the case of video conferences (e.g. by zoom, voom/Tencent Meeting, BigBlueButton, Skype, Tencent Classroom, MS Teams etc.), he can make sure that he can see all the speakers, including those who appear on screens, so that he can also recognize non-verbal signals and incorporate them into the interpretation. In principle, it is recommended that the interpreter is also shown on screens or in video conferences on a small side window in order to better understand the interpretation.
- (d) Before the event, the interpreter can be introduced to the interpreting equipment by the technician and test the audio system, determine and announce the channel-language assignment (experienced clients post these and instruct the staff who issues the receivers to inform the participants of the assignment), adjust the volume of the headphones, and arrange the aids on the work table.
- (e) He/she can coordinate with his/her interpreting colleague regarding, e.g., glossaries, agenda, and exchange documents, then both can determine the approximate intervals between changes or simply notice during the assignment if the colleague is at a loss and give a helping hand with writing a missing term on a piece of paper. He/she can also nudge him/her to draw his/her attention to something. He/she can share glossaries and documents electronically, e.g., with

the Interplex program simply with a swipe to the left. He/she can also take over the interpretation prematurely in case of exhaustion of his/her colleague.

The number of distance interpreting assignments has already been increasing before the coronavirus pandemic, but with Corona, it exploded. Before Corona, a combination of telephone and web communication was used. With the coronavirus pandemic, Zoom was used more frequently and the Business version comes with a conference interpreter menu.

AIIC, BDÜ, European institutions and other international organizations agreed (Kalina 2010) on the following conditions as minimal professional standards for distance interpreting:

- “ As a rule, a direct view of the room should be possible.
- To avoid multilingualism, distance interpreting should only be used in exceptional cases when more than six active languages are spoken. But even then, as many booths as possible should be available in the room and the booths of the distance interpreters should not be too far away.
- High-definition monitors should be installed in front of and not in the booths.
- The remote interpreter should be able to communicate directly with the client and the cameramen.
- Teams should regularly consist of a minimum of three remote interpreters.” (Kalina 2010, 91)

Higher Validity Through Explanation and Correction Functions

In the university lecture hall, students critically accompany, verify, and check for errors in the statements of the lecturer by simultaneously reading in Wikipedia, Baibe Baidu, etc., and in search engines such as Google, and Baidu and, if necessary, manually validate or question the statements in accompanying chats (e.g. in the WhatsApp or WeChat group of the course). In a technically mediated interpreting situation, it is now possible to show alternative translation suggestions to participants. This is useful in reducing misunderstanding when (a) politically/religiously/culturally sensitive terms appear, (b) different groups of recipients may have different understanding of the same term, for instance, a socialist-authoritarian country and a liberal-democracy] state perceive political ideologies, systems and concepts through a spectrum of shades and hues. Recognition of the various nuances, the multifaceted implications and the degree of value-laden presumptions for each individual recipient serve to ease tension and foster communication.

2.1.6 Special Features in the Booth

Computers or smart devices allow you to view presentations, documents, and notes. However, reference by typing during the interpreting process is hardly possible due

to time constraint. Therefore, text to speech and speech to text modules become more important.

In exceptional situations, such as a ‘blackout’ or a hesitation break, the technique of stalling, i.e., inserting neutral expressions without new information together with deceleration of the target text production, could be useful strategies (Pöchhacker 2004, 132ff).

2.1.7 Software Examples

When naming selected software, I follow the list and evaluation of Janovska (2011).

To this day, interpreters continue to manage their terminology with Office programs such as Word or Excel (Fantinuoli 2011, 50). However, searching is cumbersome with Ctrl + F, and only the first entry found is displayed. Better suited are Interplex simple, LookUp (search without Enter key, which also has a separate module for Word, Janovska (2011)); it also has input fields such as customer, topic and project for additional information, terminology extraction, vocabulary trainer, semantics filter and sorting functions, Honegger (2006, 2) and Rütten (2014b), Terminus (a) good multilingual terminology management system and TermDB developed by conference interpreter Christian Vogeler but discontinued in 2012. But here, too, Fantinuoli (2011) complains that the hit rate cannot be reduced by stop words and that the errors in the glossary cannot be corrected.

Gacek (2015) presents numerous programs: Interpreters’ Help (Gacek 2015, 55), a new browser-based web application from 2014 for all browser-based operating systems and for Boothmate for Mac OS X. It offers the possibility of synchronization offers with fast search function. The currently available beta version and the license for students are free of charge.

Gacek (2015, 56) also introduces the Glossary Assistant program, which is still in development. It presents glossaries clearly on tablets, - the focus is not on mobile phones, and makes them editable, see also Rütten (2014c) and Martin (2014). The program is currently only available for Android tablets and is free of charge.

The Intragloss program, which Gacek (2015, 57) presents, was “developed by AIC conference interpreter Dan Kenig and software developer Daniel Pohoryles.” “The aim of the program is to facilitate the creation and use of even extensive multilingual glossaries.” “Glossaries can be created directly within a preparation document or within a website.” Gacek values this as “very useful” and gives the example “making a list of problematic terms after receiving a last-minute document.” He also points to the fact that “Appropriate filter and sorting functions alphabetical, by website, by chronological order are also provided. A glossary created from a web page is automatically updated, which is an advantage for future. Like InterpretBank software, Intragloss also offers the possibility of automatic translation of terms, with the search for translation suggestions in large translation portals (IATE, GDT, Linguee, Termium, WordReference, etc.). Other useful functions include the clear comparison of different language versions of a document.” A free trial version is available for Macintosh devices, see also Kenig (2014).

Gacek (2015, 61–63) tests and describes in detail the InterpretBank program in version 3 2014, which aims to “provide interpreters with a sophisticated corpus-linguistic tool.” “InterpretBank was developed by Claudio Fantinuoli, a graduate interpreter working in the Department of Translation, Linguistics and Cultural Studies at the Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz.” (Gacek 2015, 62) “InterpretBank is a modular tool that provides interpreters with computer support in the field of knowledge and terminology management before, during and after a simultaneous interpreting assignment.” (Gacek 2015, 63) Gacek lists the three modes offered by the program: “*TermMode*: Module for creating and managing glossaries; in addition, various functions can be used, such as automatic translation of terms and searching for definitions from the Internet. *MemoryMode*: Module for visual memorization of bilingual glossaries. *ConferenceMode*: Module for cabin-friendly reference during the interpretation.” (Gacek 2015, 63).

Rütten (2014) judges: “Very user-friendly, many nice functions; organized by glossaries (which, technically speaking, are subject areas tagged to each entry), has all the essential data categories (customer, project etc.) and a very nice flashcard-like memorizing function. The quick-search function ignores accents. It is limited to five languages and you cannot add endless numbers of individual data fields.”

Interpretbank is platform independent, works on Windows, Mac and Android (Gacek 2015, 63), costs 69 Euro, for students 39 Euro, university teachers (and their students) get a free demo license.

The interpreters also use very simple websites and programs such as the search engine Google, the Internet encyclopaedia Wikipedia, dictionary programs such as Langenscheidt and systems for teamwork such as Google Docs. Typical concordance programs are WebSleuth, WebResearch, Black Widow, and Site Ripper. Terminology extraction enables Easy Concordance, and Concordance. Text to speech can handle most operating systems (Microsoft Windows, Macintosh Operating System), there are also special programs for it like Ivona Reader (from 49 €) with the free MiniReader version, TextAloud (19.99 €). There are programs for fast reading (so-called “Improved Reading”) like “A Faster Reader” (for Android smart devices) and programs for managing documents like the app “Documents” (for Apple iOS), in which among other things search functions can be used and a web browser can also be opened, or OneNote. The website www.wortwarte.de is supposed to present neologisms, but it is not up to date (visited September 11, 2020 by M.W.). The program BootCaT creates topic-specific web corpora: “The users first define the search terms. Then, web pages are collected, which contain the combination of these search terms,” see Gurevych (2010). At the end a text corpus is created, “with which one can quickly get an overview of the content and terminology, for example, of the keywords ‘energía solar’ in Spanish or ‘solar energy’ or ‘solar power’ in German,” see Rütten (2008).

In addition, there are *Termprofile*, *Endnotes*, *Qtrans-Search Bar*. The latter is rated by Gacek (2015), 50 as “no pop-up windows, faulty queries or other inconveniences.” Also Scholz (2008) presents Qtrans: “One of the great advantages of the tool, however, is its low threshold: the software can be used without training, is system-independent, requires no installation and is immediately ready for use.” Scholz also explains, that it is not based on its own search technology, but passes

parameters to other services; “therefore it is easily adaptable and can integrate any internal and external data sources via HTTP.” (Scholz 2008)

For preparation and simultaneous use, there is the glossary software Interplex, which is capable of handling multitasking. It can import glossaries from Word or Excel and is available for Windows, iPhone, and iPad. In 2020, it costs US\$ 75 and there is a free demo version available. More features for conference interpreters are offered by Term LookUp, which cost US\$99 in 2019. In 2020 the author of this paper once found the free version and IntelliWebSearch (free).

2.2 Simultaneous Interpretation with Video Conference Systems

The current video conferencing systems all allow simultaneous interpretation. For this purpose, every participant simply needs two devices and joins two meetings at the same time. For more languages, more meetings are offered. Common solutions are BigBlueButton (open source, free), Zoom, Skype for Business, Microsoft Teams, WebEx, Zoom, GoToMeeting and in China voom (alias WeMeet, Tencent Meeting), TencentClassroom, WeChat.

Every participant should mute his/her microphone (except when speaking) and can listen to the original language on the first device and use one ear plug from the 2nd device to listen to the target language. If the original language does not need to be heard, the participant can also turn off the sound of the 1st device and plug in both ear plugs from the 2nd device or listen to the sound from the loudspeakers of the 2nd device. It is not recommended to have both devices on loudspeaker at the same time to avoid acoustic feedback. Sometimes, if the web speed is too slow, turning off the camera (not the loudspeaker) may help.

With the business version of Zoom, you can simply choose the language channel by clicking on a flag. As the host of the meeting, one must activate the interpretation function and invite the respective interpreters.

So far, conference interpreters often sat in the back of the conference in their boxes and where not visible to the audience. With video conferencing systems like Zoom it is now technically possible to blend in a video of the interpreter, which enhances understanding. However, so far the video conference communication situation still feels artificial, much different from the analogue situation, with only faces, voices, and shared screens. The next generation of digital communication and interpretation is the Virtual Reality Room (e.g. using the hardware Oculus Quest VR glass and the software Spatial), in which participants can upload a photo to create realistic avatars and then “look around” to see the speaker and the interpreter. The participants can even “walk up to” the speaker to sit in the first row or they can “place” speaker and interpreter next to each other.

2.3 *Artificially Intelligent Programs as Competition for Interpreters*

The debate about the extent to which technology can replace humans is as old as the first fantasies of artificial humans. It is still a polarizing discussion today and is conducted in a highly emotional manner.

Austermühl et al. (2004) explains: “We believe that even the latest technology and up-to-date machines cannot replace the human brain when it comes to language transfer. Many times, the concepts are too complex to reduce them to the level of machine-readable language.”

2.3.1 Machine Translation Versus Human Translation

For this Sect. 2.3.1 I am indebted to the final exam paper of my student Jia Liwen 贺丽文 from my 2019/2020 Master’s course on Translation Studies at Hunan Normal University, Foreign Studies College. Although I come to slightly different conclusions, the paper sums up some discussions I had with students in the class and provides literature review and a field study worth quoting extensively here.

Machine translation, commonly known as MT, can be defined as “the application of computers to the translation of texts from one natural language into another.” (Huchins 1986, 1) The term “machine” is outdated, since we refer to computers today or to digital/electronic instead of analogue translation, the term “machine translation” is mainly understood in contrast to human translation and therefore has the potential to sustain.

Machine translation pioneers were the United States, the Soviet Union and European countries. The initial stage can be dated to 1947–1954: In 1946, the world’s first electronic computer was born. In the following year, an American scientist Warren Weaver and a British engineer A. D. Booth proposed to translate languages by modern electronic computers. It was in 1954 that Georgetown University cooperated with the International Machine Cooperation IBM on a project, which created the world’s first machine translation system thus breaking the restriction of word-to-word translation. It was recognized as a breakthrough in machine translation and it demonstrated to the public and the scientific community the feasibility of machine translation for the first time.

From 1954 to 1975, we witness the second stage, with climax and stagnation. Due to the success of Georgetown-IBM system and the potential social, economic, and intelligence benefits, quite a few countries, including the United States, the Soviet Union, and Japan, invested heavily in the research and development of machine translation. In no time, there was an upsurge of machine translation research all over the world.

In 1956, the Chinese government released its “1956–1967 Prospective Plan of Science and Technology Development,” in which “automatic translation” was listed as an important task in item 41.

The poor translation caused by the rough design of the first generation machine translation system and the exaggeration of the given computer capability eventually led some people to lose confidence in machine translation. In 1964, the US Automatic Language Processing Advisory Committee (ALPAC), which was established by the National Academy of Sciences (NAS), carried out an investigation on machine translation, which included its speed, quality, costs and consumer demand; it also ran a sound and comprehensive test, count and analysis. Later, in 1966, ALPAC published the results of the survey; its main conclusion was that no further research should be undertaken on machine translation considering its low speed, low accuracy, and higher costs than human translation and inability to overcome semantic barriers. Affected by this report, researches on machine translation declined sharply and even led to a 10-year slump worldwide.

After a quiet decade in the 1970s, thanks to the development of computer technology, linguistic theory and artificial intelligence research, the increasing demand for translation, and the unremitting efforts of some machine translation researchers, research on machine translation revived in the early 1980s, therefore we can define the recovery stage as 1975–1987. During this period, machine translation researchers were no longer blindly optimistic; instead, they paid more attention to the basic aspects of machine translation research; thus studies on machine translation systems and their development were more practical and rational. Eventually the second generation of machine translation systems emerged.

In 1975, the European Atomic Energy Agency (EURATOM) began to install SYSTRAN. In 1976, the University of Montreal, Canada, and the Translation Bureau of the Federal Government of Canada jointly developed a practical machine translation system (TAUM-METEO), officially providing (i) translations without post-translation editing. It marked the practical application of machine translation in technical languages and the maturity of machine translation technology in technical languages. Many of the methods and technologies used by the second generation machine translation were relatively mature and some of them are still used today.

Since 1987, we are in the prosperity stage. Many institutes and universities began their researchers in machine translation. Since 1989, the appearance of the third generation machine translation method based on corpus has changed the vision of the whole machine translation research, marking a new period for machine translation. Many famous machine translation systems were released during this period, such as the KY-1, being developed by the Chinese Academy of Military Sciences, the MT-IR-EC, an English-Chinese title and catalogue translation system, developed by the Research Institute of Post and Telecommunications Science, and the Huajian Chinese-English machine translation system, developed by Huajian Co. Ltd. Due to the rapid development of computer software and hardware technology, large-scale corpora which can be read by computer can be widely used in machine translation. The larger the corpus, the richer the knowledge of human linguistics it contains, and the better the quality of machine translation will be. As long as the corpus was large enough, it was expected to cover all language phenomena. In this way, the key question here is, how to automatically or semi-automatically mine relevant translation knowledge from the corpus and effectively organize the knowledge base.

The Translation Memory (TM) technology in Trados' Translation Workbench and the latest near-human translation machine translation systems introduced by Google, Language Weaver, Meaningful Machines, and other companies, since the new century and the development of artificial intelligence are all the results of the successful application of corpus technology in machine translation research.

There are two recent Chinese books on MT, by Liu Miqing and Xu Jun. Both Liu Miqing and Xu Jun uphold the dogma that human translation cannot be replaced by machine translation, although they don't reason their opinions. Liu Miqing comments on the so-called misunderstanding, "If machine translation succeeds, then translators will lose their jobs": "This kind of worry is unnecessary, and human translation will be in demand at any time" (Liu 2010, 402). Xu Jun states: "On the basis of the existing linguistic level and the research level of computer artificial intelligence, it is impossible to develop a machine translation system that completely replaces human translation." (Xu et al. 2009, 339–340).

Both of them use the same categorization for the stages of machine translation development as mentioned above. Both divide traditional machine translation methods into two categories: Rule-Based and Corpus-Based. The former builds the translation knowledge base on dictionaries and grammar rules, while the latter builds it by making full use of the corpus. Corpus-based methods can be subdivided into statistics-based machine translation and example-based machine translation. Since language has the characteristics of flexibility and openness, the development of a machine translation system based on grammar rules is greatly limited due to the lack of human thinking and of the ability to identify the text or become aware of it. On the contrary, example-based machine translation has enjoyed unprecedented development since the 1980s. With the revival of statistical methods and corpus methods, corpus-based machine translation systems based on statistics and examples are beginning to be used for large-scale processing of language material and real texts.

Both authors think that translation memory software is very useful. Because unlike machine translation, the translation memory technology cannot translate the entire text, but can offer previously translated phrases from documents stored in its database. Through comparing, retrieving, and reusing previously translated texts, translators can promptly determine how to accomplish the translation in a more efficient way. That is to say, the help of a translation memory makes translating more convenient and it makes it more effective for translators to deal with some complicated source texts through translation memory administration.

Advantages of Machine Translation

1. Among the advantages of MT are its speed and availability. If one visits a foreign country, a smart phone may make up for lack of language skills. Several free applications will help them translate texts, images, voices almost immediately, anytime and anywhere. One can take a picture of a sign and read it in one's own language. Special apps help during conversations with foreigners. The accuracy

is not high, but is also not needed in these basic conversations, which are low-end texts.

2. Another major advantage of machine translation are the low costs, with some free services. For some large enterprises and professional translators, there is an initial financial investment to buy translation software like Trados, which pays off in the mid-run.
3. Another merit of MT is the sheer volume of translation. A small application can conduct large-scale translation work in a short amount of time, impossible for humans.
4. Also for human translators, MT is a helpful tool, because professional translators and interpreters can save energy and improve their efficiency. In many disciplines, there is a huge amount of specialized vocabulary, which also changes fast. MT can make sure that all special terms are translated consistently in the same way. Most human translators prefer electronic dictionaries over paper dictionaries, e.g., because they have search functions and are updated online.
5. MT tools also enable teams of human translators to increase their efficiency of cooperation, including joint databases and standards of translation.

The trend toward MT is irreversible.

Disadvantages of Machine Translation

1. A MT can only be as good as its input, processes and self-learning algorithms. In the field of speech translation, MT depends heavily on speech recognition technology. In 2020, most speech recognition systems require speakers using the standard language (e.g. Mandarin instead of Cantonese). People's accents, dialects, and other influences like a noisy background affect the accuracy of speech recognition.
2. MT depends on connectivity and electricity. Many users become aware of this dependency when they use a translation application on their smart phone and suddenly the network connection is broken or the battery is empty.
3. The establishment of the corpus is the foundation of modern MT, but the corpus itself has its limitations. Modern MT, especially in many minor languages, has a small corpus. For example, under the same circumstances, the accuracy of e.g., a Lao translation could fall short of its English counterpart. Commercial reasons may play into this as well.
4. Almost all MT requires human post-editing. With the progress and development of science and technology, the accuracy of MT software is getting better but so far it is no match for the quality of human translation. The text after machine translation requires proofreaders to make final modifications to the translation to ensure that it is correct and has an appropriate style.
5. MT is still unable to understand in which context a word is used. In many languages, the same word may have several completely unrelated meanings, such as the word “春 chun (spring)” in English, which most commonly means

“春天 chuntian” in Chinese, but also means “彈簧 tanhuang (spring),” “泉水 quanshui (spring water)” and “活力 huoli (vitality).” Another example is the word “門檻 menkan (threshold)” in Chinese, which can refer to the “threshold on the door,” but the most common meaning is “the difficulty of a thing” or “the conditions for doing something.” In these cases, the context mainly determines the meaning of the words, and the understanding of the meaning depends largely on the clues one gets from the context. So far, the main advantage of human translators is a more accurate understanding of a sentence, which is connected to related context. Another advantage is that a human translator can creatively polish the language to obtain not just a complete and accurate translation, but an appropriate one. This is undoubtedly still a big challenge for MT.

6. MT so far does not possess cultural sensitivity. Human translators constantly study the relevant cultures, expand their knowledge and are able to understand specific situations. Human interactions and emotions are complex and machines lack the initiative and often the ability to understand or recognize slang, jargon, puns and idioms, so that the resulting MT may not conform to the values and norms of the culture of the source language and/or of the target language.

Comparison of Machine Translation with Human Translation

Machine Translation can be compared with human translation in different areas and under different aspects.

1. In the film and television industry, there is a large demand for translation of quotes (subtitling), and the difficulty lies in the individuality of each speaker which should correspond to a characteristic style depending on the speaker. The screen format requires short and pithy translations. What's more, is the internet. The film title itself has to take all possible connotations as well as marketing aspects into account, so a human translator will think it over and over again.
2. In the political and the diplomatic field as well as in international negotiations between countries or institutions: In these fields, human interpretation and translation are still widely used, since translation mistakes may have severe consequences on the relation of countries. When country leaders meet, the accumulated cultural knowledge of the translators can enable them to identify which content may not offend both sides and then pick the best translation. When a country's leader tells a joke which is not funny in the target culture, the human translator could improvise with a different joke, thus ensuring that the visitor will enjoy the wit and humor too so that the whole atmosphere stays relaxed as intended. With MT, diplomatic accidents or cultural conflicts might happen. In the first half of 2018, AI simultaneous translation was applied for the first time at the Boao Asia Forum. However, the system broke down, resulting in low-level mistakes such as inaccurate vocabulary translation and repetition. Mistakes like these are avoided by professional interpreters.
3. Legal and technical communication. Legal translation, as well as medical, pharmaceutical, and chemical translation, etc. must be accurate, because a translation

mistake may have severe consequences. The human translator spends additional time to make repeated efforts to avoid ambiguity and to improve the accuracy of the words used. Many specific terms in professional sectors have a broader definition than that in or have a different meaning from the standard language. For example, prejudice refers to damage, counterpart refers to a copy with the same effect; more complicated, for example, is dominion which refers to full ownership in civil law but sovereignty in public international law; Estoppels means that one cannot go back on one's word in contract law, while in criminal procedure law, it means "forbidden to reverse confession." Secondly, a large number of legal terms, such as "defendant," "cause of action" and "damages," usually do not appear in the common language. These characteristics of legal terms require people to carefully weigh and compare when translating, and give appropriate translation(s) in specific situations.

4. Literary translation. MT currently in general cannot compete with human translation in the field of literature, since these kinds of translations are more complex. A typical characteristic of Western literature is to avoid repetitions. If, for example, the source is a Chinese work of literature, repetitions are more common. MT would translate these repetitions repetitively, while humans from the Western target culture would be creative in finding synonyms and variations. A good translation of literature should enable target readers to understand the world created by the author of the source culture and properly realize his/her beliefs, ideas or other things the author wants to convey through his work. Subtle references to other works of literature are harder to grasp by MT than by a human translator. There are often a lot of imageries (comparisons, illustrative expressions, motifs, metaphors, allegories) in literary work, and imageries are often figurative. When translating and dealing with these imageries, even experienced translators carefully consider and repeatedly weigh them. Literary work expresses the rich emotions of humans, which may be happy or sad, and half sad and half happy. In order to understand such subtleties, the translator needs to read the text carefully and weigh it over and over again. Only after careful reading and repeated deliberation can the translator really understand them and thus produce a good translation. Literary work is often historic. In different periods, literary works created by different writers often carry the imprint of their times. When people look at past literature, they cannot simply translate it from the contemporary viewpoint. Therefore, when reading the original text, the translator would have to figure out the author's intention and the emotion to be conveyed according to the background of the times, the writer's experience and style, for example, in order to better understand the original text so as to better carry out the translation. Obviously, MT systems are not yet able to deal with these complicated processes. Last but not least, literary work is often fictional, and the fictional world is often beyond the imagination of the real world. Even if the machine can input the entire literary corpus and their corresponding translations in different languages into it to build a huge corpus, literary work will remain creative and imaginative. The current MT systems may be able to give a proper translation of some sentences in a piece of literary work, but from the perspective of development, the premise of

machine translation is to establish a corpus first, which is why it is always lagging behind and can never keep up with the pace of literary creation and innovation.

Field Study

In November 2019, we conducted a simple field study. We selected an original text (<https://b23.tv/av9604542>) among the quotes of the American movie *The Pursuit of Happiness* 《当幸福来敲门》: “People can’t do something themselves, they wanna tell you you can’t do it. If you want something, go get it. Period.”

Here are five MT versions from Sogou, Baidu, Netease Youdao, DeepL, and Google, respectively:

Sogou translation (http://bit.ly/trans_ex_1): 人们自己做不到,他们想告诉你你做不到。如果你想要什么,去拿吧。句号。(People cannot do it by themselves, they want to tell you that you cannot do it by yourself. If you want something, take it. Period.)

Baidu translation (http://bit.ly/trans_ex_2): 人们自己做不到,他们想告诉你你做不到。如果你想要什么,就去拿。周期。(People cannot do it by themselves, they want to tell you that you cannot do it by yourself. If you want something, just take it. Week.)

Youdao translation (http://bit.ly/trans_ex_3): 当人们做不到一些事情的时候,他们就会对你说你同样不能。如果你想要什么,就去争取。时期。(When people cannot do some things by themselves, they will simply tell you, that you neither cannot do it. If you want to get something, just go and get it. Period in time.)

Google translation (http://bit.ly/trans_ex_4): 人们自己无法做某事,他们想告诉您您做不到。如果您想要一些东西,那就去买。期。(People are unable to do a certain task, they want to tell you that you cannot do it. If you want some things, just go and buy them. Time period.)

DeepL translation (http://bit.ly/trans_ex_5): 人们自己做不到的事情,他们就会告诉你,你做不到。如果你想要的东西,去得到它。句号。(A thing people cannot do by themselves, they just want to tell you that you cannot do it. The thing that you want to get, get it. Period.)

The human translation (<https://b23.tv/av9604542>) is:

有些事人们自己办不到,他们就刚跟你说你也办不到。如果你想获得什么,就去争取。就这么简单。(There are some things people are unable to achieve, they will just tell you that you cannot do it neither. If you want to obtain something, just go and get it. It’s just so simple.)

The original text is relatively colloquial, so the overall difficulty for translation is not so high; still the five versions of machine translation are not ideal, only the versions translated by Netease Youdao and DeepL are acceptable, but unsatisfactory in comparison to the human translation.

In the first sentence of Sogou and Baidu translation, the word “something” is ignored and the overall coherence of the translation is not high. It is also inconsistent with Chinese habits. In the first sentence of the Netease Youdao translation, “当……的时候” is added, which is feasible, but compared with the human translation, it is

not concise enough. The DeepL translation starts strong, but does not persuade with the arbitrary addition of “的,” which destroys the grammar. The Google translation “无法做某事” is awkward in Chinese, and the reader rather would prefer something like “办不到的事情”; moreover, the auxiliary verb “想” is inappropriate.

For the translation of the second sentence, the handling of “go and get it” in Sogou and Baidu, obviously does not conform to the context in the movie, while DeepL at least uses “得到.” Although in Chinese, “take it” has the meaning of “拿” or “去拿,” in this movie, in combination with the context at that time, “take it” should be translated as “追逐.” In addition, it is worthwhile to point out that the translation of “take it” in Netease Youdao is the same as the human translation. However its translation of “wanna something” as “想要什么” is not as good as the human translation of “获得什么.” Google’s translation of “get” as “买” seems to point to a corpus with commercial texts. In using the polite address “您” and the uncomprehended ending of “期。,” Google has failed this test when compared with its competitors. Finally, for the last sentence, the word “period” is directly and roughly translated into “期,” “周期” and “时期” by three machine translation systems. Although the word “period” by DeepL and Sogou comes very close to the meaning, the human translation does a more accurate job with “就这么简单.” Here, the machine translations fail to take the context into consideration.

None of the above mentioned MT-produced versions can provide an expressive and smooth translation, let alone being equal to or surpassing the human version. The MT versions do not conform to Chinese speaking habits. There is still a long way to go for MT, especially for Sogou, Baidu and Google, to improve their translation quality.

However, when MT will succeed, is not a question of faith, it is simply a cost-benefit question that will be economically decided. Nowadays, the cameras of smartphones can be used to watch an object or a text, which is then subtitled in a given target language by augmented reality (e.g. iTranslate, Translate, Speak & Translate, DeepL, Google Translator etc. for Iphone). The WeChat app, for example, also imitates the layout and font, making it increasingly difficult to visually determine that it is a translation and not the original. Even the mundane automatic translation work (machine translation), which used to be reserved for expensive specialist programs, is now accessible to a wide range of users via websites such as translate.google.com, deepl.com or fanyi.baidu.com while it can also be activated in browsers so that the websites are displayed in the desired language. Such translations are generally worse than those produced by trained human translators. Nevertheless, some website operators are satisfied with the quality, so they have their websites automatically translated thereby attracting more users. There are also hybrid solutions such as automatically translated websites with the possibility that trained and untrained users can suggest translation corrections, which can then be implemented partially automatically with quality assurance elements (translation evaluation, frequency of correction suggestions, etc.). For clients who expect higher quality, machine pre-translation and subsequent error correction currently occasionally appears to be more cost-effective than fully human translation. Overall, Google Translator has made great progress

in recent years. Fanyi Baidu recently boasted of a simultaneous interpretation of a speech recorded live on video.

Human translators also do not just use their brains, they use translation memories such as Trados, Across, Transit, MemoQ, WordFast, Pasolo etc., in order to have the same terms or sentences displayed in the same way, for example in technical manuals, which deal with the 1:1 translation of technical terms. Here both sides seem to come closer to each other.

Currently, no program can translate better than humans. There are simply too many factors to be taken into account in order to avoid e.g., unexpected comedy because a certain expression does not seem appropriate in a certain situation. Of course, the human translator is not immune to such 'translation mistakes', but he or she often recognizes them and can correct them afterwards if necessary. Here, the human consciousness cannot yet be achieved or simulated by machines.

Automatic simultaneous interpreting appears even more difficult than automatic translation, as the transmission process is carried out in real time. In addition, the machines still lack the various means of expression accompanying the pure translation text. This does not only refer to non-verbal interpreting - there are also conference interpreters who often only listen to the translation via headphones. But it refers also to the possible variations in vocal reproduction, such as volume, speed, variation in intonation, intonation of the sentence melody, etc., which often offers the possibility to enrich the information of the pure text. Nonetheless, these are precisely the fields that are currently being researched and that increase the acceptance and subtlety in the expression of artificial intelligence.

The fact that the targeted concentration on translation errors and their causes promises success in further development is demonstrated by the leap in quality of translation services when comparing early and current Google and DeepL Translator versions.

2.4 Transition of Interpreting Situations Through Technology/Digitization

The interpreter must increasingly adapt to technically predefined interpreting situations, such as video conferences with augmented reality, tele-interpreting, etc. It is expected that the interpreter is familiar with the various hardware and software models of interpreting technology and organizes this technology.

According to the early Braun et al. (1999) study on interpreting in video conferences, the interpreter's job description is already changing toward becoming a technology organizer. Due to the rapid progress in technology, the technical problems, quality losses, and malfunctions, on which the Braun study focuses, are outdated. Rather, today's technology must be assumed to be largely trouble-free to perfect for the purpose of interpreting, often even offering functions that the users do not (or can not) exploit at all.

The following disadvantages of early video conferencing at the time of the study have since been reduced:

- (a) Social presence - through the new techniques with VR glasses (like Facebook's Oculus Quest) and, if necessary, whole-body tactile suits, the presence is sufficiently simulated so that the human mind is able to fade out the technical mediation of the presence after a period of getting used to it. The "technically caused restrictions of interaction" thus become negligible. The "restricted field of vision" of the interpreter, the study complained about can now be extended by virtual or augmented reality glasses. It should also be pointed out that even with conference interpreters present, e.g., incorrect planning of interpreting booth locations where there is no clear field of vision for the speaker or the presentation or simply unforeseeable events such as overcrowded conference rooms so that standing listeners block the view are part of everyday life.
- (b) The same applies to the unnaturalness of the discussion situation that was noted at the time. Since the perception of technology fades into the background, the technically mediated interpreting situation is increasingly being accepted as just as natural or unnatural as the analogue one/the presence.

3 The Impact of Migration: Community Interpreting and Rare Languages

Through migration, foreign language people come into a community and are dependent on interpreting services in government offices and hospitals due to a lack of knowledge of the local language. While offices often leave the task of finding an interpreter to the foreign language speaker, they do not set any qualification or quality requirements. As a result, relatives or acquaintances are often hired as one-time lay interpreters whom the foreign language speaker entrusts with the interpretation. However, the quality is often lower than that of trained interpreters. Trained interpreters would often be simply too expensive for the foreign language speaker in such situations (Moratto 2020).

In the case of community interpreting in hospital, the patient is usually not responsible for providing an interpreter, e.g., because he or she arrived at the hospital unexpectedly or is restricted in mobility due to illness/injury or hospitalization and should not be burdened additionally. Accordingly, the hospital maintains a pool of community interpreters. As field studies, e.g., by Andres and Pöllabauer (2009), show, non-professional interpreters are also hired where necessary out of cost reasons.

4 Existential Problems for the Interpreting Profession

Due to networking via the Internet, unqualified interpreters are pouring into the market from low-wage countries, bringing the profession of the professional interpreter into disrepute as a result of dumping prices and poor-quality work, especially for inexperienced clients.

From my own field I know well-trained German and Chinese interpreters who interpret in their respective areas of competence for about 850 USD (750 Euros or 3,120 Yuan RMB) plus expenses for half a day or 1,700 USD (1,500 Euro or 11,700 Yuan RMB) for a whole day. But I have also taken part in conferences where an apparently not well-trained Chinese interpreter interpreted. As a rule, the clients were inexperienced and had apparently based their decision on price in particular, and hired interpreters for 450 USD (400 Euros or 3,120 Yuan RMB) half-day or 850 USD (750 Euros or 3,120 Yuan RMB) per day.

As a result, long passages were regularly left uninterpreted, there were pauses lasting seconds or entire speeches remained uninterpreted sometimes due to a lack of agreement between the interpreters, other times perhaps due to technical problems.

I especially remember a consecutive interpreter who ‘interpreted’ the various welcoming speeches at a German-Chinese friendship celebration in sections by repeating the same sentence in Chinese: “We are delighted to have such a good partnership which serves international understanding.” For someone who was not familiar with the subject or did not speak both languages, the event made a perfect, all-round impression, the interpreting was apparently seamless, the audience clapped and laughed in the right places, solely because of the speaker’s example and the interpreter’s non-verbal signals. The German client was unable to judge the quality of the ‘interpretation’ due to a lack of language skills. It is not known whether the approximately 150 Chinese participants at the event thought that the German speakers always said the same thing, or whether they realized that the interpreter only interpreted the general setting or the atmosphere but not the specific content of the speeches. Perhaps the interpreter was also competent, but out of political or other consideration avoided any concretization of the idea of international understanding by giving examples? The listeners may also not have been aware that one of the speakers was the Lord Mayor, because his introduction and title of office by a moderator was also interpreted with: “We are delighted that we have such a good partnership that serves international understanding.”

Experienced clients, on the other hand, are familiar with the quality assurance elements of the industry, such as membership in professional associations, recommendations, etc., and do not question the established fee rates.

4.1 Declining Payment Practice

The 21st century witnesses the decline in payment morale, with interpreting services receiving delayed remuneration or are subject to default in payment. While catering companies of the same event usually get their bills paid, interpreting services, especially for inexperienced clients, appear to be a service that cannot be concretely grasped, measured, and seen. All this leads to a devaluation of the performance of the interpreter, his profession and even to a questioning of the role of an interpreter or translator in the modern age.

Should there really be a free artificially intelligent “conference interpreting version” of Google Translator one day, these clients will probably feel vindicated in their contempt for human interpretation.

5 Networking Takes Interpreting and Translation to a New Level of Quality

In the case of machine-assisted translation, for example with terminology database systems such as Trados, there are several windows/screen areas and it can be displayed how you yourself have interpreted/translated a sentence or expression in the past or how other translators have done so. The consistent further development of such workstations for interpreters would show in real time how colleagues interpret/translate or have interpreted/translated things. This is conceivable, for example, in the case of important speeches broadcasted live, which are interpreted simultaneously by different interpreters (and possibly AI) for different clients. Thus, as in the case of simultaneous chat commentaries to a live stream, the work of different interpreters on a speech could be observed simultaneously.

If we take a closer look at this technical networking, parallels to an expanded, collective consciousness, which functions very much like the consciousness of an individual, come to mind.

Artificial intelligence research focuses on the learning ability, self-perception, and external perception of an individual in order to rebuild it with a machine. When a translator uses a Translation Memory (like Trados, DejaVu etc.), the artificial intelligence shows him/her how he/she him/herself has translated the same or a similar sentence earlier and, if the system is connected, how other translators have or are simultaneously translating the sentence.

The translator, who has several windows open (a dictionary, a speech-to-text module, a machine translation module, a translation memory etc.) may intentionally or unconsciously use the hints by the artificial intelligence to produce his/her translation or interpretation.

When a huge mass of individuals (even with different languages) react with their thoughts, sometimes comment on interpretations on the same sensual impression, artificial intelligence, using Big Data analysis and self-learning algorithms, becomes

more than the sum of its parts, crosses the line of swarm intelligence and may be called a consciousness. For example, someone is giving a speech, a global audience is watching and simultaneously commenting in its own languages. The AI can filter the most common reaction on the speech, can analyze cultural backgrounds or personality differences and can match similar comments in different languages.

We have a stronger concordance of the stream of thoughts between individuals than in the purely passive reading of the texts of a foreign author between reader and foreign author.

There are no brain cells linked between different individuals; rather the thinking during the translation work is visualized: I register how other individuals perform the same thought process and come to mostly different, but comparable, comprehensible results or even, in individual cases, to the same result. This process of constant comparison with the thinking of others is similar to the unconscious management process in the brain of the various subconscious thoughts, where the thought that is reinforced by the most similar thoughts makes it into consciousness.

When interpreting and translating, we have clearly defined thought processes that are predetermined by the source text, thus creating a manageable and thus, to a certain extent, laboratory situation. If it is possible to reach a predominant consensus here, a transfer to the thought process management of several users of the same avatar with the same controlled environment and to livestream situations with the same uncontrolled environment would be conceivable. The next step, therefore, would be to extend this technically supported interpreting and translating work to align the thinking of different individuals in the same situations and to allow common thoughts to form and be visualized as text, for example when enough users write the same thing, let it be "I am us." Individual mistakes could thus not assert themselves in the mass, so-called swarm intelligence. Of course, there are also the necessary learning processes with setbacks and nonsense. The striving for meaning and for intelligent meaning is a sufficient driving factor for the establishment of a collective consciousness. Who does not shudder when we typed "How boring" during a live broadcast of the speech of a US President in the late 2010ths? These words were typed simultaneously by 13 million users and thus are selected by the artificial intelligence to be visualized as a statement of collective consciousness. On a much smaller scale shown below is the reaction "How exciting" stated by only 321 users, who therefore were unable to assert themselves. In this way, in a clearly defined setting with clearly defined rules of thought management, one could create collective meaning, e.g., by telling the progress of an action together in a digitally animated feature film, or, in the military use of artificially intelligent robots in war, by using swarm intelligence to develop/change a combat strategy simultaneously during the mission.

6 Further Developing Translation and Interpreting Theories in the Present and the Near Future

The history of translation and interpreting studies is as old as translation and interpreting itself, although it was established as a discipline only in the 1960s and 1970s. Translation and interpreting studies have changed their paradigms already several times. In ancient times, it was prescriptive, favoring literal or free translation (or combinations which were as literal as necessary or as free as possible). It later became more descriptive. Contrastive-linguistic approaches with equivalency as the main criteria were followed by communicative and then functional approaches. Since the functional approaches also considered cultural backgrounds, it was called the “Cultural Turn.” With the Skopos Theory, the equivalence of the purpose of the source and target texts are stretched beyond the authenticity of the source, and the role of the translator/interpreter gets back into the focus. Recent developments turned toward a sociology, a culture, and the ethics of translation.

Algorithms have the characteristic that they do not have to understand any more, they just take a huge mass of data and come to results without knowing how. However, translation produced with these algorithms in general are of low quality. With the next step, the algorithms need to be able to learn from mistakes and adjust themselves. These translations will be of better quality, but still qualitatively lower than human translation.

So before the machine can take over, it needs to “understand” humans better and needs to be “made more human.” Therefore, the understanding which we gained through the different translation theories and experiences have to be put into a complex set of rules to enable the artificial intelligence not just to come to better results, but also to “understand” why and how.

The new forms of translating and interpreting are mostly managed by artificial intelligence, which applies big data analysis and algorithms on human translation and interpretation to find the most appropriate and most comprehensible translation/interpretation for a specific target text recipient. Therefore, the focus shifts from the person of the translator/interpreter to appropriateness (which is defined by analysis of cultural background and individual personalities) and comprehensiveness, the latter moving the focus further toward the audience.

Since the translation or interpretation may look different depending on the individual recipient, the new translation and interpretation will be individualized and therefore the focus moves not just to the audience, but to the personality of the individual recipient and his/her social and cultural environment.

7 The New Type of Interpreting

The *new type of interpreting* is a human-controlled, digital-technically supported hybrid form. The interpreter requires technical and digital skills and aids. Translation

and interpreting can no longer take place without real-time technology, the minimum requirement is internet access. Quality-reducing factors currently include the use of lay interpreters in community situations, unqualified underpaid interpreters due to a lack of appreciation of the profession by inexperienced clients, and automatic translation programs, e.g., for various language versions of websites. However, a long-term trend toward qualitative improvement of automatic interpreting/translating through AI research can be observed, so that extrapolating past developments, even the complete replacement of the human interpreter by an AI in the future does not seem completely impossible any more.

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A Multi-Hatted Expert: Exploring Possible Roles of the Interpreter in Business Negotiations with Specifics of Sino-German Negotiations



Wei Zhao

Abstract This paper attempts to explore possible roles of the interpreter in business negotiations from the perspective of negotiation theories, setting out first the two fundamentally distinct approaches to negotiation—positional bargaining and the principled approach—and then defining areas where clients would need and appreciate contribution from interpreters beyond “just” interpreting and what actions interpreters can take to contribute. Positional bargaining, often known as haggling, is often perceived as the predominant form of negotiation in business. However, it carries its own perils both for clients and interpreters. The principled approach seeks to transform the negotiation game from win/lose to win/win. Upheld by four interlocking elements here described in detail, this approach makes negotiation a joint endeavor for both parties to identify ways to realize one’s “enlightened self-interest”. As this approach opens up much space for elaboration on emotions, perceptions, interests and options, with clients’ approval, interpreters can also serve as an active participant in a principled negotiation: asking targeted question as well as providing elaborated advice as a consultant in the pre-negotiation phase; applying facilitation skills in the “action” phase; and in the review phase, assisting the client with questions and comments once again as a consultant. Taking China and Germany as a case for how culture-specific negotiation advice often contradicts each other, the author cautions against distributing off-the-shelf advice without deep reflection. Facing the prevailing doubts about interpreters, the author argues that interpreters should take the initiative to equip themselves with the required awareness and expertise and prove themselves to be trustworthy.

Keywords Roles · Negotiation · Consultant · Facilitation · Trust

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1 Introduction

Within the field of interpreting studies, the myth of the interpreter being “invisible” and “neutral” conduit of messages have long been challenged by many researchers. At international conferences, since interpreters usually work in the simultaneous mode from sound-proofed booths, therefore physically separated from delegates, it is somewhat understandable for delegates to have the impression that interpreters are invisible and just voices on the different language channels. In business negotiation settings, interpreters usually sit at the table with clients and all other parties involved. They are, so to say, in the thick of it. Yet, just like in many other interpreting situations, “interpreters have to tolerate the schizophrenic situation in which they are expected to be there and not there at the same time, and in addition to that, to be there (and not there) for all parties involved.” (Bahadır 2010, 127).

In her doctoral dissertation, Karanasiou investigated extensively the role/roles of the interpreter in business negotiation settings, both the perceptions of interpreters of their own roles and the roles clients mandate to interpreters. Quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews have validated her thesis: “Interpreters in business negotiation settings take up more roles and responsibilities than just that of interpreting. They are expected to team up with the client’s team and become negotiators who facilitate the communicative event” (Karanasiou 2017, 202).

On the basis of Karanasiou’s work, to further explore the roles interpreters can take on during business negotiations, this paper first steps out of interpreting studies and into the field of negotiation theory. This is because the way clients conceptualize negotiation has an influence on how they involve and treat interpreters. Interpreting, in turn, as socially contexted behavior, is influenced by the expectations and behaviors of clients and audience (see Schöffner 2017). Unfortunately, clients, among them also international corporate executives who regularly work with interpreters, do tend to view interpreters with a certain degree of suspicion or at least seldom without reserve. Questions about interpreters’ skill and integrity are often raised that interpreters “can be a murky filter between the parties.” Even when interpreters perform well, still, “in all cases, a translator constrains the development of a close working relationship between the two sides”¹ (Salacuse 2004, 3). This prevailing doubt about interpreters from clients’ perspective prompts the author to seek answers for the two following questions: in the different phases of a business negotiation, what are the areas that clients would need and appreciate interpreters’ contribution beyond “just” interpreting? What exactly can interpreters do to contribute?

¹The author of this quoted article Jeswald Salacuse is a distinguished figure in law and diplomacy with years of experience in international negotiations. In the article, as its title *Negotiation in Translation* already suggests, there is no distinction between interpretation and translation—interpreters are called “translators”. In this article, he listed “seven rules for using translators” for American executives conducting business overseas. (1) Hire your own translator, and make your choice carefully. (2) Brief your translator before negotiations start. (3) Stay on guard. (4) Be sure to “chunk” it. (5) Slow down and focus on clarity. (6) Give your translator a break. (7) Respect your translators. Even though these rules sound slightly condescending, I dare say many practicing interpreters are thankful for any client that follow these rules to the letter.

With this outside-in approach, the author hopes to map out in business negotiations the zone of agency for interpreters where they can assert themselves as experts with needed skills and expertise. When interpreters openly and courageously position themselves in this zone to take expert action, it not only brings extra value to clients but also helps interpreters to protect themselves from “burnout or ‘helper syndrome’ when they do not reflect critically and honestly on their involvement as ‘participant observers’ with human(e) qualities in these contexts” (Bahadır 2010, 128). Despite, or perhaps exactly because of, the schizophrenic situation that interpreters often find themselves in and the skepticism they usually face, they can and should foster their perceived self-efficacy,² actively seek to equip themselves with the necessary knowledge and skills to masterfully change hats in different phases of a business negotiation.

2 Development of Negotiation Theory

Topics for business negotiations vary greatly. Aside from the buying/selling of goods and services that immediately comes to mind, labor disputes, coordinating with other players in common projects, setting up networks, exploring new business opportunities, verifying compliance issues, the list of topics goes on and on, encompassing all the aspects of a corporation. Negotiations happen, all the time and everywhere. In factory workshops, meeting rooms, banquet halls and online. With Power-Point presentations projected on the wall and over dinner tables. Between workers, managers, executives, 3rd-party technical experts and sometimes also government officials. With all these variations, the business world still constitutes only one arena where negotiations take place. Other arenas abound, examples including policy making and execution, international relations and the justice system. In all these arenas, a negotiating individual usually represent the interests of the institution or the group that he or she is affiliated with. Of course, individuals also negotiate in the private sphere, with family members, friends, co-workers and so on.

Negotiators have interests that they want to protect and advance; they possess power and resources (at least to a certain extent) to make decisions, but also need to answer to or at least be able to explain to others the results they have managed to obtain through negotiations. Very often, institutional relationship exists and persists between the negotiating parties. Negotiators also build up some kind of personal relationship between themselves. Both kinds of relationships inevitably influence and are influenced by the dynamics and the results of negotiations. Beyond these

²According to the psychologist Albert Bandura who first put forward the theoretical construct of self-efficacy: *People make causal contribution to their lives through mechanisms of personal agency. Among the mechanisms of agency, none is more central or pervasive than people’s judgements of efficacy. Perceived self-efficacy refers to beliefs in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given levels of attainments. Unless people believe they can produce desired effects by their actions, they have little incentive to act. Efficacy belief is, therefore, the foundation of agency* (cited from Bandura 2000, 16).

seemingly sober and objective calculations that go into the forming of decisions on whether and how to negotiate, negotiators are also under the prevalent yet often invisible influence of their institutional and national cultures. As human beings, they have their moods and emotions.

This abundance of practices and factors in negotiations has provided both impetus and raw material for research on negotiation theory. Especially the last thirty years have witnessed “the explosion of dispute resolution and negotiation in law and business school curricula” (Schneider and Lewicki 2016). One major revolution in the development of negotiation theory has been its focus shifting away from competitive positional bargaining. As marked by the publication of the first edition of Roger Fisher and William Ury’s book *Getting to Yes* in 1981 (now in its 3rd edition), writings have exposed the limitations of positional bargaining. As an alternative, a problem-solving approach to negotiation has been championed ever since. This approach encourages negotiators to treat each other less as adversaries but find ways to work effectively together, coming up with creative ways to deal with the common issue and building a long-term relationship.

The development of negotiation theory has been interdisciplinary right from the beginning. Although research on negotiation theory started in the field of law, it has continuously drawn ideas from business, economics, international relations, game theory, social and cognitive psychology, communication and other fields during the course of its 40-year history. In recent years, the field of anthropology has received growing attention, placing differences in negotiation behaviors on the basis of culture, gender and identity to the foreground and raising the sensitivity of negotiation researchers and practitioners for these differences.

3 Business as Usual? Positional Bargaining

3.1 Overview of Positional Bargaining

In many regions of the world, when people are asked about negotiation, the picture that often pops up instinctively in one’s head is that of a customer and a seller at some market, haggling over the price of a certain item³. This mental association with haggling, if left without further reflection, prompts people to view negotiation in general as a competition or even a zero-sum game between two parties. A zero-sum game assumes that there is only a fixed amount of value to be divided—my gain is your loss. Both parties will therefore seek to outcompete the other and get the bigger cut. Negotiations often become a “contest of wills”.

³Haggling is more common in some parts of the world than others; especially Asian countries are commonly perceived to have a deep-rooted practice of haggling. See Sood (2010) among others referring haggling as a cultural tradition in many countries.

In negotiation terminology, this adversarial approach is called “positional bargaining”. Usually, both parties would begin the negotiation with an extreme position—it could be an exorbitantly high price, a very tight deadline for delivery or a request for immediate and total commitment. During the negotiation process, both parties would make small concessions, carefully watching whether reciprocity is observed and constantly probing how far the other party is willing to compromise. Established tactics include setting effective anchors and avoiding being anchored⁴, cautiously managing concessions and using strategies of persuasion and influence.

In order to wield maximal influence on the adversary, ostensive show of power to the extent of bluffing, making threats, consciously withholding or distorting information, making false promises and other manipulative measures are not uncommon. Not much regard is paid to the potential damage to the interpersonal relationship and the long-term effects of a deal concluded in such a way. There is not much trust between the parties.

As often taught in travel advice to Asian countries, haggling has its fun side. Considering not all negotiators would have longer-term dealings with each other, using positional bargaining isn’t all bad. In simple business transactions on very specific and limited issues with low stake (like the purchase of some non-essential supplies or a one-off service contract), particularly when one party believes it has many other easily accessible and interchangeable alternatives, using positional bargaining can be quite efficient. It “requires little preparation other than knowing what your opening offer is, what concessions you are willing to make, and any threats you might use” (Weiss 2014).

As commonplace as positional bargaining may sound in business, it is considered to be ineffective to reach and sustain an agreement. Bargainers become fixated at their own proposal, reluctant to back down, which often cause them to lose sight of what else they might gain. Also, the process of starting with an extreme position and making small concessions can drag out the negotiation longer than it needs to be. Positional bargaining often becomes a “contest of wills” and if one party feels that they are being pressured too much, it leads to anger and resentment, sometimes even the breakdown of the whole negotiation (see Fisher et al. 2011).

3.2 Interpreters in Positional Bargaining

Positional bargaining situations can exert extra stress on interpreters that are uninformed about the common dynamics of bargaining. Especially interpreters that identify themselves strongly with their profession are likely to feel caught in the middle. Because of the lack of trust between the negotiating parties, intentions of remarks are almost always veiled. This heavily hampers interpreters from facilitating communication—their professional obligation. Additionally, it is not seldom that both of the bargaining sides feel suspicion and indignation towards the interpreter, especially if

⁴For the anchoring effect in negotiation, see also Glaeser (2020).

the interpreter has the same nationality, ethnic affiliation, race or some other easily recognizable trait as the “adversary”: either the client suspects the interpreter of not fully serving his/her interest, or the other party accuses the interpreter of “betraying your own kind.” Last but not the least, there is also the risk that a client accustomed to the position bargaining game would play this game with the interpreter either before or after the interpreting assignment. The client could attempt to subject the interpreter to the same set of tactics.⁵

How do interpreters cope when they find themselves in position bargaining situations then? Many would attempt to distance themselves psychologically from the negotiating parties and retreat into a mechanical way of interpreting, translating word for word, speaking consciously or unconsciously in the third person and using a flat tone. Although this shielding strategy or sometimes appears to be the only viable one, interpreters should use it with awareness. Continuously holding up this supposedly protective shield could abet a feeling of being instrumentalized and powerlessness, therefore negatively impact the perceived self-efficacy of interpreters (compare also with Turner and Best 2017 on Defensive Interpreting).

Another danger for interpreters resides in constant exposure to the tit-for-tat mindset of positional bargaining. Some interpreters might feel a sense of vengeance as they think they haven’t been treated fairly and respectfully or perceive the manipulative measures often employed in bargaining situations to be “normal.” They could then seek to gain from their unique place of being in the middle, resorting to profiteering behaviors such as selling information to a third party, asking for tip or commission, even though such behaviors evidently damage their reputation, may lead to expulsion from professional associations and constitute law infringement. Needless to say, unethical behaviors of some cast a shadow on all interpreters.

Despite the stress and difficulty in positional bargaining negotiations, there are still opportunities for ethical interpreters to be self-efficacious. As the saying goes, “knowledge is power.” Firstly, having knowledge on positional bargaining will help interpreters recognize quickly the situations they are in, enabling them to foresee possible courses of the negotiation. They can then get mentally prepared, predicting with more confidence the intentions of exchanged remarks to then choose appropriate interpreting tactics. Secondly, in the worst case with a negotiation (be it between a client and the adversary, or between a client and an interpreter) breaking down, understanding of the dynamics of positional bargaining could at least protect less experienced yet well-intentioned interpreters from excessive self-blame. What’s more, knowledge and experiences gained in bargaining situations could aid interpreters in their future decision making. As all of us have only limited time and energy, it is important to make informed choices on whether to take up an interpreting assignment and decide on what necessary precautions to take.

⁵In the professional experience of the author, a practicing interpreter since 2011, positional bargaining is the predominate approach of negotiation between language service providers (LSPs) and freelance interpreters in the language service sector in China. One can’t help but to speculate that this phenomenon is at least partly the result of pressure from upstream, i.e., positional bargaining between final clients and LSPs.

Going beyond defense, one thing interpreters could do is to apply conscientiously some of the tactics in positional bargaining to shape a better deal with clients. In cases where a working relationship with some degree of robustness exists between interpreters and clients, interpreters could also enquire about the aims and the strategies of clients before a negotiation starts. They could try to raise clients' awareness for the pitfalls of positional bargaining and perhaps nudge clients to consider some of the concrete suggestions in the principled approach oriented at joint problem-solving. Asking targeted questions is helpful for interpreters to navigate through the negotiation and may also aid clients in their preparation. This gesture of interpreters, in itself, already constitutes an active step toward forging a solution-oriented interpreter–client relationship. Once such a relationship is built, interpreters could refer to the proceedings described in Sect. 4.3.2.

4 The Principled Approach

4.1 Overview

As the business world becomes more complex each day, topics for negotiation interlink, stakeholders increase, more written and unwritten rules need to be observed. Establishing contact with a potential supplier or a customer, setting up a joint project, handling complaints and other disputes—in all these and many other cases, stakes are higher than just a single buy-and-sell of some standard item. Negotiating parties usually need to continue to work with each other, so there is a need to manage the relationship between them. Since the past can cast a long shadow, both for individual negotiators and for the institutions they represent, how an agreement is reached can be just as important as what is in the agreement. In particular, bigger projects often require continuous negotiations as well as sustained collaboration efforts from all involved parties.

Adopting the positional bargaining approach at a complex negotiation, no matter if one negotiates soft or hard, often doesn't serve these factors adequately. As the authors of the pivotal negotiation book *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement without Giving In* wrote in the introduction to the 3rd edition:

People find themselves in a dilemma. They see two ways to negotiate: soft or hard. The soft negotiator wants to avoid personal conflict and so makes concessions readily to reach agreement. He or she wants an amicable resolution; yet often ends up exploited and feeling bitter. The hard negotiator sees any situation as a contest of wills in which the side that takes the more extreme positions and holds out longer fares better. He or she wants to win; yet often ends up producing an equally hard response that exhausts the negotiator and his or her resources and harms the relationship with the other side (Fisher et al. 2011, 31).

This is the reason why the principled approach to negotiation is proposed, an approach that is “neither hard nor soft, but rather both hard *and* soft...hard on the

merits (of issues), soft on the people” (32). The combination of hard and soft is possible, because the proponents of this approach view the game of negotiation as having two levels. One level is on the substance, the “what” of a negotiation. It may be about a salary, a price, a complaint, a particular article in a contract. The other level, usually implicit, focuses on the procedure to address the substance. It is about the “how” of a negotiation, “a game about a game—a ‘meta-game’. Each move you make within a negotiation is not only a move that deals with rent, salary, or other substantive questions; it also helps structure the rules of the game you are playing. Your move may serve to keep the negotiations within an ongoing mode, or it may constitute a game-changing move.” (46).

One such game-changing move is for one party to frame the negotiation as a joint problem-solving process rather than an adversary process, creating “a pattern of *interdependence* out of the assumption of *independence*” (Rubin 1991, 4). There might be ways I could address my concerns and they don’t obstruct you from addressing yours, so why not explore these ways in a negotiation and move toward joint solutions? To use a common metaphor in negotiation theory, the size of the pie is seldom fixed—rather than focus all the attention on how to divide it, parties could investigate ways to enlarge it.

A principled negotiation thus becomes a way for parties to achieve “enlightened self-interest.” On one hand, it is about “self-interest”—each one is interested in doing well for himself or herself, satisfying underlying his or her own needs and wants. On the other hand, this interest is “enlightened” in the sense that there is “the acknowledgement by each side that the other is also likely to be pursuing a path of self-interest—and that it may be possible for *both* to do well in the exchange” (Rubin 1991, 4).

4.2 *The Method*

As mapped out by Fisher and Ury, the method of the principled approach is constituted of four elements: separating the people from the problem; focusing on interests, not positions; inventing options for mutual gain; and insisting on using objective criteria. Each of these four principles is explained below.

Separating the people from the problem means first and foremost to acknowledge all negotiators are human beings. All have emotions and biases. Coming from different backgrounds, all have varied values and views. All frequently mistake perception for reality. When feel attacked, some attack back, some immediately retreat. Misunderstanding and miscommunication happen all the time, very often unconsciously—all these and other factors make the jungle of “people problems.” Fisher and Ury suggest thinking about people problems in terms of three basic categories: perception, emotion, and communication. For perception, one key thing to do is trying to understand the other person’s viewpoint by putting oneself in the shoes of the other. When it comes to emotion, to register and anticipate your own emotional reactions is

as important as acknowledging and respecting the emotions of the other party. In an emotionally challenging situation, sometimes a simple gesture could go a long way to produce a constructive emotional impact. To ensure communication, the key thing to do is to listen actively and acknowledge what is being said, instead of being preoccupied in one's own mind, planning what oneself wants to say. And when one speaks, bear in mind to speak for a purpose. "Before making a significant statement, know what you want to communicate or find out, and know what purpose this information will serve" (83).

Even applying all these techniques at the table, it is still better to build a personal and organizational relationship first to "cushion the people on each side against the knocks of negotiation." "The best time to develop such a relationship is before the negotiation begins" (84). Also, throughout the principled negotiation process, a negotiator should pay attention not to mix up the anger at a situation with the anger at a person. Making sure neither party is forced to lose face is one more thing to bear in mind.

Focusing on interests instead of positions requires a clear separation of the two. Interests are desires, concerns, motivations, "the silent movers behind the hubbub of positions. Your position is something you have decided upon. Your interests are what caused you to so decide" (90). For example, a manufacturer may be having doubts about the distributor's credibility. This concern is then formulated into his position that demands the distributor to leave a big down payment. An employee may ask for a significant raise. Behind this position, her interest may be to gain more visibility in the company. Fisher and Ury point out that for two reasons, negotiators should try to reconcile interests rather than position. First, each interest can usually be expressed by several different positions, yet people tend to be fixated on the most obvious one. Second, behind conflicting positions, there are not only conflicting interests, but also reconcilable ones.

Then why do people so often get stuck in a tug of war on positions? It is at least partly due to the difficulty of identifying interests, not only those of the other party, sometimes also those of one's own. This is especially true when the parties involved are not individuals but groups of individuals. Therefore, in preparation for a complex negotiation, one needs to ask both the question "why" that the other party insists on a particular position and the question "why not" for choices you want them to make.

During the negotiation, the authors suggest negotiators should clearly and specifically explain their interests without implying the interests of the other party are unimportant or illegitimate. Also, to help people listen better to you, you need to make people feel you've understood them. This makes acknowledging and appreciating the interests of the other party also tactically important to you. Focusing on your interests doesn't mean to be closed minded about the view of the other party—it means actually to listen even more attentively and be open to suggestions.

The third element of the principled approach is inventing options for mutual gain. There are four major obstacles that hamper people from coming up with varied options: (1) judging and criticizing options prematurely; (2) searching for the single answer out of worry of digression or obfuscation; (3) the either-or thinking: either

I get my way, or you get yours; and (4) only concerning oneself with one's own immediate interests.

To tackle these four obstacles, the authors offer the following four prescriptions. The first prescription against prematurely judging options is to have a structured internal brainstorming session. People can first freely come up with as many options as possible without judging them. Usually there is a clear need here for a facilitator that keeps the meeting on track, makes sure everyone gets a chance to speak and asks stimulating questions. For some issues, it is even possible and advisable to brainstorm together with the other party. Needless to say, extra preparation and precaution is a must.

After the brainstorming session has freed up thinking, people need ways to formulate with constructive solutions. Instead of looking for one single answer, it is vital to broaden the options on the table. Among others, one important tool is to have experts from different disciplines look at the issue. At this stage, one is creating room for negotiation rather than looking for the right path. "Room can be made only by having a substantial number of markedly different ideas—ideas on which you and the other side can build later in the negotiation, and among which you can then jointly choose" (124).

Once room for negotiation is set up and various options have been put on the table, time has come to seek mutual gains rather than thinking in the either-or term. It is worth remembering that in every negotiation lie latent shared interests. These should be expressed explicitly; stressing them can make a negotiation smoother and more amicable. Shared interests and beliefs can be the basis of agreements, but so can different interests and beliefs: "Differences in interests and belief make it possible for an item to be of high benefit to you, yet low cost to the other side" (136). What's more, negotiating parties may value time differently, foresee the future differently, and have different degrees of risk aversion. All these differences can lend themselves for creative solutions.

As negotiators apply the first three prescriptions, they will realize that they are moving away from solely focusing on themselves, and increasingly toward shaping mutually acceptable or even preferable solutions. Here the authors point out: "Since success for you in a negotiation depends upon the other side's making a decision you want, you should do what you can to make that decision an easy one... To overcome the shortsightedness that results from looking too narrowly at one's immediate self-interest, you will want to put yourself in their shoes." (136) Understanding the interests of the other party and designing options that take these interests into account will not only make it easier for them to say yes, but also benefit the relationship between you and the other party.

In some cases, despite the best intentions and efforts, interests clash and can't be reconciled even in the most ingenious ways. The last element of the principled approach to negotiation deals with such cases: When interests are directly opposed, the parties should use objective criteria to resolve their differences instead of resorting to positional bargaining. Objective criteria should at least be independent of each side's will, ideally both legitimate and practical: such as scientific findings, professional standards, or legal precedents. There are three points to keep in mind when

using objective criteria: (1) Frame each issue as a joint search for objective criteria and enquire about the criteria of the other party. (2) Reason and be open to reason. This means even if you have prepared thoroughly from your perspective objective criteria, you still keep an open mind to the criteria the other party advances. (3) Never yield to pressure, whatever form it takes. Be it “a bribe, a threat, a manipulative appeal to trust, or a simple refusal to budge. In all these cases, the principled response is the same: invite them to state their reasoning, suggest objective criteria you think apply, and refuse to budge except on this basis.” (159) By following these three points, a negotiator prevents the negotiation from sliding into a positional bargaining.

Adopting the principled approach doesn't prescribe a negotiated agreement as the only way to realize one's self-interest. In fact, the cornerstone in the principled approach is the BATNA—the Best Alternative To a Negotiated Agreement. The goal of negotiators is to reach an agreement that would make them better off than their BATNA. If a negotiation hasn't produced better results than the BATNA, you should walk away from it. In this sense, a well developed BATNA protects negotiators from accepting a bad agreement. Seen from the positive side, BATNA means power in negotiation. “People think of negotiating power as being determined by resources like wealth, political connections, physical strength, friends, and military might. In fact, the relative negotiating power of two parties depends primarily upon how attractive to each is the option of not reaching agreement.” (208) When you have a strong BATNA, you can walk away more easily from a negotiation. This psychological boost, paired with skills in the principled approach, can help a negotiator to make the most of his/her assets even though the other party may appear more powerful.

The original designers of the principle approach, Roger Fisher, William Ury, and Bruce Patton, all have been employed by different US state institutions as mediators and consultants in international conflicts. They claim their approach has universal applicability, also beyond the arena of international affairs: “Principled negotiation can be used by diplomats in arms control talks, investment bankers negotiating corporate acquisitions, and by couples in deciding everything from where to go for vacation to how to divide their property if they get divorced...Every negotiation is different, but the basic elements do not change...Principled negotiation is an all-purpose strategy.” (Fisher et al. 2011, 37–38). This claim is not undisputed. Researchers and practitioners in business have raised doubts about real results of principled negotiations in the corporate setting (see for example Ebner and Efron 2009; Jensen 2013; Reyes 2015).

Going back to the field of the conflict management and negotiation research where the principled approach originally stems, there are also critical views on it. One of the central issues in this field is to explain variance of outcomes produced by mediation and negotiation efforts in conflicts. Among the three broad categories of theories in conflict resolution, the principled approach is a typical example of prescriptive theories. Prescriptive theories “explain any variance by emphasizing a set of behavioral norms that parties in conflict either follow (and hence achieve success), or fail to follow (and hence experience failure).” Bercovitch and Gartner stated in their (2009) article that the principled approach is unconvincing in explaining variance in outcomes.

Another criticism on the principled approach raised by the circle of international relations researchers is the lack of awareness for its own American culture-boundedness. The approach in its conception has somehow embedded a cross-cultural perspective, especially on the second level of negotiation, i.e., on the procedure to address the substance (see Sect. 4.1). “This second negotiation by and large escapes notice because it seems to occur without conscious decision. Only when dealing with someone from another country, particularly someone with a markedly different cultural background, are you likely to see the necessity of establishing some accepted process for the substantive negotiations” (Fisher et al. 2011, 53–54). While the book has made obvious attempts in some cases to incorporate practices from other cultures—the concept of “face-saving” being a conspicuous example—its main aim remains to distill out of the myriad of culturally specific negotiation practices “some accepted process,” thus still claiming this approach has culture-independent validity.

Citing Fisher’s newspaper articles before the 1990–91 Gulf War calling President Bush to consider Saddam Hussein’s needs and concerns, recommendations congruent with Fisher’s own “single, universally valid model of negotiation,” Raymond Cohen calls them “strikingly incongruous, and, indeed, culture-bound. His projection of Western concepts of fair play, negotiation by reasoned persuasion, due process, and equity onto the Iraqi dictator are inappropriate to the point of naïveté” (Cohen 1997, 216). In his book, Raymond Cohen demonstrates with a great number of examples in international relations that culture determines not only the procedural level of negotiation, but also the substance level, defining what can be negotiated and what issues would never even get on the agenda of a negotiation. Culture is “the hidden dimension,” exerts “a pervasive influence on the behavior of individuals, groups and societies...What one culture takes to be self-evident, another may find bizarre.” (Cohen 1997, 215). With research on cultural differences in negotiation research mushrooming over the last two decades, Roy J. Lewicki also concluded after an extensive review that “no one model will explain every cross-cultural situation” (Schneider and Lewicki 2016).

4.3 The Principled Approach and Interpreters

4.3.1 Interpreters as Practitioners of the Principled Approach

The principled approach was first developed within the frame of the Harvard Negotiation Project. Created in 1979, this project later became one of the founding organizations of the current Program on Negotiation (PON). In the four decades after the first edition of *Getting to Yes* was published, PON has grown from a special research project at Harvard Law School into a university consortium that includes faculty, students, and staff from Harvard University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Tufts University. Currently, PON is open to students from across the Boston area and also offers executive education training courses that have already reached

more than 35,000 global professionals⁶. With prominent teachers from law, business, psychology, international relations, and public affair, the principled approach to negotiation has spread far and wide, also deeply into the business world. The caliber and the standing of the PON faculty, the number of students reached, the professional background of executive trainees in the program all testify to the impact of the principled approach. Setting aside the question of whether one fully subscribes to the approach or not, chances are not small that interpreters would work for negotiating parties that adopt this approach. Therefore, it makes sense for interpreters to have at least some working knowledge of this approach to understand better what's happening at the table.

Before getting the chance to serve as interpreters at the negotiation table, familiarizing oneself with this approach could make interpreters better negotiators in their own right. With the problem-solving orientation and the method in mind, interpreters can systematically reflect and renew their own way of negotiating with language service providers and direct clients. At a minimum, the concept of BATNA and its usefulness may spur interpreters to invest efforts in developing strong BATNAs for themselves, for example, acquiring a second source of income, mastering a sought-after language, expanding the professional network, or managing personal finances better. Walking into a negotiation with a client while knowing that you can afford to refuse this assignment will give you greater confidence and ease to uphold your interests.

The principled approach can also encourage a change in the mindset of interpreters: instead of the question "how do I get paid more?", interpreters can start asking themselves "what are the shared interests of myself and this client?" and "how do we best work together to ensure the success of the meeting?". In this way, interpreters shift their focus away from a positional bargaining on remuneration, seeing more the bigger picture of the communication occasion and its significance to clients. This mindset change can help interpreters liberate themselves from feeling like a passive instrument, empowering them to exert their agency in the context of the occasion, and to actively contribute to its success. Such an assertive yet client-oriented stance would in turn prompt clients to view interpreters more than "a necessary evil," but as trustworthy experts providing needed service and expertise. Negotiating in the principled way with clients can clearly demonstrate to them that the expertise of interpreters goes well beyond "speaking two languages," which is conducive for interpreters to establish themselves also as competent consultants for negotiations between the client and the other party.

Having established a work relationship with a client for a particular assignment, signed an official or unofficial Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA),⁷ an interpreter

⁶For information on the Harvard Negotiation Project and the Program on Negotiation, see PON website: <https://www.pon.harvard.edu/>.

⁷AIIC, the International Association of Conference Interpreters, has established Code of Professional Ethics that is binding for all members of the Association in their work as conference interpreters and also set up the Disciplinary and Disputes Committee for any breach of the rules in the Code. Article 2, which pertinent to the question of confidentiality, clearly states that its members shall be bound by the strictest secrecy and shall refrain from deriving any personal gain (see AIIC

could then attempt to have an open and candid conversation with the client on the upcoming negotiation*. This conversation is aimed at finding out how the client plans to go about the negotiation, identifying areas where there may be a need for and a presence of expertise of the interpreter, as well as gaining the client's approval for the active involvement of the interpreter in the negotiation.

Also, this conversation offers a chance for the interpreter to get the parameters of the negotiation: Who will be on both sides of the table? Where will the negotiation happen? What issues have been discussed previously and what will be discussed this time? What goals does the client have in mind? What is the timeline for the client? How is the existing institutional relationship between the two entities? How is the interpersonal relationship between the client and the other party? It may be helpful to prepare a checklist of key questions for this conversation. From both the perspective of the client and the interpreter, such a checklist makes sure that all the presently available information has been put together; the client and the interpreter are aligned on these basic points. Been prompted by the interpreter to answer all these questions also serves as a step in the client's preparation, opening up a chance for the client to reflect on both the goals and the fundamentals of the upcoming negotiation.

4.3.2 Interpreters as Active Participants in a Principled Negotiation

In the temporal context, any negotiation can be roughly divided into three phases: a sequence of events preceding the negotiation ("pre-negotiation phase"), the negotiation proper ("action phase"), and another sequence of events following the conclusion of a negotiated agreement ("review phase"). Usually, the interpreter is only involved in the "action" phase, or shortly before and afterwards. In both the pre-negotiation phase where the client prepares for the negotiation, and in the review phase where the results of the negotiation are formulated into an agreement or preparation is made for the next round of negotiation, the interpreter is seldom present. Sometimes because of the time constraints or the geographic distance between the client and the interpreter. Or because that neither the client nor the interpreter sees the necessity of getting involved. However, if the interpreter is both allowed and willing to engage also in the pre-negotiation and the review phase, with solid mastery of the principled approach and sharp awareness for cross-cultural communication, she can

2010 Basic Texts. Codes of Professional Ethics). This article, in the author's opinion, should also be abided by every interpreter loyal to this profession. That is to say, their discretion and secrecy shouldn't be dependent on whether an NDA is signed or not.

* From this point on in this paper, "negotiation" will only mean the international business negotiation between the client and the other party/parties as mediated by the interpreter. For the sake of simplicity, from this point on the article will refer to client and interpreter in the singular form, even though in reality the client side usually consists of several people with varied functions and positions in the corporate hierarchy; for big-scale cross-border business negotiations a team of interpreters may be employed. Considering the interpreters in real life are overwhelmingly female, this paper will use the female pronoun for the interpreter.

bring substantial value as a consultant both to the client and indirectly to the whole negotiation.

Considering the criticism at the culture-boundedness of the principled approach laid out at the end of the previous section, having the interpreter to provide a different cultural perspective may be highly valuable to the client. Country-specific advice on negotiation abounds, and various studies do suggest culture affects negotiating style (see for example Salacuse 1998). Either at the client's request or out of her own initiative, the interpreter could consider offering some general advice from her own reading, experiences, and reflection, though it must be noted that here the line between expertise sharing to spreading or strengthening stereotypes and cliches can be, and often is, blurry. Another thing to bear in mind both by the client and by the interpreter is this: even though culture does significantly shape certain aspects of a negotiation, behaviors of individual negotiators and the real circumstances of a negotiation may diverge greatly from any preconceived notions, however well-grounded they may be in general. Therefore, the consulting interpreter asking targeted questions to raise the culture awareness of the client is at least just as valuable as giving concrete "to-do" tips. Being a capable consultant means having not only the needed expertise for some questions in a given area, but also the awareness for one's own limitation for other questions. Especially in a setting where the client has overwhelmingly deeper knowledge in his or her own business field and possibly already previous experiences working with parties from the other culture, providing consultancy in the form of asking questions rather than offering some off-the-shelf advice may be more appropriate and more effective.

Negotiation analysts have long observed that some of the most important work takes place before the parties arrive at the negotiation table (See Cohen 1997). This is true not only for international diplomatic negotiation but also for business negotiation (See Rubin 1991). As evident from the Sects. 4.1 and 4.2, a principled negotiation needs thorough preparation. For all four elements of the principled approach, there are numerous cultural specifics to be considered. As each client differs in educational and professional background, personality, sensitivity, and other aspects, it is vital to enquire about the client's needs. For some clients, an introduction in broad strokes on the basics may suffice. For others, it is necessary to conduct a nuanced investigation on certain cultural aspects. For the interpreter who assists the client on this investigation, it is important to remember that in this interconnected age where information appears to be ubiquitous, yet not always verifiable, clients who are about to enter into an international business negotiation never start from a blank slate. They are not only influenced by their previous experiences, but usually have also read the off-the-shelf advice available in books and on the internet.

For example, for the element of "separating the people from the problem," a piece of well-known advice is building a personal relationship with the other party prior to the negotiation. To a client going for the first time to a particular country for a brief survey, it may be enough just to suggest planning more time for each meeting. But for a client who is entering into a big project or planning for a stable cooperation, going deeper into the relationship issue may be worthwhile. How such a relationship is built through certain rituals and gestures, how much each person

is expected and willing to disclose about himself or herself, to what degree this relationship has an influence on the stance of one's own and the other party, how an established relationship is maintained, all these are culturally specific questions that the interpreter could explore with the client.

Here are some other examples where the interpreter could support the client as an external consultant in the pre-negotiation phase: brainstorming alternatives, rehearsing opening remarks to the negotiation, coming up with culturally effective ways to express and acknowledge appreciation and building rapport. The hat as an external consultant also makes it possible for the interpreter to act briefly as the other party of the negotiation, proposing some possible shared and divergent interests that could be taken into the account by the client.

Aside from these more visible and behavior-related points, an important aspect in preparing for a negotiation is to at least foresee some of the positive and negative emotions that may arise (See Fisher and Shapiro 2006). As most negotiations last longer than expected and at least some negotiations get heated, having awareness for one's own frustration, tiredness, or anger serves as the first step to prevent a downward spiral. This last point is something that the interpreter should prepare herself for as well.

Not all preparation will be used, yet when it comes to preparation for a negotiation (or for any interpreting assignment), the saying of Benjamin Franklin always applies: "By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail."

At the end of this pre-negotiation phase, depending on the client's attitude and how confident the interpreter is of her own methodology and ability, she could highlight some of the common challenges of a long negotiation. Factors to consider include: first, in an international negotiation that requires long distance travel, physical wellbeing of all people at the table is frequently subliminal yet impacts both the communication and the interpersonal relationship. This factor should be given special attention when the client is hosting. Second, verbal expressions of indignation, resistance, and other negative emotions often vary starkly in different cultures. It may be necessary to call for a break before the atmosphere in the negotiation deteriorates unintendedly. Third, in the negotiating process, fueled by negative emotions, interests and positions tend to entangle and parties may need some hints to take a step back and reconsider. Someone at the table may need to raise clarifying questions on contentious issues. In all these cases and many others, facilitation skills are called for, a point worth making to the client. Ultimately, of course, it is the decision of the client whether the interpreter or some other person at the table is to take on the role of the facilitator.

Whether the client approves the interpreter taking on a facilitating role or not, in the "action" phase, the interpreter can (and in the author's opinion must) apply one central skill in facilitation: empathetic listening, that is, "listen with our ears and our eyes for both the spoken and the unspoken communication. By paying attention to the words, tone of voice, body language, and gestures, we enhance our understanding of what is being said, how the client feels about it, and what lies beneath the words" (IAF Handbook 2005, 88). It is common knowledge nowadays that only a part of communication happens verbally, much more nuances lie in the tone of voice, the

facial expression, the gesture, and other non-verbal forms. On one hand, every reading of non-verbal communication carries risks of misreading, to provide a 100% mirror image of another person on the spot is not feasible; on the other hand, the interpreter still should pay attention to non-verbal cues that may at least help her to decipher the emotional tone of certain messages.

During the “action” phase of the negotiation, particularly when the other party doesn’t have its own interpreter, the interpreter serves both parties of the negotiation, not only the client. Here the author refers to and explicitly advocates for the expository interpreting as proposed by Turner and Best (2017): “a stance of knowingly co-constructive openness between the interpreter and the primary participants. Expository interpreting entails taking the initiative to discern meaning, and to deliver its significance sufficiently, drawing upon everything one knows about everything; and, at the same time, being willing to open one’s decision making to others’ scrutiny when one believes, in good faith, that it is in her interests that one should do so.” (309–310).

After the negotiation has ended,⁸ or before the negotiation officially ends, drafting the minutes of the meeting is something the interpreter could consider offering assistance to. Going through the notes of the negotiation, offering possible alternative explanations to certain remarks or moves of the other party and brainstorming for concrete action points, are some examples that the client might consult with the interpreter. Since in the case of most negotiations, just as in football, “after the game is before the game,” a review phase serves as the basis for the preparation of the next round. The impressions gained in the last negotiation can inform future dealing; opinions exchanged can be used for analysis of unvoiced interests of the other party; in issues where contention resides, a search for objective criteria that can be accepted by both parties may need to start immediately. Once again, the interpreter could put on the hat as an external consultant, asking targeted questions for the client to reflect his or her own thoughts.

As stated previously, a competent consultant should know what she does and doesn’t know. On one hand, through careful observation, extensive reading on negotiation and communication, wide exposure to a great variety of topics in different areas, as well as deep reflection on the cultures that she usually works with, the interpreter gains a unique place as *the third party* where she could undertake certain tasks of a mediator or a facilitator. She could, through identification of issues and judicious intervention, help the negotiation to move toward mutual gain. On the other hand, half-baked advice hastily given may put the other party in negotiation in the wrong light, throw the client’s negotiation strategy off track and undermine the interpreter’s own reputation. Before the phrase “culture difference” is uttered, the interpreter must truly have grounded knowledge and reflection in both cultures that she works with. This point will be further elaborated in the next section.

⁸In some cultures, as pointed out by Raymond Cohen, the end may be very difficult to define: an agreement signed sometimes is just the beginning of more negotiations. See for example Cohen 1997, Chap. 11: When is a Deal a Deal?

Beyond cultural differences, an array of other factors must be considered in any international business deal: political and legal pluralism; international monetary factors; the role of government and bureaucracies; instability and sudden change; and ideological differences (see Salacuse 1991). What concrete topics within these factors are discussed and how they are discussed, are in turn shaped by cultural differences and may sometimes require explanation. Considering the high degree of complexity that underlies the exchanged remarks at the table, the most appropriate guiding principle for the action of the interpreter may be the saying from the Analects: “To know what it is that you know, and to know what it is that you do not know.”

5 Some Specifics About Sino-German Business Negotiations

Since 2016, People’s Republic of China has become the biggest trade partner of Germany for four years in a row.⁹ In 2019, the trade volume (both export and import) between the two countries reached 206 Billion Euros. Such a number is built by a myriad of actors, operating across different networks and within complex frameworks of national cultures, state regulations, and international rules. Setting up new plants, expanding sales networks and marketing activities, forging new partnerships and ending old ones, on all these topics and many others, negotiations are held.

It is no secret now that people from different cultures negotiate differently, but different in what ways? Research results and the pictures offered by off-the-shelf negotiation advice can vary significantly. Seeing the following three examples, both the client and the interpreter is well advised to ask, to what extent, the way one culture/country judges the other reveals its view about itself? How is the self-view projected onto the other?

Juxtaposing the Chinese negotiation approach with the American, Harvard Business Review published an article in 2003 that characterizes the Chinese approach like this: Chinese tend to have long courting process instead of quick meetings, tend to be formal rather than informal and use often intermediaries. In information exchange, Chinese negotiators at the table tend to have only limited authority, give information indirectly and put forward explanations first instead of proposals. In means of persuasion, Chinese are patient and enduring, prone to use questioning rather than aggressive tactics. When it comes to agreement, Chinese value forging a long-term relationship over forging a “good deal” (Graham and Lam 2003).

In another older study that aimed at determining through surveys how culture influences negotiation in ten countries, among them Germany and China, ten factors (with their polar extremes) are measured (Salacuse 1998). Several interesting findings are selected and listed here as follows:

⁹Data from the German Federal Statistics Office (in German): <https://www.destatis.de/DE/Themen/Wirtschaft/Aussenhandel/handelspartner-jahr.html> (last access: 20th August 2020.)

- (1) On the factor negotiating goals (contract or relationship?), 54% of Germans responded with contract orientation, 45% Chinese—noted also by the author of the study “the preference for a relationship was not as pronounced among the Chinese as one might have expected from the literature” (226).
- (2) Regarding attitudes to the negotiating process (win/win or win/lose?), Chinese scored 82 toward win/win, i.e., negotiating in a collaborative and problem-solving way. This is significantly higher than the 55 of Germans.
- (3) On the factor of styles of communication (direct or indirect?) 18% of Chinese respondents stated that they communicate indirectly, in contrast to only 9% of Germans. The author believed the organizational culture of the participants and their international experience may have strongly influenced their response.
- (4) On the tendency to display emotions at the negotiating table or not, 73% of Chinese respondents answered that they would show emotions, in contrast to only 36% of German respondents.

If one would google “Verhandeln mit Chinesen” (negotiate with Chinese), besides many tips on dos and don’ts, one finds also such titles in major economy media: from *Handelsblatt* “Whoever shows emotions, is lost in China” (Schmitt 2007), from *Manager Magazin*: “Hiding a Dagger behind the Smile” (Langer 2004) and “Smiling Dragon” (Frank 2005). One also finds on the website of Germany Trade & Invest (GTAI), the economic development agency of the Federal Republic of Germany, an article called “Compact Guide on Negotiation—China,” offering as fundamental rules of conduct: “The Chinese are difficult and insistent partners, or rather, as frequently, adversaries in negotiations. Figuratively speaking, if one isn’t yet lying on the floor gasping for air, the Chinese side will still see room for maneuver. Although people in China talk repeatedly about ‘mutual benefit’ and ‘common interests’, the concept of ‘live and let live’ oriented at building long-term business is rather alien for many counterparts, friendly as they may be.”¹⁰(Schmitt 2019). Interestingly, a popular German guidebook on negotiation written by a German expert, never even mentions the possibility of a win/win negotiation (see Schraner 2006).

China and Germany are just examples of how contrasting depictions may color the general view of the client toward the upcoming negotiation and even the final business decision. As a well-informed consultant, the interpreter can be a counterweight for balancing and finetuning the existing notions of the client. This, perhaps, is the key value that the interpreter can provide to the client in all phases of the negotiation as a consultant.

¹⁰“Chinesische Gegenüber sind harte und beharrliche Verhandlungspartner oder, nicht selten passender, -gegner. Wenn man, bildlich gesprochen, nicht am Boden liegt und noch Luft zum Schnaufen hat, dann besteht aus chinesischer Sicht nach wie vor Spielraum. Selbst wenn immer wieder von ‘mutual benefit’ oder ‘common interests’ die Rede ist, das langfristig orientierte kaufmännische Konzept des “Leben und leben lassen” ist vielen Counterparts - bei aller Freundlichkeit - eher fremd.” English translation by the author of the paper.

6 Conclusion: Trust and Trustworthiness

In many business negotiations, it is not uncommon for companies to use a (supposedly) bilingual¹¹ employee as interpreter instead of hiring a professional. Cost saving, apparent as it is, often isn't the only reason why such a decision is made. All kinds of reasoning may be at work here: The employee is "one of us" so there is no need to doubt about his or her loyalty. He or she is familiar with the company's structure and people, so will be confident and ready to defend its interests. Confidentiality is guaranteed, so it is possible to go over the strategy, the tactics, and all relevant information together for preparation. The employee knows the topics for discussion, the background of the negotiation, has the technical expertise and also knows the specific terminology. Sometimes, a negotiation is scheduled on such short notice that there just isn't enough time to find a professional. The possibility that the company had negative prior experiences with external interpreters can also not be ruled out.

In many cases where a professional interpreter is hired, especially for critical occasions, there is usually at least one other person present from the client's side who also speaks the languages of the negotiation. This may very well be the client having similar doubts about the interpreter as quoted in footnote Nr.1, Rule Nr.3: stay on guard. The negotiation expert Prof. Salacuse tells business executives to be alert to interpreters who try to take control of negotiations or slant them in a particular way because of personal interests or ego. He also gives a warning about interpreters adding in personal business advice.

To the ears of professional interpreters, these concerns are uncomfortable. From the perspective of clients, though, the concerns have their legitimacy. In a way, they are all modern expressions of the century-old doubts, even suspicions, that interpreters have always faced—raised sometimes by the client, as well as by all other stakeholders in a negotiation: "Whose side is the interpreter on?" "How capable is she?" "Is she really saying what I am saying?" "Are we letting her know too much?" or "Does she know enough to do the job adequately?" In other words, "Can she be trusted?"

Baroness Onara O'Neill, a leading moral philosopher of current times, wrote: "Trust requires an intelligent judgement of trustworthiness. So those who want others' trust have to do two things. First, they have to be trustworthy, which requires competence, honesty and reliability. Second, they have to provide intelligible evidence that they are trustworthy, enabling others to judge intelligently where they should place or refuse their trust." (O' Neill 2013)¹²

An interpreter adopting the different roles as depicted above becomes highly visible in all phases of a negotiation and her actions carries strongly her own signature. How competent she is in terms of language, communication, and negotiating, how

¹¹* The word "bilingual" here is used in the very loose sense of having one language as mother tongue and at least basic knowledge and skills needed to conduct a conversation in another language.

¹²The Baroness gave a TED talk titled *What We Don't Understand About Trust* in the TEDxHouse-OfParliament event 2013 in front of the members of the British Parliament and later wrote this blog article for TED.

aware she is of herself and of her projection into the minds of the client and the other party, how solid her methodology is, how openly and transparently she communicates about her knowledge and expertise, how consistent she is with her words and deeds, how discreetly she handles information—she would be demonstrating all these facets of her professional self. In other words, in order to gain the client’s trust in her to take on different roles, she has to be trustworthy and provide intelligible evidence of it. Instead of trying to fend off doubts that she is “meddling” therefore can’t be trusted, she takes the initiative, throws herself into the ring by explicitly defining her active roles and delivering performance, and proves that she is trustworthy.

In the increasingly neo-liberal and “faceless” market of language services where price seems to be the only factor that matters and interpreters are increasingly viewed as interchangeable, it is all too easy to efface oneself for a coat of presumed invisibility and call it professionalism. True professionalism, however, demands character. Just like in the words of General de Gaulle (1962):

The difficulty attracts the man of character, because embracing it, he becomes himself. Had he overcome it or not, it is an affair between them. Like a jealous lover he does not share what it gives him or what it costs to him. He seeks in it, whatever the outcome may be, the bitter joy to be responsible.

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Policy-Related Studies

Gestation of State Translation Program Embedded in Liang Qichao's "On Translation of Books" (*Lùn Yì Shū* 論譯書)



Yuxia Gao

Abstract In this study, translation is regarded as an act of State. In the Chinese context, this kind of translation activity not only provides governors and officials with a primary agent of state governance, but also offers Chinese intellectuals imported paradigms of thinking and knowledge of modern science and technologies. Focusing on translation thoughts embedded in the article "On Translation of Books" (*Lùn yì shū* 論譯書), which was written by the leading Chinese reformer Liang Qichao (*Liáng qǐ chāo* 梁啟超) in 1897, this paper investigates Liang's critical comments on the previous translation projects carried out by the national translating institutions and the new translation norms he set forth to guide the future translation activities to save the nation from extinction. Based on a review of the translation thoughts during the late Qing dynasty and close reading of the article "On Translation of Books", the author finds out that it was Liang Qichao who systematically discussed translation programs initiated by a State for the first time. Moreover, the article "On Translation of Books" is the thinking formation of State Translation Program, a new concept of translation studies put forward by Chinese scholars in 2015. Therefore, it should occupy a significant position in the history of translation thoughts in China.

1 Introduction

It has become a consensus that the period from the late Qing dynasty to the May Fourth Movement is the transitive period of Chinese translation thoughts, but even ideas that have been accepted by most translation scholars should be discussed and analyzed from the perspectives of modern translation theories. In 2019, the 100th anniversary of the May Fourth Movement, Chinese translation scholars (Xie 2019; Xu 2019; Wang 2019; Lan 2019) re-discussed the translation activities during this period, but most of them still hold that the May Fourth period is the transition of Chinese translation thoughts. However, without the germination of new translation thoughts

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in the late Qing dynasty, it would be impossible to make a sweeping transformation of Chinese translation thoughts from tradition to modernity during the period of the May Fourth. It is also one of the reasons that most scholars who study the history of Chinese translated literature do not view the year 1919 as the beginning of modern translated literature in China. Meng and Li (2005) regarded the year 1897 as the starting point of the history of modern translated literature because “ ‘On Translation of Books’ (*Lùn yì shū* 論譯書) written by Liang Qichao (*Liáng qǐ chāo* 梁啟超, 1873–1929) was published in that year” (Li and Lan 2018, 18). Xie and Zha (2003, 31) believed that “among the three major events which proclaimed the beginning of the history of Chinese translated literature in the 20th century, the first one was that Liang Qichao advocated translating political novels in ‘Foreword to the Translation and Publication of Political Novels’ (*Yì yìn zhèng zhì xiǎo shuō xù* 译印政治小說序)” and he was “the earliest advocate of translated literature” in China (Chen 1989, 7).

Liang Qichao, one of the leading intellectuals of the late Qing and early Republican period, played a significant part in shaping the modernization of both translation practices and theories. However, as Luo (2005, 178) states, “Liang’s critical thinking on translation is underrated in the literature”. In the past 15 years, increasing scholarly attention has been paid to the translation thoughts and practices of Liang, but the study mainly focuses on his literature translation after he fled to Japan in 1898. Lu (2007) explores Liang Qichao’s advocacy of translating political novels as a tool to illuminate Chinese people in the fourth chapter of his Ph.D. dissertation titled “Translation and Nation: Negotiating ‘China’ in Translations of Lin Shu, Yan Fu, and Liang Qichao”. Jiang (2009) investigates Liang’s “random translation” (*Háo jié yì* 豪傑譯) in a systemic way. Chi (2019, ix) examines “the development of Chinese translation practice in relation to the rise of ideas of modern selfhood in China from the 1890s to the 1920s” and the focus of his study is Liang’s translation thoughts and practices of using translation as a means for modernizing literature and citizenship as well as his influence on the coming generations such as Hu Shi (*Hú shì* 胡適, 1891–1962). Similarly, based on a review of Liang’s literature contributions through his fiction, poem translation, and style recreation of translation, Hu (2020, 151) points out that it was Liang Qichao rather than Yan Fu (*Yán fū* 嚴復, 1854–1921) or Lin Shu (*Lín shū* 林紓, 1852–1924) who uplifted the status of literary translation with highly appealing theoretical advocacy and exemplary literary translation activities.

In the above instances, the scholars have only brushed lightly over Liang’s translation thoughts in and after the year of 1898. Liang’s advocacy of translating Western learning was first to be demonstrated in the article “On Translation of Books”, which was published in *China Progress* (*Shí wù bào* 時務報) as serials in 1897. In the late Qing dynasty, with the social crisis intensified, the Chinese intellectuals such as Wei Yuan (*Wèi yuán* 魏源, 1794–1897), Ma Jianzhong (*Mǎ jiàn zhōng* 馬建忠, 1845–1900), Yan Fu, Kang Youwei (*Kāng yǒu wéi* 康有为, 1858–1927), Liang Qichao and so on began to regard translation and introduction of Western learning as a critical instrument of cultural and political transformation. Meanwhile, a large number of Western books had been introduced into China, and the integration of Chinese

and Western culture and knowledge had contributed to the evolution of the theoretical model and approaches of translation studies. As a famous Chinese politician, philosopher, educator, historian, and literature, Liang Qichao was arguably one of the foremost intellectual leaders during the reign of Emperor Guangxu (*Guāng xù* 光緒, 1871–1908). After China's defeat by Japan in the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895), civil examination candidates led by Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao signed a petition to the Emperor to oppose to the *Treaty of Shimonoseki* (*Mǎ guān tiáo yuē* 馬關條約). The political movement was well-known as “Public Vehicles Presenting a Memorial” (*Gōng chē shàng shū* 公車上書). From then on, the writings of Liang and Kang caught the attention of Emperor Guangxu.

Supported and sponsored by the Emperor, Kang and Liang, declared “self-strengthening” was not enough, and institutional and ideological changes must be accompanied. Against this backdrop, Liang turned Western book translation into a major way to acquire Western knowledge in a full scale. His thought of translating Western works was published with the title of “On Translation of Books”. Later, together with other 12 articles, it was compiled into a volume titled *A General Discussion on Reform* (*Biàn fǎ tōng yì* 變法通議), which became a guideline of the Hundred Days' Reform (*Bǎi rì wéi xīn* 百日維新) in 1898. It is the first article that advocates and discusses translation in the modern literary world. Therefore, it is beneficial both to Chinese translation theories and the understanding of the relationship between Chinese and foreign literature in modern China (Xu 2000, 137). The article “On Translation of Books”, which mainly focuses on the relationship between translating Western books and the development of the country, can be logically divided into three parts: the significance of translating Western books, the problems of previous translation practices, and the establishment of new and workable translation norms. Therefore, as a part of his reform thought, Liang Qichao's advocacy of translation in this article, aimed at strengthening the nation through political reform and had little to do with literary translation. His thought on literature translation was reflected in another article “Foreword to the Translation and Publication of Political Novels”, which was published in *Qingyi bao* (*Qīng yì bào* 清議報), founded in Japan in 1898.

As mentioned before, compared with thoughts and practices of literary translation, which have been closely discussed, Liang's translation thoughts in the article “On Translation of Books” is still under-explored or re-interpreted inappropriately. For example, considering the fact that Liang believed that the selection of texts for translation was the first priority in “On Translation of Books”, Luo (2005, 180) points out that “the books he referred to were all political novels from the West that aimed to educate readers”. In reality, the top texts Liang proposed to translate are regulations of Western countries instead of novels. His proposal of “revolution of fiction” was put forward during his exile in Japan after the failure of the Wuxu reform. From then on, he turned to literary translation and took it as a sharp sword to debunk the dark society and bankrupt government, and awaken and educate the Chinese people. Su (2008, 76), the only one who reinterprets Liang's “On Translation of Books” from the perspectives of sociology, finds that Liang's translation thought “initiates the sociological dimension and embodies the modernization of Chinese traditional translation theories” because there are “some fundamental propositions related to

cultural capital, patrons, norms and other essential concepts of translation sociology". Her research provides an insightful perspective for the re-interpretation of Liang's thought during the period of reformation movement, but it doesn't touch on Liang's pioneering understanding of the role of State in translation practice. Although he was disappointed with the Qing government after the failure of reform, his translation thoughts represented in "On Translation of Books" were aesthetic and academic. His thoughts were formed on the foundation of an overview of the translation histories both at home and abroad, as well as a profound study of the translation of Buddhist scriptures. He was the first person who became aware of the active role of State and government in translation activities.

After making a review of the translation thoughts during this period, it is found that an idea of "State Translation Program" was germinated in the article "On Translation of Books". Therefore, the present article intends to explore the thinking of State Translation Program in this political article on translation. Considering that the concept of State Translation Program was coined by Chinese scholars in just recent years, an introduction will be made first to elaborate on the relations and distinctions between the new term and the frequently used concepts, such as "institutional translation" and "government translation". Then, based on close reading and reinterpreting of "On Translation of Books" from the perspective of sociological translation studies, a systematic analysis of the reasons why it is the sprouting idea of State Translation Program will be made from three aspects.

2 From Institutionalized Translation to State Translation Program

Since Brian Mossop (1988) emphasized that translating institutions had been ignored in translation theory, translation has more or less been investigated as a kind of institutional practice, with increasing attention being paid to the settings in which translations are produced and disseminated.

2.1 Institutionalized Translation

Translation that occurs in institutional settings is broadly defined as "institutional translation". However, the concept itself is problematic, partially due to "the categorical ambiguity of the concept of institution". "Translation itself is arguably an institution in its own right" and "translators and translations inevitably become associated with an institution" because of the commissioning and publishing mechanism of translation practice. (Kang 2009, 141). In this respect, the concept has been redefined by different scholars from distinctive perspectives.

Applying the abstract usage of institution to Translation Studies, Hermans argues translation itself is institution:

Firstly, that translation, as institution, is circumscribed by expectations which have both cognitive and normative elements in them; secondly, that, beyond this, these expectations also structure the ‘domain’, or the ‘field’, or indeed the ‘system’ of translation, in the sense in which Niklas Luhmann speaks of expectations as constituting the structure of social systems (1984:377ff.); and thirdly, that since we are dealing with translation, the matter is more complicated than it looks (Hermans 1995, 5)

Defining all translation as institutional is helpful to improve our understandings of the social mechanism of translation activities and widen the application range of “institutional translation”, but it also harms its explanatory power. On the contrary, based her own working experience in EU, Koskinen gives a definition in a much narrower and more specific way:

We are dealing with institutional translation in those cases when an official body (government agency, multinational organization or a private company, etc.; also a person acting in an official status) uses translation as a means of ‘speaking’ to a particular audience. Thus, in institutional translation, the voice that is to be heard is that of the translating institution. As a result, in a constructivist sense, the institution itself gets translated (Koskinen 2008, 22)

Considering that institutional translation has so far mostly centered on translation practice in the large and important institutions or organizations, and its definition is either too broad or too narrow, we prefer to use the term “institutionalized translation”, which is introduced into Translation Studies by Michaela Wolf in her study of the translation practices in the Habsburg monarchy in 2012. She argues that “institutionalized translation”, contrasting to “habitualized translation”, dominates in three central areas: the school, the army, and the administration of the multilingual monarchy (Wolf 2012, 88–90). Compared with institutional translation, institutionalized translation is a much more insightful term to investigate translation activities, because it implies “a transitive process leading from no institutionalization to increasing and finally full-fledged institutionalization” (Koskinen 2014, 489).

Due to the increasing complexity of translation activities, translation practices gradually go beyond a loose and unfixed mode, which is implemented by individuals or groups independently, and move to a well-organized and fixed mode, which relies on institutional or organizational systems. This phenomenon can be called “institutionalization of translation”. On the one hand, the change of translation mode is a natural development of translation activities itself due to the self-consciousness of actors carrying out translation activities. On the other hand, it is interfered with by political or ideological entities. In the latter case, the translation behavior is not limited to individuals, institutions and market, but is closely related to the interests of political entities. The political or ideological entities at the national level, tend to incorporate translation activities into the state system, more specifically, turn it into an act of state in an attempt to realize their political goals. Translation becomes a part of the national undertaking.

Therefore, institutionalization of translation signifies two different facets, the institutionalization of translation practice automatically and the institutionalization

of translation production with the engagement of the political or ideological entities. With the development of translation practice, the standards, norms, poetics, strategies, and methods of translation become mature gradually, a common value system of translation can be established. It is the representation of translation itself, which marks the stability of translation practice. This kind of institutionalization of translation is naturally formed in the process of its development.

From the perspective of ideological engagement, certain regulations and standards are formulated for translation. Any translation that violates the standards and regulations is regarded as criticism, treason or even slander of political ideology, which is not allowed to exist. Therefore, this type of translation is contained by ideology greatly, with a characteristic of compulsion and arbitrariness, which can be seen in two aspects; the organizational structure and behavior mode of translation community. To the former, translation is incorporated into the national political system, and the production, publication, and circulation of translation are included in the national cultural production (rather than national industry), becoming part of the political and institutional culture. Under the control of state will, translating institutions with unified systems and rules are established. These institutions, which are superior to the individual translator, represent the coercive force of the national ideological authority, standardize the behavior of the members in pursuit of their interests, and maintain the stability and unity of the organizations with the identity or unity of interests, thus forming a unique organizational structure and translation ecological community. To the latter, promoted by the national will, the organization and stability of the existence of translation community can be guaranteed by regulating the behavior of each member, and the scattered and independent translation individuals can be aggregated and combined together. The members with common goals and values work in the same cultural environment and are regulated by institutional norms.

“Institutionalization of translation” in this paper refers to the latter meaning. Many sociological factors, which have both a negative and positive impact on translation practice, contribute to the institutionalization of translation. On the one hand, it enhances efficiency, lends authority to the translated texts, and regulates the translator’s behavior. On the other hand, it restrains the translator’s freedom of expression and inhibits his or her subjectivity. In consequence, a stereotyped or institutionalized translation, contrasting to commercialized translation, is produced. Institutionalized translation in this chapter means translation initiated and sponsored by ideological and political entities such as sovereign states (Ren and Gao 2015), governments (Mosso 1988, 1990, 2006), churches (Lai 2007), intergovernmental organizations (Koskinen 2000, 2008, 2013, 2014; Tcaciuc and Mackevic 2017), super-national organizations (Cao and Zhao 2008) etc., and implemented in concrete institutions or in the form of outsourcing for specific goals, or translation for institutionalized social systems such as the legal system (Ramos 2018), economic system (Poirier and Gallego-Hernández 2018), or the health care system (Waldorff 2013). Characteristically, institutionalized translation, the product of the institutionalization of translation, aims to canonize a translated text through state power in the hope of achieving a political purpose.

2.2 *State Translation Program: A New Concept*

The nature of institutions is one of the factors that contribute to the degree of institutionalization of translation. Translation activities initiated and sponsored by institutions with more political and ideological attributes show a higher degree of institutionalization. State, the biggest political and ideological entity, always takes translation as one of the main instruments for State governance. If we focus our attention on the role of State in translation practice, the relation between translation and State can become a significant academic field of Translation Studies. The manipulative role of State in translation activities and the negative impact of translation as a tool for acculturation and enrichment has received increasing attention since the cultural turn in translation studies which sparked an interest in the politically and ideologically oriented power of translation. For instance, Thomson-Wohlgemuth (2009) explores “translation under state control” in the German Democratic Republic (GDR), and analyzes how the East German government, under the protection of the USSR, utilized translation of children’s literature as a tool to break away from the West and build a new kind of nation.

Literature had become part of a social system encompassing not only authors, publishers and readers, but also the Party, its ideology and its state machinery. Books were taken into the service of the agenda to build the new society, regardless of whether they were books for adults, adolescents or children. Coupled with a uniform, ideologically convergent and state-controlled education system, books for young readers were reshaped into tools for the all-round formation of a new kind of socialist human being. Literature for children and young adults became a vehicle of ideological education (Thomson-Wohlgemuth 2009, 3–4)

His research brought a new dimension to the relation between literature and translation, but the status of the state as the subject of translation and the positive influence of State on translation are out of his recolonization.

In the last decade, some scholars have begun to pay attention to the enriching and supporting effects of translation to a State as well as the positive role of State in translation activities. Based on the investigation of “state-governed translation activities” carried out by the Translation Bureau of the Turkish National Education Ministry from 1939 to 1946, Aksoy (2010) analyzes how the state ideology manipulated translation, which became one of the main aids to establish a modern society and national literature, and looks at the relation between translation and ideology as “an act of enriching and supporting initiatives within the power relations” in the early years of Turkish Republic.

One of the distinguishing characteristics of the Turkish experience in translation is that the initiatives to use translation as a nation or community building process were manipulated basically by the Turkish State itself, which was aligned with the dominant state ideology aimed at attaining and implementing Western enlightenment and modernity in the Turkish society (Aksoy 2010, 439)

Similarly, Badenoch investigates translation within the Lao National Radio broadcasts in the Khmu and Hmong and proposes that language use in state media provides insights on how ethnicity, nationalism and the everyday extension of state power

intersect in the lives of the Lao People's Democratic Republic and translation is thus used as "a way of speaking that crosses ethno-linguistic boundaries to reinforce the control of the state". As a result, to a large extent, the State itself gets translated, that is, "translating the State" (Badenoch 2018, 1).

Apparently, in these instances, translation is seen as a means to introduce new thinking and cultures, enlighten the people, modernize the society, and even a regular and effective method of governing the State. Such is also the Chinese case. After making an investigation of the translation activities initiated and carried out by the State or the ancient dynasties in the history of China, Chinese scholars put forward a new concept "State Translation Program" (STP), which is defined as "translation that a state initiates and sponsors in its name for strategic and self-beneficial goals" (Ren and Gao 2015, 93). The term is coined according to the "subject-behavior model". Whether it is a dynasty or city-state in the traditional sense, or a sovereign state in the modern sense, when it becomes the subject of translation activity, state translation action will be produced. In other words, translation action is regarded as an act of state, that is, an exercise of sovereign power, which is always linked to national interests, national strategies, national image, and national identity, etc. Translation initiated by a state is generally carried out in a form of programmatic and large-scaled projects, so this kind of translation activities should be named as State Translation Program.

Defining translation as an act of state means to see state as a common unit of analysis in Translation Studies, which is insightful to explore the relation between translation and politics. As a core concept of politics and international relations, state, with its unique attributes, is always expected to be a good bet by scholars of international relations. It is also should be regarded as a good bet by scholars in the field of Translation Studies. First, state may possess a national interest (Lake 2010, 42), which is assumed to be state survival, at a minimum, or state power, at a maximum. State survival is the primordial goal which is necessary for the pursuit of all other political ends and striving for power is instrumental for achieving other ends within the political arena. State that fails to balance against other states rising in power, will be eliminated or selected out of the international system. (ibid, 44) In the history of China, translation in the late Qing dynasty can be seen as an example of striving for state survival and power. In recent years, a large number of full-scaled and initiative translation projects, implemented by the People's Republic of China, provide inspirational exemplars of translation to pursue mutual understanding within the international system. Besides, as sovereign entities, states are authoritative actors, who possess ultimate or final authority over their territories and inhabitants. "The duly enacted policies are binding on their citizens and thus regulate how individuals and the collective interact with other similarly bound societies". (ibid, 43) Therefore, state policies, especially cultural policy, language policy and translation policy, are the most common factors of analyzing translation activities.

The main distinction between STP and the frequently used concept of government translation lies in the different subjects of translation activities. In daily life or on informal occasions, people tend to see the government as the synonym of state and replace each other subconsciously due to the same perception in the practical sense.

Just as White (2004, 67) says “government is so fundamental to statehood that the word government is used synonymously with state. Thus, when we speak of state action, it can actually mean government action”. However, strictly speaking, they are not only different in meaning, but also have different connotations in the field of politics and law.

It is the government which speaks on the state’s behalf... It is these [governmental] institutions in which state power lies and it is through them that this power is wielded in its different manifestations by the people who occupy the leading positions in each of these institutions (Miliband 1969, 49)

Therefore, government is just one element of State and government translation is just one part of STP. Now that STP is a kind of act of state, its subjects are multiple and hierarchical, including decision-making subjects, publicizing subjects, and implementing subjects. Specifically speaking, the decision-making subject refers to “the subject who has the right to exercise the decision-making power of state act”; the publicizing subject is “the subject that publicizes the state act to let the public know the existence of state act”; the subject of implementation refers to “the subject who has the right to implement state act” (Chen 2015, 32). We call them high-level, medium-level, and low-level subjects, respectively. The high-level subject of STP is the sovereign state. The state does not carry out translation activities directly, but commission concrete translating institutions to implement it. Therefore, state authorized translating institutions belong to the medium subjects. The low-level subjects of STP are the translators, editors, etc., appointed or authorized by the state.

STP has three basic attributes: self-initiative, self-sponsored, and self-beneficial, which indicate that it is essentially an institutionalized translation. It is a conscious act of the state, which is not subject to the domination, interference, and influence of external forces. Its self-dependence is reflected in the fact that the state or agencies in the name of the state independently formulate language policies and translation policies to guide the translation practice of translating institutions and translators; the state decides the direction of translation independently. Since STP needs a large number of funds, which cannot be borne by ordinary translation agencies, and is generally non-profit, it needs more support from the state. As a state act, the self-beneficial nature of STP is mainly reflected in the internal and external aspects. The internal purpose of STP is to shape and strengthen domestic ideology through translation and then maintain national unity and cohesion. The external purpose is to establish the international image of the country, and then safeguard a nation’s security, economic, and cultural interests.

2.3 State Translation Program in the History of China

Scholarly attention to STP is a relatively recent phenomenon, but the practice of State translation has a really long history all over the world. In China, STP has played a significant part in the spreading of Buddhism, the introduction of Western

learning and the implementation of trade and diplomatic policies. Based on a survey of Chinese translation activities from the first century B.C. to the early twentieth century, Eva Hung classifies the translation activities into cultural translation and government translation. She argues that the goal of cultural translation was to “change the host culture”, while government translation was to strengthen “the ruler’s prestige and effectiveness” (Hung 2005, 67). It is no doubt that the two cultural translation movements, the sutra translations and the introduction of Western learning, indeed brought sharp changes to the Chinese culture. However, the real purpose of cultural translation in Hung’s word, the systematic sutra translations governed by the dynastic government in particular, is open to discussion.

The translation of Buddhist scriptures in China can be roughly divided into four stages: the primitive period from the Eastern Han dynasty to the Western Jin dynasty, the experimental period from the Western Jin dynasty to Kumārajīva (*Jiū mó luó shí* 鳩摩羅什, 344–413), the completed period from Kumārajīva to Xuanzang (*Xuán zàng* 玄奘, 602–664), and the declining period. The third stage was also known as the “Imperial Command Era” (*Qīn dìng shí dài* 欽定時代) because the translated scriptures with the Chinese characters *fengzhaoyi* (*fèng zhào yì* 奉詔譯) were the best both in style and expressions (Wulao 1978, 172). Besides the sign of *fengzhaoyi*, another two icons, *fengzhiyi* (*fèng zhì yì* 奉制譯) and *fengchiyi* (*fèng chì yì* 奉勅譯) can also be seen in the translated Buddhist scriptures. The latter two expressions were used since the Tang Dynasty, especially during the reign of Wu Zetian (*Wú zé tiān* 武則天, 624–705). *Zhao* (*zhào* 詔), *zhi* (*zhì* 制) and *chi* (*chì* 勅) were official documents in ancient China, which were essential parts of the imperial system since the First Emperor of Qin Dynasty who implemented the policy of “Writing in the Same Chinese Characters” (*Shū tóng wén* 書同文) to standardize the written language. In the 26th year of the reign of the First Emperor of Qin, an edict was issued that the imperial commands were called *zhi* (edicts), the imperial orders were *zhao* (decrees), and the Emperor called himself *Zhen* (our royal self).

“We have consulted men and, as in ancient times there were the Heavenly Sovereign, Earthly Sovereign and Supreme Sovereign, of whom the last named was paramount, we presume to suggest the exalted title *Taihuang* or Supreme Sovereign. Your Majesty commands should be known as ‘edicts’, your orders as ‘decrees’, and you should refer to yourself as ‘our royal self’.” The king replied, “‘Supreme’ may be omitted and ‘Sovereign’ adopted with the title of ‘Emperor’ used since ancient times. Let my appellation be *Huangdi*, Sovereign Emperor. I approve your other proposals (Sima 2008, 21)

Since then, *Zhi* and *Zhao* became the proper names of the imperial commands and orders, thus making a significant part of the emperor system. The successive dynasties inherited the official documents system of Qin. Therefore, official documents issued by the Emperors in ancient China were almost equal to state ideology. The Chinese character *zhao* in *fengzhaoyi* refers to the imperial orders, which is mainly used to issue major administrative orders of the successive courts. To show the authoritative-ness of the decrees, it was usually written by the Emperor self, or drafted by senior officials authorized by the Emperor (Zhao and Yao 2017, 10). The sign of *fengzhaoyi* indicates that the translation of Buddhist Scriptures was ordered by the Emperor. It was firstly seen in the Buddhist Scriptures translated by Kumārajīva. During the reign

of Wu Zetian, *fengzhiyi* came into being. According to the records of *Biography of Empress Wu Zetian* (*Zé tiān běn jì* 則天本紀) in the *Old Book of Tang* (*Jiù táng shū* 舊唐書), “The Empress coined a new Chinese character, *zhao*(zhào 曷) as her name, which is a homonym with the word *zhao* (詔) in *zhaoshu*(zhào shū 詔書), so *zhaoshu* was changed into *zhishu*(zhì shū 制書)” (Liu 1975, 120). *Institutional History of Tang Dynasty*(*Táng huì yào* 唐會要) also documented that “in the previous system of official documents, the official documents were collectively called ‘zhao’. In the first year of the Wu Zetian reign, due to an imperial taboo that the name of the Emperor should not be duplicated in any form, neither in pronunciation nor in morphology, ‘zhao’ was replaced by ‘zhi’” (Wang 1991, 1086). After the Shenlong Coup(*Shén lóng zhèng biàn* 神龍政變) in 705, Emperor Zhongzong of Tang (*Táng zhōng zōng* 唐中宗, 656–710), did not abolish all policies established in the reign of Wu Zetian. Out of filial piety and his need for the power in his mother’s side, he continued to use *zhi*, as an alternative of *zhao*, so did Emperor Ruizong of Tang (*Táng ruì zōng* 唐睿宗, 662–716). (Meng 2019, 112) Since that *zhi* began to be employed as an alternative of *zhao* from the reign of Wu Zetian, *fengzhaoyi* was also replaced by *fengzhiyi*. At the same time, *fengchiyi* was also used. The meanings of *fengzhiyi* and *fengchiyi* are no different from *fengzhaoyi*.

In ancient China, “the Emperor’s will, an equivalence of will of the state, was embodied by official documents, on which the Emperor relied to deal with state affairs and govern the state” (Wan 2010, 1). In other words, the command of the Emperor is consecrated, equal to the highest national decision. *Fengzhaoyi* (or *fengzhiyi* and *fengchiyi*) in sutra translations indicates that the translation activities were initiated by the state and carried out by imperial order, and that the state evaluated sutra translation as a state cause and a way of state governance. Since official documents like *zhao*, *zhi*, and *chi* were used as one of the critical tools to govern the state by the rulers, sutra translation in China also became a method of State governance rather than just a means to “change the host culture” in Hung’s words. As Hung states, the sutra translation sponsored by the governors was partly a political instrument.

As the influence of Buddhism grew, so did government attention and control. While support for Buddhism in a divided China was at least partly a political tool wielded by different ruling houses (The motives of rulers who supported Buddhism were not necessarily spiritual. Some saw it as a cohesive force to unite people of diverse origins, others as a source of supernatural support. Monks credited with magical powers were highly valued by successive rulers.), a reunified China saw a greater need for control. From this sutra translation was not exempt. The Sui dynasty set up a sutra translation academy at court and introduced the participation of lay officials. The Tang dynasty introduced further regulations on translation forums, limiting severely the number of participants and thus the role of the forum in Buddhist instruction (Hung 2005, 88–89)

Although the sutra translations were imitated by the foreign monks in the primitive period, it gradually became a national cause. At the end of the East Han dynasty, people found it hard to live because of the political darkness and the decline of pre-Qin culture. Thus, the foreign Buddhist scriptures became the new cultural and spiritual nourishment, and sutra translation “was elevated to the focus of state affairs of the day” (Zhang 1978, 1). With the establishment of national translation forum (*guó*

jiā yì chǎng 國家譯場) one by one, the State was almost totally in control of sutra translation by providing human, material, and financial resources. Afterwards, the national translation forum gradually developed into a permanent national translation institution. The monk official system was also put into force to supervise and control Buddhism.

Sutra translation sponsored by the State continued in the Qing dynasty. Since the period of Kaibao (*Kāi bǎo nián jiān* 開寶年間), the 4th year of the Emperor Taizu of Song dynasty (*Sòng tài zǔ* 宋太祖, 927–976), along with the subsequent dynasties, *the Buddhist Canon*, also called *the Tripitaka* has gradually and widely dispersed or partially destroyed. Until the Qing dynasty, Emperor Yongzheng (*Yōng zhèng* 雍正, 1678–1735) issued a decree to recollect and recompile the Chinese *Buddhist Canon*. And Emperor Qianlong (*Qián lóng* 乾隆, 1711–1799) once gave the order to translate *the Canon* into the national language (Manchu language) in light of the tradition of sutra translation in the past dynasties.

Following the system of Tang dynasty, a sutra translation academy was set up in the early year of Song dynasty. Both the Yuan dynasty and Ming dynasty regarded collecting and publishing of *The Tripitaka* as one of the national undertakings. After Manchu Qing dynasty was established, in order to surpass the previous dynasties and praised by the coming generations, the Emperor ordered to recollect and recompile *the Dagon Tripitaka*. In the third year of Emperor Wuzong, Tibetan, Mongolian, Han and western scholars were invited to retranslate *the Tibetan Buddhist Canon* into Mongolian, known as *the Mongolian Buddhist Canon*. If there was no Manchu *Buddhist Canon* in Qing dynasty, it seemed the Qing dynasty was inferior to Yuan dynasty. Now that Han-Chinese, Mongolians and Tibetans all bowed to Qing dynasty, *the Buddhist Canon* in Manchu was absolutely necessary. Therefore, Emperor Qianlong tried his best to carry out the cause of translation. By the way, the translation of *the Tripitaka* was helpful to popularize Manchu both home and abroad, and conformed to the dream of unification of the Chinese nation (Jiang 2004, 273–274)

The new edition and recompilation of *the Canon* through wood engravings, which is called *the Qianlong Buddhist Canon* (*Qián lóng dà zàng jīng* 乾隆大藏經), also known as *the Dragon Tripitaka* (*Lóng zàng* 龍藏), was completed in 1738.

In terms of the political intention, most of the sutra translations in China should be categorized into the so-called “government translation” by Hung, or state translation program. Therefore, it is much wiser to classify the translation activities into STP and non-STP. Considering that government translation, “the only continuous translation tradition in Chinese history” (Hung 2005, 74), occupies the largest part of STP in China, and the concept of STP can encompass government translation as well as other kinds of translation activities initiated and sponsored by the State, it is more reasonable and logical to say that STP in the Chinese context is actually the representation of the only successive translation tradition in history. This tradition can be observed on that date until today. When the People’s Republic of China was founded in 1949, Chinese government attached great importance to translation and set up successively three national translating institutions, that is, China International Publishing Group (CFLPA), Central Compilation and Translation Bureau (CCTB), China Ethnic Languages Translation Bureau (CELTB), which are responsible for international publicity translation, administrative texts translation, and ethnic languages translation, respectively.

In short, STP in China has a history of more than two millennia. From Zhou dynasty to Han dynasty, the tradition of STP was inherited by successive dynasties. Thanks to the support and encouragement of the successive dynasties, the translated works were abundant and talented translators emerged in large numbers, and Chinese culture was changed. From the late Qing dynasty to the May Fourth Movement, the westernizationists, the reformists and the revolutionaries all regarded translation as a great cause of national security and national rejuvenation. After the founding of new China, with the foundation of the three national translation bureaus, translation was considered from the perspective of national strategies. All the instances indicate that the STP is a unique translation tradition, which is the result of long-term development, gradual improvement, and endogenous evolution of translation activities in a specific historical context.

3 Gestation of State Translation Program in the Late Qing Dynasty

Due to the strong sense of superiority of the rulers and intellectuals in ancient China, little attention was paid to acquire foreign knowledge or learn from the Others. Most of the mainstream intellectuals had no awareness of State in the modern sense. Therefore, although the Emperors or governors in the successive dynasties unconsciously relied on translation as a tool “to reinforce or strengthen the effectiveness and the image of the government in power, to facilitate exchanges with the outside world, and to contribute to efforts at territorial expansion or protection” (Hung 2005, 74), most of them had no awareness of the significant influence of translation on the survival of a State, or the decisive role of State in translation activities until the late Qing dynasty. The concept of STP was put forward in 2015, but scholars and officials in the late Qing dynasty already had a sharp sense of translation’s relevance to State. The period of the late Qing dynasty saw vigorous Western aggression in China. With the internal disorder and external challenges intensified gradually, the whole country was even in danger of being occupied and smashed. In the threat of the Western’s advanced weapons and technologies, the Qing government was forced to react and accept the new world order. The idea that China was “the Central State” became an illusion in the contrast with “the Others” and “China must deem itself not a world but a unit in the world” (Levenson 1968, 104). Thus, “in large part of the intellectual history of modern China has been the process of making *kuo-chia* of *t’ien-hsia*” (ibid., 103).

Faced with the challenges brought by the West, the conservatives, the capitulators and the patriots held totally different attitudes. The first group chose to close the door to suppress the West, while the second group gave into the West totally and accepted whatever demands the enemies made. It was only the patriots that could realize the double character of the West and react properly. Admitting the military power and even the advancement of the institutions of the West, they were eager

to control the Western encroachment completely, and at the same time, they looked forward to learning from the West.

In the years of 1840s, with the notion of “learning the superior skills of the barbarians to control the barbarians” (*Shī yí cháng jì yǐ zhì yí* 師夷長技以制夷) formally proposed by Wei Yuan, some Chinese intellectuals began to regard translation as a means to contain the Westerners. Before the outbreak of the Opium War, Lin Zexu (*Lín zé xú* 林則徐, 1785–1850) had realized the importance of translation in acquiring intelligence and information about the enemies. In 1839, Lin was assigned as Commissioner to Guangzhou by the Emperor to wipe out the illegal trade of Opium. Considering that he had little knowledge of foreign countries, Lin eagerly formed a translation team to regularly translate excerpts from the English newspapers including *the Canton Register*, *the Canton Press*, and *the Singapore Free Press*, into Chinese. Feeling a need to have a grasp of the diplomatic and legal practices common among Western countries, Lin also commissioned translators to translate and rewrite Hugh Murray’s *The Cyclopaedia of Geography* (1834) into *Geography of the Four Continents* (*Sì zhōu zhì* 四洲志) and Emerich de Vattel’s (1714–1767) *Le Droit des gens* (*The Law of Nations*). It was the first time that “translation played an important role in early modern Chinese politics” (Wong 2005, 113), but translations of Western works initiated by Lin were basically for spying on the enemies as his own reference.

Translating Western books in the early stage of the late Qing Dynasty was only for acquiring knowledge about the enemies, and the Emperor and officials had no sense of the effect of translating to a nation. After the Second Anglo-Chinese War (1858–1860) ended in the defeat of China, Qing government started to reform, which was frequently called Western Affairs Movement (*Yáng wù yùn dòng* 洋務運動). The Chinese spared no efforts to acquire Western learning for self-strengthening. Feng Kuifen (*Féng guì fēn* 冯桂芬, 1809–1874), the disciple of Lin Zexu, was the first man who had seen the military advantage of the Western countries. In 1861, he argued that “the top political priority of the government in today’s world is to contain the barbarians” (quoted in Chen 2011, 61) in the article of *On Adopting Western Learning* (*Cǎi xī xué yì* 采西學議) and become the first one who discussed the significance and arduousness of translation and uplifted the status of translation to the top political priority. He also proposed to establish a “translation office” (*fān yì gōng suǒ* 翻譯公所) to train translators for the country. At his suggestion, the Qing government set up Beijing Tongwen Guan (*Běi jīng tóng wén guǎn* 北京同文館) in 1862. Later, he further proposed to establish Tongwen Guan in Shanghai and Guangzhou in his article *On the Establishment of Tongwen Guan in Shanghai* (*Shàng hǎi shè lì tóng wén guǎn yì* 上海設立同文館議) Feng advocated to improve the political system and learning the technology of Western countries to strengthen the country. His thought of reform later became the spring-head of “Chinese learning for the foundation and Western learning for use” (*Zhōng xué wéi tǐ, xī xué wéi yòng* 中學為體, 西學為用), which exercised great impact on the ideas of westernizationists and reformists.

If we let Chinese ethics and famous (Confucian) teachings serve as an original foundation, and let them be supplemented by the methods used by the various nations for the attainment of prosperity and strength, would it not be the best of all procedures (in Qi 2012, 2)

It was under this circumstance that Qing government gradually employed translation as an aid to self-strengthening and became the largest translation patron at this time. In consequence, several official translation organizations were set up one by one. After the Beijing Tongwen Guan was established to provide translation training. Later, similar organizations were founded in Shanghai and Guangzhou, respectively. In 1868, a translation bureau, which turned out to be the most productive and important official translating institutions of the Qing dynasty, was established within the Jiangnan Arsenal (*Jiāng nán zhì zào jú* 江南製造局), one of several arsenals built as part of China's military modernization plan. The source texts chosen for translation were mostly the superior skills including warships, firearms, the training and maintaining of an army. Therefore, although the Chinese began to view translation from the level of national security, their views on translation were still limited to the surface understanding of translation for collecting information.

Until the year of 1894, China was terribly defeated in the Sino-Japanese War, the reformists realized the shortcomings of “learning the superior skills of the barbarians” and began to notice the importance of other types of translation to the country. In the article *A Proposal to Establish a Translation Academy* (*Nǐ shè fān yì shū yuàn yì* 擬設翻譯書院議, 1894), considering that “nowadays China is terribly oppressed and controlled by other countries”. Ma Jianzhong, a grammarian specialized in Classical Chinese grammar and the author of *Ma's Grammar* (*Mǎ shì wén tōng* 馬氏文通) noticed the significance of translation for a Nation and argued that translating Western books was the most pressing political priority. He suggested Qing government setting up a translation academy to train translators and proposed three requirements for a “good translation” (*shàn yì* 善譯).

Translators should have a good mastery both of source and target languages and make a detailed comparison so as to distinguish the differences and similarities between them in terms of meanings, pronunciations, sentences, and styles, etc. When a translator is assigned to the translation task, he or she should read the source text repeatedly so as to have a full-fledged understanding of the meaning, form and spirit of the source text and then translate them properly into the target language. No deviation between the source text and the target text should be allowed to exist. Only in this way, will the readers of the target text have an identical feeling with the readers of the source text (Ma 2009; in Luo and Chen 2009, 192)

The mass demonstration by candidates for the national examination in Beijing in 1895, led by Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao to oppose signing *the Treaty of Shimonoseki*, marked the beginning of the Reformist Movement. Kang as the reform leader, proposed to establish a school to train ambassadors and he regarded translating books as the top priority in the *Regulations of Qiangxue Society* (*Qiáng xué huì zhāng chéng* 強學會章程, 1895). He also wrote to the Emperor Guangxu to suggest establishing a translation bureau in Beijing, so that the Japanese books could be translated firstly and conveniently.

Although the “the reform in the late Qing dynasty took a form of compromise, it indeed had a positive effect on the changes of people's conceptual understanding

of the national security” (Yu 2008, 155). In face of the great changes in the late Qing dynasty, national awareness among the intellectuals was gradually improved. Building a strong country to resist invasions, maintain national unity and preserve territorial integrity became a unified goal, and saving the country and enlightening the people became the theme of the times. “The translation theory of modern China was also constrained by the characteristics of the era” (Chen 2011, 18), and thus the translation notion centered on translating to build a strong country has become the main thread of translation thoughts in the late Qing dynasty.

The intellectuals mentioned above had realized the significance of translation to China, but most of them had little awareness of the critical role of the State or the government in translation practice until Liang Qichao (2015a, 66) declared that “translating books was the most critical thing to build China into a strong country” in his article “On Translation of Books” in 1897. At the beginning of “On Translation of Books”, based on the facts that China was defeated both in the Opium War and the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895, Liang argued that “there were two reasons for China’s failure: at the beginning, China was defeated due to the ignorance of the strength of the enemy, and later due to the ignorance of the reasons why the enemy was powerful” (ibid, 64). After making a summary of the successful examples of Russia and Japan, which became great powers through translation, he proposed two solutions, “the first one is to make students in China learn western languages from their childhood; the other is to introduce useful western books and translate them into Chinese characters” (ibid, 66). For the former, it will take about 10 years to have an effect because most of the Chinese over 20 years old can’t devote themselves to learning foreign languages, which must be taught from an early age. For the latter, once a book has been translated and published, all the intellectuals in China will be of benefit. Considering the crisis of China, there is no choice but to choose the talents to cultivate to save the country. Moreover, translated western books can be used as textbooks. Therefore, he believed that translating books was indeed the most primary strategy and proposed that “in today’s world, translating books is the first and foremost method to make our nation stronger” (ibid).

The method Liang adopted to develop his argument shows that he was sensitive to the significance of linguistic capital in Pierre Bourdieu’s sense to a nation in the competition with other countries. He argued that the fundamental reason for the prosperity and power of the West was not the powerful military and weapons but the advanced inquisitional and academic systems. His analysis is an insightful understanding of the convertibility among different forms of capital, that is, cultural capital can be converted into economic capital, social capital, and so on. Since cultural capital is an important factor for power competition, and the circulation and redistribution of cultural capital are mainly mediated by linguistic exchange, hence the cultural symbolic practice mediated by language exchange should be viewed as the primary way of power competition and social change.

Linguistic exchange—a relation of communication between a sender and a receiver, based on enciphering and deciphering, and therefore on the implementation of a code or a generative competence—is also an economic exchange which is established within a particular symbolic relation of power between a producer, endowed with a certain linguistic capital,

and a consumer (or a market), and which is capable of procuring a certain material or symbolic profit. In other words, utterances are not only (save in exceptional circumstances) signs to be understood and deciphered; they are also signs of *wealth*, intended to be evaluated and appreciated, and signs of authority, intended to be believed and obeyed (Bourdieu 1991, 66)

Both of the two solutions he offered to change the terrible situation of China are closely linked linguistic exchange, which implies that in his view, language as a sign of symbolic power, can be used as an instrument to struggle for more powers. As a cross-border exchange between languages, translation has become an important form of the circulation and dissemination of cultural capital and power struggle between countries. Besides, translation is much more economic. Therefore, he called for using translation as a medium to update and reproduce culture so as to achieve the political goal of saving the nation from subjugation.

To elaborate his ideas, Liang also made an overview of translation examples initiated and sponsored by state governors or governments all over the world, including Emperor Kangxi and Emperor Qianlong, other previous emperors of the Qing dynasty, Peter the Great of Russia as well as other Western countries. The examples he took demonstrate that he realized that patronage was an important factor in promoting and manipulating translation. He was the first person to ascribe the causes of China's failure to improper translation practice from a national standpoint, and advocate to play the important role of the state in the process of translation production, dissemination, and reception. In reality, early in the year of 1896, when drafted the "Memorial to the Emperor to Plea for Establishing Schools" (*Qǐng tuī guǎng xué xiào zhé* 請推廣學校折) on behalf of an official named Li Duanfen (*Lǐ duān fēn* 李端綦¹, 1833–1907) Liang already argued that "to know the enemy, the first thing to do is to translate books" (quoted in Chen 2011, 77). In the same year, he further proposed that "translating Western books as many as possible was the foundation for China to become stronger, and the contribution of scholars who wants to improve himself" (Liang 2015b, 123) in the "Preface to the Bibliography of Western Learning" (*Xī xué shū mù biǎo xù lì* 西學書目表序例). At the beginning of the article "After Reading the Japanese Bibliographic Records" (*Dú rì běn shū mù zhì shū hòu* 讀日本書目志書後), he said that "if China wanted to be an independent country, it should take translation as the first strategy" (2015c, 184). And he called out that "translating books is really urgent today" (2015d, 189) in "Preface to Datong Translation Bureau" (*Dà tóng yì shū jú xù lì* 大同譯書局叙例) in 1897. It is obvious that

¹As an open-minded official of Qing government, Li Duanfen always believed that talents were crucial to the future of the country. When he presided over the provincial examination, he selected a large number of talents for the country. In the 15th year of Guangxu's reign (1889), he admired Liang Qichao's talent and even married his cousin to Liang. Liang always lived in his home when he went to Beijing for examination for several times and even after his marriage. Li advocated taking political reform to save China. In May of the 22nd year of Guangxu's reign (1896), he presented to Emperor Guangxu a memorial on establishing schools. He suggested that education system reform should be carried out throughout the country. It is also suggested to set up libraries, science museums, translation bureaus, run newspapers and send students to study abroad in this memorial. They were all approved and implemented one by one in two years.

the idea of translating Western books to build China into a strong country was always the guideline for his translation practice.

Since the late Qing dynasty, translation has been closely linked to national rejuvenation in China. “It is regarded as a cultural strategic weapon to save the nation from extinction and a critical factor for China to improve its national strength”. (Liu 2005, 1). The thought of “taking translation as a way to strengthen a nation and an expression of one’s patriotic emotion, not only has practical significance at that time, but also affects translators in the coming generations” (Meng and Li 2005, 44), which is indeed the germination of the thought of STP. In fact, in the history of more than five thousand years, “the rise and fall of China are roughly consistent with the development and prosperity of translation cause in China” (Wang 2019, 30).

4 Translation Norms of State Translation Program Proposed by Liang Qichao

The second part of “On Translation of Books” analyzes the problems of previous translation practices. Since the government mistook the reasons why the enemies were stronger than China, the government translations done in the translating institutions such as the Beijing Tongwen Guan, Tianjin Navy School (*Tiān jīn shuǐ shī xué táng* 天津水師學堂), Jiangnan Arsenal, etc. were lack of pertinence. In 1898, he pointed out the inappropriate text selection of the translation projects in the earlier decades in a memorial presented to the Emperor Guangxu:

Before the war with Japan, whenever scholar-officials spoke about the West, they took it for granted that the strength of Westerners lays in their powerful weaponry and sophisticated machinery. Therefore, Western learning was limited to ship-building and gun-making. This was in fact what caused our failure. After 1895, the literati came to attribute the strength of the West to scholarship (quoted in Chi 2019, 13)

He also stated that the Western books which had been translated into Chinese were just a part of it and some of them were not even the best versions, let alone that a large number of books were going to be published every year in western countries. What’s worse was that the translation quality was usually poor due to translators’ language ability and their translation strategies. In general, foreign translators had a good command of foreign languages, but they were not good at Chinese. On the contrary, Chinese translators specialized in Chinese expressions, but knew little about the foreign languages. Some Chinese translators even translated according to other people’s oral interpretation with their own ideas added into the target text frequently. Last but not least, the lack of unified stylistic guidelines caused the translation in chaos.

Therefore, in the last part, according to the problems of previous translation practices, Liang (2015a, 68) proposed that “on the subject of translating western books nowadays, three main areas should be given attention: (1) selecting appropriate source

texts for translation, (2) laying down operative translation principles, (3) cultivating qualified translators.”

According to the theory of translation norms proposed by Gideon Toury, Liang Qichao in the second and last parts of “On Translation of Books”, actually had a detailed discussion about the translation norms of STP. As a kind of institutionalized translation, STP is much more regulated by translation norms. Toury argues that there are three types of translation norms: initial norm, preliminary norms, and operational norms. Initial norm, serving “first and foremost as an explanatory tool”, means translators have to “make an overall choice” between adequacy and acceptability. Preliminary norms are related to translation policy and the directness of translation. Operational norms “may be conceived of as directing the decisions made during the act itself” (Toury 2012, 79–85)

4.1 Selecting Proper Source Texts and Translating from or via Japanese: Preliminary Norms

The selected texts of State Translation Program must be consistent with the ideological goal of the State. In the article “On Translation of Books”, Liang Qichao pointed out that half of the previous books translated by government translating institutions were about military science, which was not in accordance with the goal of political reform. Therefore, all the translations were inappropriate and lack of pertinence for the starting point was wrong. He further proposed that “to translate books today, we should know that the western country’s military is advanced, but it is not the reason why the West become strong” (Liang 2015a, 68), and accordingly set the source texts selection principles of the future translation practice. He argued that regulations and constitutions, textbooks, laws, historical books, yearbooks, agriculture, mining, technology, commerce and nomenclature from the western countries should be translated firstly, rather than only focused on the military and weaponry books (ibid., 69–71).

The standard of source text selection was basically consistent with the categories listed in the “Preface to the Bibliography of Western Learning” (1896), in which he said that “all translated books can be classified into three categories: the first is academic works, the second political works, and the third textbooks” (2015b, 123). In the “Preface to Datong Translation Bureau” (1897), he still adhered to the selection standard that political works have the top priority over artistic ones to contribute to political reform and he gave a detailed list of the texts that should be translated urgently.

Books should be translated firstly in this Bureau (Datong Translation Bureau) includes works on the reform in different countries and recordings of all situations in the transitive period, to make preparations for the reform in the present day; textbooks related to different courses for school children to read; books on the constitutions of western countries, to serve as the basis of our nation-building; regulations to guide our daily governance; business books to boost studies of Chinese commerce and to retrieve our economic rights and interest. All these above should be included as the list of top priorities. One or two types of the rest varieties can be

translated if time permits.[...] The agricultural works translated by the Agricultural Society, the medical books by the Medical Association, and the military books often retranslated by the provincial government bureaus should not be translated temporarily (Liang 2015d, 190)

It is clear that the source texts selected by Liang Qichao are political-oriented and thus the source text selection principle has an obvious characteristic of political utilitarianism. Considering the social and cultural backgrounds in the late Qing Dynasty, Liang Qichao had the foresight to select materials for translation from the standpoint of the state. The standard of translation selection is a preliminary understanding of the hierarchical selection of source texts for STP.

STP is a kind of autonomous translation which is carried out spontaneously for self-interest, “the direction of translation is determined by the state” (Ren and Gao 2015, 95). The state not only has the right to decide independently whether to implement direct translation or inverse translation, but also decides which language should be chosen as the source language in direct translation and what kind of language should be the target one in inverse translation.

In the late Qing dynasty, for the sake of saving the nation from subjugation, the westernizationists and the reformists adopted direct translation from a national standpoint. The source language of direct translation is directly related to the effectiveness of translation. At the end of “On Translation of Books”, after analyzing the kinship between Chinese and Japanese, Liang Qichao (2015a, 76) suggested translating Western books via Japanese.

Japan has been using almost the same characters with China ever since it adopted the Chinese script. With the evolution of the Japanese language, it began to mix its own dialects such as hiragana and katakana, etc. with the Chinese characters, which still accounts for sixty or seventy percent. After the Meiji Restoration in 1860, Japan was keen on learning from the West and translated the most important Western works in almost all fields. A large number of new books written by the Japanese also have been published. If we start to learn Japanese and translate Western books from and via Japanese, we will gain great benefits with little work. There are several reasons why Japanese is easier to be acquired for our Chinese people. Firstly, the phonology of Japanese is succinct. Secondly, all of the pronunciations can be found in Chinese and there are no difficult or rough sounds. Thirdly, the grammar is fairly loose and free. Fourthly, terms and names are much identical to Chinese. Fifthly, sixty or seventy percent of the vocabulary are Chinese scripts. Therefore, Huang Zunxian (*Huáng zūn xiàn* 黄遵宪, 1848–1905) held that one can read Japanese even if he has no knowledge of it. Provided that one has a good memory, it will just take him half a year to master it thoroughly. Compared with the acquisition of Western languages, it requires less effort to achieve a greater command (Liang 2015a, 76)

There are two reasons why Liang strongly advocated to translate Western books from and via Japanese versions. On the one hand, “since the Meiji Restoration, Japan has been keen on seeking knowledge from all over the world for 30 years, with thousands of useful books, especially books on political science, economics, philosophy, and sociology, etc., being translated. All the translated books are urgent tasks for enlightening the people and strengthening the country”. On the other hand, “it costs just a few months to master Japanese, and hence we can acquire all the Japanese learning” (Liang 2015e, 362–363).

It was insightful to recommend to translate Western books from Japanese at that time. Only by taking a national stance can Liang have this vision. The first one who advocated to translate from Japanese was Kang Youwei, but Liang was not only an advocate but also put it into practice. He put forward the idea of “giving priority to the eastern languages, supplemented by the western languages” in the Preface to Datong Translation Bureau. He also translated some works from Japanese in person, such as Jules Verne’s *Fifteen Juveniles* and Camille Flammarion’s *La Fin du Monde*. From then on, translating Western learning from Japanese became mainstream in China, both governmental and non-governmental organizations began to translate a large number of Western books from Japanese.

4.2 *Standardizing Translated Terms and Adopting Domestication Strategy: Operational Norms*

Liang Qichao (2015a, 71) mentioned that “due to the inconsistency of terms, the readability of translated books was poor”. Therefore, he convinced that it was necessary to make a stylistic guideline to rectify translation practice, that is, to standardize the translated terms. He believed that five kinds of terms need to be unified: personal and geographical names, official system, objects, weights and measures, and chronology, to improve the readability of translation products. Liang was either not the first person to advocate the unification of translated terms. In 1865, Beijing Tongwen Guan began to assign translators to unify and standardize names and places translated from Western books. In 1867, John Fryer (1839–1928), a translator working in the Translation Bureau of Jiangnan Arsenal, firstly advocated unifying scientific and technological terms in the article “On Methods of Translating Books” (*Lùn yì shū zhī fǎ* 論譯書之法). In 1897, Gao Fengqian (*Gāo fèng qiān* 高鳳謙, 1869–1936) initially explored the methods of unifying the translated terms in “On Methods of Translating Useful Western Books” (*Fān yì tài xī yǒu yòng shū jí yì* 翻譯泰西有用書籍議). Liang Qichao’s view on the unification of translated terms is consistent with Gao’s, and he further put forward some solutions to the translation problems unsolved by Fryer. “Regarding the unification of translated terms as the core of governing western studies and rectifying translatology” (Zhang 2014, 53), Liang’s thoughts and methods of unifying translated terms are much more systematic and practical.

“To unify the translated terms, there is a need to set up an organization with compulsory power to release a set of standardized translation system to the society, and force the organizations and individuals in the society to comply with it” (He 2015, 36). In 1902, Zhang Baixi (*Zhāng bǎi xī* 張百熙, 1847–1907), Minister of Education, suggested that the Translation Bureau of Imperial University of Peking (*Jīng shī dà xué táng* 京師大學堂) “set up a general rule, list all the translated terms, and issue to all provinces. In the future, books translated by whatever institutions must use the terms listed in the table to avoid confusion” (quoted in Li 1996, 99). Yan Fu listed

four principles of translating western books in the *Regulations of the Translation Bureau of Imperial University of Peking* (*Jīng shī dà xué táng zhāng chéng* 京師大學堂章程), among which the fourth one was that “all proper names should be listed in the order of the Western alphabet, and then be retranslated or translated according to the previous versions (the names of countries and places, which were used in the documents of the *Ministry of foreign affairs and History of The World* (*Yíng huán zhì luè* 瀛寰志略) should be used. After being submitted to the chief translator, the terms should be included in the *Table of New Terms* (*Xīn xué míng yì biǎo* 新學名義表) and the *List of Proper Names of People and Places* (*Rén dì zhuān míng biǎo* 人、地專名表) and so on, which will be submitted for approval in the future” (Yan 1986, 128). These ideas are almost consistent with Liang’s, which can be said to put the methods proposed by Liang in “On Translation of Books” into practice. Since then, the issue of translated terms has attracted the attention of both the government and the individuals. From 1910 to 1914, Zhang Shizhao (*Zhāng shì zhāo* 章士釗, 1881–1973) and Hu Yilu (*Hú yǐ lǔ* 胡以魯) launched a debate on the issue of translated terms and made a theoretical exploration on the unification and standardization of terms in translation. In 1932, the Nanjing National Government established the National Compilation and Translation Institute, and set up a Committee for the unification of translated terms, which was responsible for the unification of translated terms in a systematical way.

The unification of translated terms has a normative effect on translation. At the same time, “for the new things in the development stage, the task of term standardization also has constructive significance and values beyond the conventionality” (Liu et al. 2019, 109). The discussion of translated terms in the late Qing dynasty and the early Republic of China is of great significance not only for standardizing translation behavior, improving translation efficiency, but also for the modernization and construction of Chinese culture. From the perspective of modern theory, Liang Qichao’s idea of unifying translated terms is the germination of terminology standardization of state translation program, which can offer an important reference for the formulation of terminology translation norms, the construction of terminology database with Chinese characteristics and the compilation of dictionaries.

By analyzing the history of Buddhist Scripture translation, Liang Qichao proposed to adopt the translation strategy of domestication or free translation in line with the tradition of sutra translation, which was called “heroic translation” or “random translation” (*haojie yi*) in his practice. Liang believed that the purpose of translating books is to strengthen the country and enlighten the people. The focus of translation for saving and strengthening the country is the introduction of ideas related to self-strengthening. Therefore, “more attention is paid to the content than to the form. A freer translation strategy is used in translation, and even the translator’s own opinions and comments are added” (Lu 2014, 241). According to Ban Wei, the theoretical sources of Liang Qichao’s thought and view consist of traditional Chinese culture, Western values, and reform experience of Japan. He hammered out the reform theory following the Meiji Restoration as a model at the Wuxu Reform Movement in the late Qing. (Ban 2004, 35) Since his reform thought was influenced by Meiji Restoration, as a part of his reform theory, there was no exception to his translation

thought. Translating Western books in the Meiji period of Japan, “was not for accurate translation, but for understanding the western society, ideas, customs, traditions, etc., reflected in the original story of the source texts” (Wang 1993,47). Therefore, Liang adopted the method of “copinism”. It can be said that heroic translation or random translation is a copy of the translation strategy adopted during the period of the Meiji Restoration. This translation approach not only embodies his consciousness of reader-orientation, but also embodies the political utility of his translation thought. The translation strategies of STP should be in line with the political purpose of the country.

Although Liang Qichao turned to literature translation after the failure of reform, most of the principles and norms he proposed in “On Translation of Books”, guided his translation practice in his whole career and helped him become a critical figure in the modernity of Chinese translation history. Influenced by Liang, Cai Yuanpei (*Cài yuán péi* 蔡元培, 1868–1940) proposed in his paper “On Translation Studies” (*Yì xué* 譯學, 1901) that “there are two kinds of translation: One is for political circles, the other is for academia” (quoted in Chen 2011,123). Luo Zhenyu (*Luó zhèn yù* 羅振玉 1866–1940) proposed in “Rules to Translating Books” (*Yì shū tiáo yì* 譯書條議, 1902) that “at present, the New Deal and education reform are well-organized, but the most urgent thing is translating western books”. (ibid, 131–132) Most leaders of New Cultural Movements, including Lu Xun (*Lǚ xùn* 魯迅, 1881–1936) and Hu Shi, who took translation as part of national causes, were influenced by Liang.

4.3 Cultivation of Translators and Collaboration of National Translating Institutions for State Translation Program

Liang Qichao divided translators into three types in the article “On Translation of Books”, and held that “the best translators are those who are proficient in both Chinese and foreign languages as well as familiar with the translated books. Those who only specialize in two of them are secondary, and those who only master one cannot be called qualified translators” (2015a, 76). Accordingly, he proposed that “setting up translation training school is the key point to cultivate qualified translators”. The idea of running a school to cultivate translators for the country stems from his reform thought, which is the embodiment of the idea of running a school to strengthen the country in the field of translation. In the article “A General Discussion On School” (*Xué xiào zǒng lùn* 學校總論), he put forward that “if we want to achieve the goal of self-strengthening today, we must first enlighten the people. How to enlighten the people? Establish schools” (2015f, 14). He inherited Ma Jianzhong’s idea of building a translation academy and proposed that translators (who are proficient in English, French and Chinese) should be cultivated in two classes respectively.

After the Opium War, the Qing government began to set up official translation agencies, including Beijing Tongwen Guan (1862), Shanghai Tongwen Guan (1863, later renamed Guang Fangyan Guan in 1867), Guangzhou Tongwen Guan (1864),

Translation Bureau of Jiangnan Arsenal (1868), etc., and employed Chinese and foreign translators to translate Western books, forming a translation system dominated by official translation agencies. In view of the phenomenon of multiple translations of one book due to “translation bureaus established respectively without collaboration”, Liang proposed that “a general rule should be set up now, and the bureaus should inform each other in advance so as to avoid the retranslation of the same books for several times” (2015a, 75–76). In fact, Liang advocated the national translating institutions to cooperate to avoid retranslation, improve the efficiency of translation practices, and reduce translation costs. It is clear that “On Translation of Books” has the theoretical value of seeking novelty, application, and effectiveness.

5 Conclusion

Since the late Qing dynasty, China has been on the road of national rejuvenation, and translation has been playing an important role in this process. Liang Qichao, as one of the representatives of the intellectuals at that time, inheriting and developing the translation ideas of Ma Jianzhong, Kang Youwei, Gao Fengqian, etc., believed that three things must be done first in order to translate Western books properly, which was the first time to express his translation thoughts systematically from the selection of source texts, the standardization of terms and the cultivation of translators. And he also proposed to translate Western books from Japanese and introduce political novels for a fiction revolution. The proposal that translating books was the first and foremost principle to build China into a strong country, which associates state security with translation practice for the first time, embedded the thought of State Translation Program. All in all, the article “On Translation of Books” is a systematic discussion of State Translation Program.

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Translating China's Power: The Collaborative Work Practice of Translating *The Governance of China*



Tanina Zappone

Abstract This chapter approaches institutional translation as a multi-layered and multi-stage process and gives an account of the ‘collective dimension’ of political translation in China. Translating political speeches is not a solitary undertaking, but a collaborative work practice that can be deeply affected by interactional dynamics. The study seeks to reveal these dynamics in different stages of the translation process by taking the Italian version of *The governance of China I* as a case study. Specifically, it begins by shedding light on the growing use of political translation as a tool of PRC external propaganda, outlining not only the strategic narratives conveyed, but also the role of the institutions involved. In so doing, this study explores the organization of the translational act, providing insight into the selection of translators, their identity and the interactional dynamics that characterized their relationship with the Chinese reviewers. This article is deemed to contribute to the development of a common conceptual and empirical framework in the domain of political translation, that takes into due account the role of the specific factors that determine the institutional mode of translation, factors which to date have remained largely understudied by scholars in the field of translation studies.

Keywords Institutional translation · Collective translation · Political translation · Xi Jinping · External propaganda

1 The Collective Dimension of Translation

Contrary to the widespread assumption among Western scholars that translation is an individual and solitary act, in China it has often been a collaborative process. Indeed, Eva Hung shows that this collaborative mode has been established over the course of many centuries (Hung 2006).

According to some scholars, in fact, four waves of translation activity can be identified in China's history. The first wave corresponds to the ten-century-long

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translation of Buddhist sutras (150 CE-1150 CE), which led to the emergence of the first theories of language and translation in China (St. André 2010, 4). The second wave stemmed from the peaceful encounters with European Jesuits in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, while the third wave was motivated by China's search for reform and innovation following the country's defeat in the opium wars. From the second half of the nineteenth century onward, many translations from Japanese and European texts in the fields of social sciences, engineering, mathematics, and literature were commissioned by the *Zongli Yamen*, the department established by the Qing dynasty to manage foreign affairs. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, many Chinese literates and intellectuals—such as Yan Fu, Lin Shu, Kang Youwei, Liang Qichao, and Lu Xun—translated foreign authors into Chinese, in an effort to glean knowledge from Western political, economic, philosophical, and religious works that would be useful for improving the national situation. The fourth wave of translation activities in China started in the Eighties as part of the period of reform and opening-up inaugurated by Deng Xiaoping (Gaenssbauer 2018, 50).

The common element of the first three translation waves¹ is that translation has very seldom been a solitary task. For example, the translation of sutras was a communal act, consisting of up to eleven separate tasks and involving multiple people with different roles (chief translator, interpreter, audience, recorder, etc.). The *Zongli Yamen* translations were often the product of working in pairs (one native speaker and one foreigner) or in groups within a bureau. Lin Shu, who translated more than 150 books between 1899 and 1924, always involved a native Chinese speaker with knowledge of foreign languages, while Lu Xun (1881–1936) worked with his brother Zhou Zuoren (1885–1967) as a team.

Although the cooperative dimension of translation practice is not unique to China and the global history of translation features analogous translation practices—such as collective Bible translation in the European context—the long tradition of team translation in China represented an early distinguishing characteristic, differentiating it from other translation traditions. In 1998, Lefevere noted that “the Chinese tradition emphasizes what we would now call teamwork, while the Western tradition has often frowned upon that very concept” (Lefevere 1998, 22).

In fact, team translation is sometimes a *de facto* reality in both China and the West. It may be related to issues such as the dimensions of the job, tight deadlines or quality control, or to the need to establish routine mechanisms of translation, checking, revision, and editing. Collaborative translation is sometimes motivated by the nature of the text to be translated. Translations of some types of text—such as technical, legal, and political texts—are very often a multi-stage process consisting of at least two steps (translation + check and revision by native speakers) or an institutionalized collective act, carried out at translation agencies or governmental bureaus and always involving more than one translator. In the case of political texts, collaborative translation can also be motivated by the sensitiveness of ideological content, the prestige of the institution which the text represents or the strategic goals

¹As the twentieth century advanced, the idea that translation should be accomplished by one person alone gradually replaced the tradition of translation as teamwork in China (Hung 2006, 157).

of the translational act. As Schöffner and Bassnett argue (2010, 2), a number of aspects of the practice of political translation, such as the decisions made about which foreign languages political texts should be translated into, which texts should be translated, and which policies and procedures should be put in place for translating relevant political texts, all constitute questions of interest for translation studies that nonetheless remain largely understudied.

Yet the most prominent Western scholars in the field of translation studies—from Levy to Steiner, from Nida to Toury—tend to celebrate the role of *the translator* while often neglecting roles other than that of the translator or at most considering such figures as ancillary. For instance, studies on the figure of the reviewer are quite rare and mostly limited to the didactic perspective of translator trainers and practitioners (e.g., House 1981, 1997; Hönig 1997; Lauscher 2000; Mossop 2007). Very few studies use an empirical approach to focus on revision (Petersen 1996, Shih 2006, Wølch and Schjoldager 2011).

Conversely, indirect or relay translation has always played a prevalent and pervasive role in Chinese government translation (Kang 2009) and, as Hung and Wakabayashi argue in relation to the Chinese context, government translation can be considered the “only continuous translation tradition in history” (Hung and Wakabayashi 2005, 6).

2 Institutional Translation Practice in Political Context

Only recently has scholarly interest in collaborative translation arisen under the framework of ‘institutional translation.’ This ambiguous formula essentially refers to a type of translation that occurs in institutional settings. In the West, scholarly attention to institutional translation is closely associated with the multilingual translation work carried out among organs of the European Union. For instance, the Translation Service of the Commission of the European Union has been the focus of academic scrutiny in translation studies since the Nineties.

Discussing the specific case of institutional translation in political context, Vilceanu observes that it is still “not a clear-cut domain and becomes more and more hybrid, intersecting, conceptually and methodologically, with other long-established fields”; this is an “emerging sub-type of institutional translation struggling to assert its own identity,” a new sub-field in the relatively new discipline of translation studies (Vilceanu 2018, 150). As a result, this field of study still struggles to gain wider acceptance and formulate unified theory and common conceptual and empirical frameworks.

Translating in an institutional context implies a complex, intricate, and highly regulated process through which a network of translators, revisers, editors, and experts generate collectively produced output. In this case the collective practice is associated not so much with issues of speed and quality control, but rather with the need to distribute responsibility while coping with the difficult task of ensuring that the target text reflects the prestige and authority of a given institution (Kang

2009, 141). When the text to be translated is a leader's speech, this task is made even more difficult by the necessity of striking a balance between accuracy of information, ideological consistency, and effective intercultural communication.

Notably, in the context of research on institutional translation, the notion of *the translator*, as it is commonly conceptualized in translation studies, may no longer have any relevance, since *the translator* might simply be a member of an institutionalized and routinized team. However, academic analysis of institutional translation seems to display a persistent translator-centered approach. Looking at the practice of the European Parliament, for instance, Mason highlights the political translator's visibility and his/her role in shaping institutional discourse given that there is "little uniformity of practice or evidence of influence of institutional guidelines on translator behavior" (Mason 2004, 481). Along the same lines, in 2007 Munday seems to have discarded mechanistic practices by observing that the translator's choices at the lexical and grammatical level are the result not so much of the influence of the institution but of his or her "unique experience of the two languages" (Munday 2007, 213).

To some extent, therefore, it seems that existing studies on institutional translation still tend to consider the impact of the institutionalized approach on translation practice as controversial. Issues such as the way in which the role of *translator* is understood in a translating institution, the different tasks of translation agents, reviewers and translators in a particular institution, the actual operational procedures, and other empirical factors that can affect the production of an institutional translation are all topics which remain understudied and require further investigation. As Ji-Hae Kang argues, "the diachronic, synchronic and panchronic study of translation practice in institutional terms might render new insights about different forms of translation practice and provide more systematic explanations, alternative explanations and specific empirical detail that have so far been largely lacking in the discipline" (Kang 2009).

3 The Surge of Political Translation as a Tool of External Propaganda

The urgency of enhancing research on the practice of institutional translation in political contexts is emphasized by the exponential increase in the quantity, quality, and meaning of political discourse in the international sphere from the beginning of the twenty-first century onward. In a deeply interconnected world, political discourse—understood as texts that are "crucial in constituting a political community or group" (Schäffner 2004, 119)—has become, more than ever, an important tool through which the agenda of widely significant contemporary issues is set, discussed, and realized.

Communication theory describes political language as a form of political action. "Politics cannot be conducted without language" (Schäffner and Bassnett 2010, 2), in that discursive practices are essential to building and triggering political

processes. This is particularly true nowadays due to the development of communication technologies and mass media as well as the professionalization of politics (Sárosi-Márdirosz 2014, 167). When political activities and goals refer to the outside world, political language relies entirely on translation. Political translation can thus be considered a form of political action in and of itself; action that takes place beyond national borders and serves the primary function of informing and influencing an intended audience in order to achieve specific political purposes. It goes without saying that a country such as China, the world's second-largest economy ruled by a strong leadership and increasingly engaged in global governance, cannot do without this important political tool.

Currently, China must cope with growing economic uncertainty²—exacerbated by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the commercial war with the USA—and increasing political instability, especially in hotspots such as Hong Kong and Xinjiang. Partially as a response to the challenges posed by this situation, since Xi Jinping's rise to prominence in 2012 the country's leadership has adopted an assertive attitude. Domestically, this stance is aimed at legitimizing the Party's rule while internationally it seeks to present the country as a world major power, ready to adopt a proactive approach to issues of global concern, after decades of low-profile foreign policy. In this context, political translation has gained momentum in China as a means of projecting this new national attitude onto the world stage and giving voice to the country's position in international politics. It is not surprising, therefore, that the propaganda machine of China's Communist Party (CCP) has contributed to this evolution, not only by expanding and renewing its tools for reaching and indoctrinating domestic and foreign mass audiences (including by means of pop songs, smart-apps, and cartoon videos, to mention just a few), but also by honing its time-honored weapons such as the translation and worldwide distribution of collections of the supreme leader's speeches.

In reality, supreme leaders' language has always played a crucial role in China's propaganda. "Every sentence of Chairman Mao's works is a Truth, one single sentence of his surpasses ten thousand of ours" claimed Lin Biao, the then-heir apparent to Mao Zedong, in 1966 (Kau 2016). As Yong Zhong notes, while the words of political leaders matter everywhere in the world, this is especially true in China where the single-party system puts national leaders at the core of political communication, and what they say exerts great influence in shaping the national image in and outside of the country (Zhong 2014). The enormous efforts that have been devoted to political translation throughout the history of the People's Republic of China (PRC) reflect the importance given to the language of Chinese supreme leaders in "fostering an understanding in the foreigners about Chinese situations and policies" (Zhang 2004, 55). As early as the Twenties, long before Mao's Little Red Book, Poems and Selected Works had been translated into many languages and distributed around the world, the CCP had already fully grasped the importance of political translation: in that period, Mao Zedong's works began to be translated into

²Despite being the world's second largest economy, China's GDP per capita is still way down global ranking.

foreign languages and published in the periodical of the Comintern, while during the War against Japanese Aggression (1937–1945) a publicity group headed by Zhou Enlai was established and entrusted with the task of translating Mao Zedong’s works and disseminating them to foreign countries (Hou 2013). Unsurprisingly, the strong leadership of Xi Jinping has not merely inherited this tradition, but also furtherly fueled the rise of political translation activities. In the Chinese context, the translation of political language is expected to bridge the gap between the country and the international community and bring the latter to better understand the policies adopted by the government, its concept of development and foreign policies (Huang et al. 2014, 5). In particular, the translation of the leaders’ speeches is meant to grant visibility to the personality of national leaders, a crucial point for a country such as China where power tends to be personified and the perceived charisma and intellectual qualities of a leader are considered essential for the future of the nation. It is in this perspective of vigorous efforts to consolidate the leadership of the current president and to conquer the minds and hearts of foreign people that we must understand the proliferation of collections of speeches by the man who has been defined as “China’s most decisive, disciplined leader in a generation” (McGregor 2017, 2).

4 The Collections of Xi Jinping’s Speeches

Words are weight, and leaders’ words carry more weight than others. Xi Jinping’s words seem to be even weightier than those of his predecessors, however. For instance, the outstanding quantity and timing of the publication of collections of his speeches since his appointment as Party leader in 2012 attests to this elevated stature. The Selected works of former Chinese leaders were published years after the dates when the speeches were given, as in the case of *Selected Works of Mao Zedong—first volume* (*Máo Zédōng xuǎnjí dì yī juàn* 毛泽东选集第一卷), referring to the period 1925–1938 that was published in 1951, or even after leadership turnover, as in the case of *Selected Works of Hu Jintao* (*Hú Jìntāo wénxuǎn* 胡锦涛文选) published four years after his resignation. As we will see in more detail below, however, the publication of the first collection of Xi Jinping’s speeches dates back to 2014, just two years after his nomination.

Since that moment a number of collections of Xi Jinping’s speeches have been published nationwide. At the end of 2017, ten collections of Xi’s discourses had already been published in the attempt to provide a complete series of works for CCP members to study Xi’s thoughts and strategies on the topics of socialist culture, economy, politics, society, and ecological progress. In January 2020, a compilation of discourses in Chinese referring to the theme of “major country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics” was issued by the Central Party Literature Press (Xinhua 2020a). Moreover, Peoples’ Daily and CCP News maintain a complete, constantly updated, and freely available online database of “Xi Jinping Important Speeches (*Xi*

Jìnpíng xīliè zhòngyào jiǎnghuà shùjùkù 习近平系列重要讲话数据库” including both texts and audio recordings.³

More relevant for this study is the number of speech collections which have been already translated into languages other than Chinese since 2012. Referring once again to the internet, there are at least two webpages, operated by the Information Office of the State Council (SCIO) and China Daily, which present collections of the English translations of presidential speeches and articles (full-text versions). The former is a special section of the English version of SCIO's web portal titled “Xi Jinping: The Governance of China”;⁴ the latter constitutes a section of the website of China Daily called “Xi's moment.”⁵ Both websites also boast sets of infographics specially designed for mobile phones, aimed at presenting the President's key quotes on various topics and briefly illustrating some basic principles of Xi's thought in a graphically appealing way. The contents range from statements on diplomacy, scientific development, and market entities to the metaphors Xi used during the “two sessions”⁶ or his remarks on epidemic prevention and control.

Even more impressive than these virtual compilations are the country's investment in print (and electronic) books containing translations of Xi's speeches (full-texts or excerpts). Remarkably, some of these have been published simultaneously in both Chinese and English. This is the case of the three-volume collection of speeches and writings—to be discussed in detail in the following sections—titled *The Governance of China (Xi Jinping tán zhìguó lǐ zhèng* 习近平谈治国理政) and published in 2014, 2017, and 2020.

In November 2015, the Foreign Languages Press (FLP) issued an English version of the collection titled *Xi Jinping's Speeches at UN for 2015*, containing four speeches Xi made just two months earlier at UN meetings. The speeches are from Xi's earliest appearance at the UN and constitute the first opportunity for the president to lay out China's international agenda for the future as well as for the international community to develop an idea of the future role Xi wishes the country to play on the world stage in matters of peace and development (Oertel 2015).

In 2016, a compilation of twenty-nine speeches delivered between September 1988 and May 1990, during Xi Jinping's assignment to Ningde (Fujian province), titled *Up and Out of Poverty. Selected Speeches in Fujian*, was published in English by FLP. The Chinese edition (*Bǎituō pínkùn* 摆脱贫困) was first circulated in July 1992 and then reprinted in August 2014 by Fujian People's Publishing House. The foreign editions of the book have been edited by the Secretariat of the Chinese Follow-up Committee of the Forum on China–Africa Cooperation. This editorial project was initially aimed at providing advice to other CCP officials about the problem of poverty in China. The more recent involvement of the Committee could indicate that it has been converted into a product of external propaganda, as the book has become a

³<http://jhsjk.people.cn/article>.

⁴http://english.scio.gov.cn/featured/xigovernance/node_7253447.htm.

⁵<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/xismoments/5d9c4b8ca310cf3e3556f344>.

⁶The term (in Chinese *liang hui* 两会) refers to the annual plenary sessions of the National People's Congress and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.

sort of manual for developing countries that might learn from China's experiences in combatting poverty.

In January 2017, the FLP along with the China International Publishing Group (CIPG) circulated a collection of seventeen speeches in both English and Chinese that had been delivered during the 2016 Hangzhou Summit of G20 Leaders: *Xi Jinping Selected Speeches at the G20 Hangzhou Summit* (*Xìjīnpíng èrshí guó jítuán língdǎo rén hángzhōu fēnghuì jiǎnghuà xuǎnbiān* 习近平二十国集团领导人杭州峰会讲话选编) (China Daily 2017). China's G20 was another grand occasion to fine-tune China's strategic narrative abroad. The translation of the speeches has served to inform the foreign public about the country's move from outsider to stakeholder in global governance, with particular reference to economic recovery and development. Indeed, the speeches convey a triumphal narrative in which the West inertly witnesses its own decline while "only China is a reliable engine of growth, its politics less populist, its leadership farsighted" (Gracie 2016).

Another telling example of the exceptional importance attributed to the circulation of Xi Jinping's words among the international community is the newly released book *Narrating China's Governance: Stories in Xi Jinping's Speeches* (2020), edited by the Department of Commentary of the People's Daily, and jointly published in open access format by Springer and the People's Publishing House. The volume is a selection of more than one hundred anecdotes and stories from Xi's speeches, presenting explanations and interpretations; it celebrates the president's capacity to tell stories so to engage "his audience in a sort of conversation, where moods and sentiments of the narrator are mirrored in the narratee with elements of refreshing surprises" (People's Daily 2020, XII). Besides editing the English version, the Chinese publisher People's Publishing House has also signed agreements with the Chance Group and Duan Press for the Russian and Japanese versions of the book (Mei 2017). In March 2019, a similar project edited by the same department but addressed to teenagers—*Xi Jinping Tells Stories for Teenagers* (in Italian, "Xi Jinping racconta")—was published in Italian by the China Children's Press and Publication Group, People's Publishing House and Bononia University Press with the help of the local Confucius Institute.⁷ It is striking that both the collections feature the formal involvement of academic publishing houses (Springer and Bononia University Press) as well as foreign academic supervisors; this aspect has indisputably contributed to the value of the book and has raised the profile of the editorial projects.

The translational effort focused on Xi Jinping's words thus extends well beyond the major languages. Among the many publications involved, one particularly noteworthy for the purposes of this article is the March 2020 Japanese version of the book *On promoting the building of a community with a shared future for humanity*, containing eighty-five pieces by President Xi and already available in English and French (Central Compilation and Translation Press) (Xinhua 2019a, 2020a). In this case the institution in charge of the compilation is the Institute of Party History and Literature of the CCP Central Committee. The book aims to introduce a foreign

⁷The Confucius Institute helped to contact the Bononia University Press and find translators (Hanban News 2019).

readership to the idea of “a community with a shared future for humanity,” a signature concept of the PRC’s foreign policy under Xi that places China at the center as a unique model capable of leading humankind. The goal of making foreign audiences familiar with this concept seems quite attainable if we consider that by 2017 the slogan had already appeared for the first time in the United Nations security resolutions (Gao 2017).

As noted above for a few of the cases cited, the translation of Xi’s words is not always in the form of full-text speeches; rather, it often focuses on slogans, keywords, and rhetorical expedients he employs recurrently, such as stories and classical quotations.

In December 2015, the English edition of the book *Xi Jinping Wit and Vision selected quotation and commentary* was published. The book, jointly published by FLP and Shanghai Jiaotong University press, is divided into four sections: overview, imagery and metaphors, everyday sayings, and quotations from the classics; it examines and explains distinctive expressions selected from speeches delivered by Xi since the 18th National Congress. Zhang Meifang, deputy consul general of the Chinese Consulate General in New York, said that the publication “will help readers in America and around the world to learn more about the Chinese president’s thinking on governance, understand Chinese culture and wisdom, so as to promote elimination of Sino-US differences, and deepen mutual cooperation and mutual trust” (Yue 2016).

A similar case is the book *Xi Jinping: How to Read Confucius and other Chinese Classical Thinkers* published in 2015. The volume is neither a collection nor a translation, but the result of the work of a former senior editor for China Press and member of the Chinese Writers Association, Fenzhi Zhang, who has brought together Xi’s speeches, presentations, and writings—translated into English—about the importance of classical Chinese thought, literature, and reading. The author provides explanation of Xi’s use and intended meaning of classical quotations on different themes (national governance, self-cultivation, foreign affairs, etc.) as well as information about the original work from which the quote was selected, including a short biography of the original author. In this case the publisher was CN Times Beijing Media Time United Publishing Company Limited.

As for distribution, most of the above-mentioned books are available for purchase on Amazon and other mainstream book sales platforms, in print and sometimes digital versions.

In some cases, the impetus to undertake translation projects has come from the Chinese Book International Promotion Plan (CBI). The Plan was implemented in 2004 with the approval of SCIO and the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film, Television of China (SAPPRFT) and by the end of 2015 it had led to the signing of 1454 agreements (2792 books and 47 copyrights) with 564 publishers from 71 countries (CBI Project n.d.). Along with the book donation program “Window into China,” initiated in 2005 by SCIO and the National Library of China, the Plan aims to deploy translation as a means of spreading Chinese culture, making China better known to foreign audiences “and thereby improving China’s status and international influence.” As outlined on the program’s website, it specifically seeks “to select books

that suit foreign audiences best among published books on Chinese politics, economy, society, history, culture and science and donate them to well-known libraries in other countries” (Window into China).

As noted above, the institutions which are most often involved in the compilation of the books are:

- SCIO (*Guówùyuyàn xīnwén bàngōngshì* 国务院新闻办公室), a governmental body founded under the State Council in 1991 after the Tian’anmen crisis to enhance the country’s representation on the stage of world public opinion;
- national media outlets, such as China Daily (*Zhōngguó rìbào* 中国日报) and the People’s Daily (*Rénmín rìbào* 人民日报);
- the CIPG, also known as the China Foreign Languages Publishing Administration (*Zhōngguó wàiwén chūbǎn fāxíng shìyè jú* 中国外文出版发行事业局), abbreviated as *Zhōngguó wàiwén jú* 中国外文局, a semi-ministerial organ under the CCP Central Committee that was established in 1949 to reach global audiences through books, periodicals, audio-video products, and website services in foreign languages;
- the Institute for Party History and Literature Research (*Zhōngyāng dǎng shǐ hé wénxiàn yánjiù yuàn* 中央党史和文献研究院), a research center specialized in party history and theories, under the direct control of the Central Committee. In 2018, the Institute absorbed the Central Compilation and Translation Bureau (*Zhōngyāng biānyì jú* 中央编译局), the organ that had been in charge of translating party documents and government reports from 1953 to 2018 (*Zhonggong zhongyang dang shi he wenxian yanjiuyuan n.d.*).

In this respect, it could be said that most of the translation projects focused on Xi Jinping’s speeches are the result of constructive cooperation among the state administration, the party administration, and the media.

As for publication, the two main publishing houses involved in the circulation of Xi Jinping’s speeches abroad are FLP (*Wàiwén chūbǎnshè* 外文出版社) and the People’s Publishing House (*Rénmín chūbǎnshè* 人民出版社). FLP as well CIPG is part of the China Foreign Languages Publishing Administration; FLP and People’s Publishing House both belong to the CCP propaganda machine, and their work falls—albeit indirectly—under the supervision of the Propaganda Department of the CCP Central Committee (*Zhōnggòng zhōngyāng xuānchuán bù* 中共中央宣传部). However, while the goal of the FLP is to serve as “the link for China’s best to reach the world beyond,” the People’s Publishing House is “the most important publisher of the Party and state in the politics sector since the founding of the People’s Republic of China” (People’s Publishing House 2009). It thus comes as no surprise that the collections specifically designed to be translated into foreign languages are most often published by the FLP.

5 *The Governance of China* and Its Institutional Translation

As briefly mentioned in the previous section, the most complete and significant translation project published to date is undoubtedly the three-volume collection *The Governance of China*. Here again the institutions in charge of compiling the first two volumes are the SCIO, along with the Party Literature Research Office of the CCP Central Committee, and the CIPG; the Propaganda Department is explicitly mentioned in the third book as one of the compilers. This change could indicate a will to rebalance the institutional weight of the state and party by granting more emphasis (and visibility) to the role played by party institutions.

Each volume presents approximately one hundred texts including speeches, conversations, instructions, interviews, allocutions, and letters, all of which were delivered in the time-ranges November 2012–June 2014, August 2014–September 2017, and October 2017–January 2020. The texts are arranged in 17–19 chapters corresponding to a wide range of topics relating to China domestic and international governance (from socialism with Chinese characteristics to rule of law, from party discipline to national defense, from ecology to diplomacy and foreign policy, from economic reforms to cultural development). Thanks to the quantity and variety of content, the collection basically covers the entire period of Xi Jinping's political tenure from his nomination to the present.

As expressed in the publisher's notes presented in the first few pages of each volume, the first book aims “to respond to rising international interest and to enhance the rest of the world's understanding of the Chinese government's philosophy and its domestic and foreign policies” (Xi 2014), while the second volume intends “to reflect the evolution of Xi Jinping's Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era and to help Chinese and foreign readers gain a full appreciation of the depth and innovation that it offers” (Xi 2017). The third volume aspires “to help officials and the public understand and apply Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, to strengthen their commitment to the Four Consciousnesses, the Four-sphere Confidence and the Two Upholds, and also to help the international community gain a full appreciation of the thought and the reasons for the success of the CPC, Marxism and Chinese socialism” (Xi 2020). The declared strategic goals of the work seem to have undergone a political evolution, a sort of ascending climax from a cautious search for mutual understanding to the idea that the world community should appreciate (and adopt as a model?) the undeniable success embodied by Xi's strong leadership.

As with other collections, *The Governance of China* was also concurrently released in both Chinese and English. This aspect has particular significance in that it means that the collection has been “specifically formulated to be translated and supplied to the foreign mass readership” (Kevin 2019, 1). The first and second volumes have both been translated into more than twenty languages so far; the third is supposed to follow the same path. The editions in major languages—including English and French—are the output of the work of committees of Chinese experts whose identity remains anonymous. At the very end of the English and French

versions, in reality, there is mention of the “*yīngwén fānyìzǔ* 英文翻译组 (English-language translating team)” and “*fǎwén fānyìzǔ* 法文翻译组 (French-language translating team),” respectively. It is clear that the translators in these cases are not English or French native speakers but rather a group of Chinese individuals trained in foreign languages, probably working for the institutions in charge of the editorial project (*ibidem*, 13).

The collective and anonymous character of institutional translation is not a novelty, especially in China. Previous studies show that the translation of political texts in particular has always been a mostly secretive collective endeavor due to the ‘closed’ nature of China’s political system. The translation of *The Selected Works of Mao Zedong*—which began in the Fifties and constituted the first systematic translation of Chinese political discourse into foreign languages (Xu and Mu 2009)—was conducted in secret and following a lengthy, strict procedure consisting of up to twelve steps (Liu 2009). It is not surprising, therefore, that the translational procedure has been highly regulated and involved several stages in the case of *The Governance of China* as well. According to Kuijuan Liu, a senior translator for the English version of the second volume, the teams followed very strict and comprehensive procedures that involved the following steps as a standard process:

1. translation into English by Chinese translators
2. proofreading by foreign experts aimed at making the text more reader-friendly and ensuring that the target text is idiomatic enough to be well-received by the target audience
3. comparative finalizing by senior Chinese experts, meant to correct any political errors
4. reviews and proofreading.

Liu points out that, due to the prestige of the book, the translation underwent more than a dozen phases of reading and proofreading, and foreign experts were often invited to discuss the translation.

Although their names do not appear in the colophon, information about the identity of the members of the translation team can be found in the few interviews translators and editors have given to Chinese media. An article published on the institutional website <http://www.china.org.cn>—operated by CIPG—provides the names of four members of the staff that translated the second volume: Mingjie Wang, former vice president of CIPG and finalizer; David Ferguson, foreign expert (FLP); Kuijuan Liu, deputy director and senior translator (FLP); and Yang Li, senior translator (FLP). According to an interview with Xin Feng, head of the FLP Department of English, the team was composed of twenty-nine members, consisting of senior language consultants from China, foreign copyeditors who have lived in China for years, and translators. Feng describes the group as “high-caliber, dedicated, very responsible and efficient,” and the work procedure as “efficient and streamlined”: “Every morning, senior consultants met to discuss problems they identified and offered their solutions afterward” (Wang 2017). In another interview, Mingjie Wang states that a special finalizers’ group of seven people was set up to meet daily to discuss translation problems such as lexical choice, consistency of editing style throughout the book,

accuracy of footnotes and the translation of sensitive expressions. Wang recounts that all the members of the translating team were specialized in translating major party and government documents, State Council white papers, and the works and speeches of party and government leaders from Chinese into English (China.org 2017). These elements suggest that, in all likelihood, the team was basically composed of in-house translators. As professionals working in political institutions, these translators not only have excellent foreign language education but have certainly also received a political education that helps them to follow a code of conduct and to work according to institutional guidelines and for the interests of the organizations they represent.

5.1 The Translation Strategies for the English Version

And yet what are the institutional guidelines that have driven the work of translators?

Generally speaking, political translation has undergone a profound evolution in China over the years. As the number of translated Chinese political texts increased in response to the crucial need for international communication, so the number of studies on political translation carried out by Chinese scholars also increased (e.g., Zhang 2004, Cheng 2002, Huang 2004, Xu 2000).

The origins of this evolution can be traced back to the Nineties and, in some measure, it has taken place in light of a deeper knowledge of western translation theories, such as Toury's descriptive translation studies and Nida's functional equivalence theory. Over time, the shift has gradually moved China's political translation from the literal, purpose-driven translation of Mao's works—where formal equivalence abounds—to a translational approach based mainly on the principle of dynamic equivalence. Moreover, while early studies consider accuracy the “overriding institutional norms governing the translation of political texts” (Li 2013, 27), recently a more target audience-oriented approach has prevailed in Chinese analysis, an approach that stresses the need to “adapt to the cultural and linguistic conventions and expectations of the target community, in order to enhance the effectiveness of cross-cultural communication” (Li and Saihong 2015, 426) and meet external propaganda goals (Huang 2004). Although faithfulness still constitutes a basic requirement of political translation, scholars now agree that the main objective should be achieving a balance between accuracy and flexibility without jeopardizing cultural communication. To reach this goal, political translators must possess indispensable qualities of political sensitivity and responsibility (Wang 2002).

Pointing out the predominant and vocative function of political translation as a means of external propaganda, Youyi Huang proposes the original concept of the “three proximities (*Wàixuān sān tiējìn* 外宣三贴近),” namely proximity to the current situations in China, proximity to the foreign readers' demands in terms of information acquisition, and proximity to the thinking patterns of foreign audiences (Huang 2004). Huang's opinion is especially relevant because he is one of the senior

translators of the first volume of *The Governance of China*. In fact, beyond any theoretical framework that might be involved, the direct opinions expressed by translators always represent a key source for understanding the strategies that underlie a translation work.

Referring to his experience, in April 2015 Huang stresses that the average target readers of Chinese political translators are no longer limited to China scholars or watchers, but now include foreign commoners with very different levels of understanding of China. According to Huang, this consideration should have significant impact on translators' work and drive them to become innovators who actively intervene in the texts to change that "old-fashioned Chinese way of speaking" which still characterizes Chinese political discourse (Areddy 2015). During a lecture given at a translation forum in September 2016, another senior translator of *The Governance of China I*, Mingjiang Xu, former chief editor at the FLP, pointed out that the main objective of translators has been to use language as simply and plainly as possible, avoiding uncommon or culturally specific words which would be difficult to understand or unfamiliar to foreign readers. Speaking of her experience as a senior translator for the second volume, Kuijuan Liu corroborates this conception of translation as a creative process. The frequent mention of historical figures, political concepts, the use of metaphors, and quoting from poems are all challenges which require translators "to comprehend the original text, convert it into another language and make adjustments" (Wang 2017). Frequently—as asserted by Qin Wang, another senior translator of Xi's speeches—literal translation is not the best choice: like some complex metaphors, such translation might cause confusion if not converted into plain and easily understandable language. According to Liu, one of the main tensions is that of achieving the right equilibrium between faithfulness and flexibility: "In the translation process, we put ourselves in the shoes of foreign readers as much as possible, always thinking about how to convey the meaning of the original text accurately and at the same time, make it easier for readers to understand" (*ibid.*)

Many studies by Chinese scholars have been devoted to analyzing the translation strategies actually applied in *The Governance of China*. They investigate the target text from a variety of different perspectives: C-E pragmatic translation (Chen and Wu 2019), cognitive translation (Liang 2019), functional translation (Feng 2018), genre perspective and corpus-based methodology (Yu 2020; Sun 2020), cultural translation (Lin and Lin 2019), ecological translation, (Li 2018) etc. Even paratexts, such as the illustrations in the volumes, have been subjected to in-depth investigations from the point of view of graphic translation (Chen and Liu 2017).

Most of these studies consider *The Governance of China* to be a "theoretical and practical reference for the translation of political documents." This position is quite expected, in view of the authority of the speaker.⁸ Always keeping in mind the strategic objectives of intercultural communication, scholars mainly agree that the translators adopted diversified methodologies, that reflect institutional guidelines

⁸Talking of the official translation of *The Selected Works of Mao Zedong* Yin Chengdong, for instance, claims that it is the best quality ever reached by any other leader's official translation since 1949 (Yin 2009).

but also different translation purposes and the various kinds of texts included in the collection. As such, principles of faithfulness and accuracy for political translation—which essentially result in literal translation—have been prioritized when the original text referred to political concepts involving the country's national interests or the specific content of China's major policies (Zhang 2019), while literal translation (with or without annotations), free translation, domestication, foreignization, simplification, information reorganization, etc., have all been used to pursue other specific purposes, especially in the case of culturally connoted texts (such as idioms and classical quotations) (Zhao 2017). Scholars also concur that readability and a reader-oriented approach have been key factors guiding the translators' work, in keeping with the objectives of external propaganda translation. As Cheng and Liu observe, the book "has achieved the effect of promoting the country's cultural soft power in the context of foreign propaganda" (Chen and Liu 2017).

6 The Italian Edition and the Figure of Institutional Revisor

While the English and French versions of *The Governance of China* were edited for the most part by in-house translators, as we have seen, for editions in minor languages the translation procedure was different. In most cases, it involved local publishing houses and free-lance translators. In fact, directly after the release of the second volume in Chinese and English, in November 2017, the Chinese media announced that publishing houses from 16 countries (Italy, Poland, Ukraine, Albania, Romania, Kenya, Tajikistan, Vietnam, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Laos, Mongolia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Afghanistan) had signed memorandums with the FLP to translate and publish the book (Xinhua 2017). Similar agreements were expected to have been signed two years earlier for the first volume.

As a matter of fact, the Italian translation of the first and second volume (*Governare la Cina I—II*) was the result of cooperation between FLP and Giunti Editore SPA, an Italian publishing house and leader of Italy's second most important publishing group. We had the opportunity to dialogue with the Italian chief editors of the first and second volume; some of the information contained in the following discussion derives from these conversations as well as from the author's direct experience as a translator for both the translation projects. The statements are presented without attribution to a specific chief editor, so as to maintain the interviewees' anonymity.

The first agreement between FLP and Giunti was signed in the summer of 2015, approximately seven months after the publication of the book in China. Giunti committed to completing the publication procedure within 12 months. Given such a tight schedule, the first step was to locate potential skilled translators as quickly as possible. Under these urgent conditions Giunti approached academic circles, which basically overlap the Italian community of editorial translators from Chinese to Italian. In fact, most of the Chinese contemporary literature published in Italian

is translated not by ‘professional’ translators, but by scholars in the field of China studies. Giunti thus initially proposed the project to the free-lance translators with whom it had already worked. The search may have been made more challenging by the fact that, on one hand, the dual identity of most Italian-Chinese translators (both academics and translators) might have made them less willing to tie their names to Chinese propaganda and, on the other hand, the fact that the FLP certainly urged the publisher to commission high-profile translators. In the end, the team was composed of people linked to the Italian scientific community: two young researchers—as translators—and an associate professor—as revisor—all of whom were native Italian speakers, coordinated by Giunti’s chief editor. In contrast to the outcome of the English and French translation processes, their names do appear in the colophon of the book.

According to the agreement, the Italian publisher was in charge of carrying out the translation work, editing (*biānjí* 编辑), and proofreading (*jiàoduì* 校对) of the volume, as well as other aspects related to the book’s design (format, cover, colophon etc.), layout graphics, and the index; on the other side, FLP undertook to identify Chinese experts to review the draft (*shěngǎo* 审稿) and grant final approval for publication (*zhōngshěn* 终审).

In an initial stage of the cooperative process, Giunti proposed to the Chinese publisher that the title⁹ as well as the cover of the book be changed slightly. The proposals were linked to an effort to make the product more appealing for Italian readers and to attract the attention of non-experts who might not recognize the proper name and face of the Chinese President. However, the Chinese editor rejected these Italian proposals, at times justifying the refusal as a matter of insufficient time to meet the deadline. And time pressure was indeed an element of the procedure: the final outcome of 576 pages in Italian (for the first volume) constituted a large task for only two translators, and this aspect had an impact on the translation procedure. For instance, to stay on schedule the Italian team arranged to send the drafts of each chapter to be checked by the Chinese revisors as soon as they were ready, rather than submitting the entire text at the end.

In this case as well, the translation process involved various stages, but with evident dissimilarities as compared to the English experience. The main steps were:

1. rough translation by native Italian translators
2. first check by the Italian revisor
3. first revision by Chinese professionals who are experts in Italian
4. page layout and proofreading outsourced to an external company in Milan
5. second revision by Chinese experts
6. final check by Chinese revisors in Beijing, carried out on a print-test.

The first check involved only the Italian team and was aimed at improving the Italian text. The revision by Chinese experts—which partially involved the Italian

⁹The announcement of book’s release first appeared online under the title “Governare la Cina. Scritti e discorsi del presidente cinese (2012–2014)” (the Governance of China. Writings and speeches of the Chinese President) (Zappone 2018).

editor—was intended to reconnect the translated text to its original in terms of meaning and style. The proofreading had the goal of making the text uniform in terms of capitalization, italics, spelling, and proper names, etc. The second revision by Chinese experts served the function of approving the corrections proposed by the copyreader, such as the use of synonyms in place of repeated adverbs. In the finalizing stage, Chinese revisors checked and approved the final version.

As for the second volume, particular attention was devoted to guaranteeing a high level of homogeneousness with the first volume and, for this purpose, the publisher commissioned the same team (translators and copyreader) to complete the task. It is worth noting here that the first book won the Pavese Prize literary award in 2018,¹⁰ a fact that did generate some perplexity among Italian intellectuals (e.g., Pangea 2018). This development undoubtedly encouraged the Chinese publisher to recommend that the translation of the second volume be conducted by the same Italian team.

The collaboration between the Italian and Chinese publisher has always been mediated by a Chinese interlocutor from Hong Kong, thus the identity of the Chinese experts and revisors remain basically unknown to the Italian translators. However, it can be presumed that the native Chinese-speakers involved in the first and second revision were experts from the world of political communication, probably working in globalized multi-language media (such as China Radio International or China Daily); their main task was to bring the draft closer to the Chinese original. The final check was instead carried out directly at the central level by experts holding bureaucratic positions at the institutions involved in the project; their task was essentially to verify the congruence of the Italian edition with official ideology.

To some extent, therefore, the Chinese members of the translation team could be considered the embodiment of the institution involved in the project. While, as we have seen, the English translators (including foreign experts) were in-house professionals familiar with China's institutional mode of translation, the Italian edition was the result of collaboration among very different figures: on one side, Italian editorial professionals and sinologists, on the other side Chinese institutional translators and finalizers. This empirical factor certainly influenced not only the translational process, but also the final product. Here we can clearly see how, in the context of institutional translation, an accurate investigation of the translation practice is essential in order to uncover the true translation dynamics and the actual strategies giving rise to the target text.

As Gagnon observes, studies on political translation can help reveal the relationship between power and language (Gagnon 2010, 253). In the case analyzed here, in particular, an analysis of the translation shifts that came about as a result of the work of Chinese revisors could shed light on the dynamics among different players in the process of institutional translation. Moreover, since translation shifts are often related to shifts in communicative effects, an investigation of the role of Chinese experts in forging the target text could serve as a fruitful analytical perspective for

¹⁰The award was reasoned by the book's "congruence with Pavese's own love and passion for his motherland and its social progress" (Xinhua 2019a).

better understanding the relationship between the translator/revisor's choices and the realization of the communicative purposes of the editorial project.

In the following sections, therefore, the relationship between Italian translators/editors and the Chinese actors—and the consequences of interactions between them on the target text—will be discussed to show how different forces came together in the institutional translation process.

6.1 *Interactional Dynamics in the Institutional Revision Procedure*

Revision might be defined as “that function of professional translators in which they identify features of the draft translation that fall short of what is acceptable and make appropriate corrections and improvements” (Mossop 2007, 109). The case under analysis is what Mossop calls “other-revision,” namely a quality check carried out by someone other than the translator. Revision procedures vary according to aim and circumstances (*ibidem*, 140).

There is no evidence on the basis of which to understand whether the Chinese experts of the Italian edition of *The Governance of China I* carried out a systematic comparative revision—bilingual—or a unilingual revision, checking with the source text only occasionally. The first type of revision aims to detect non-idiomatic and/or incorrect language and other textual errors, while comparative revision checks for accuracy and completeness by comparing it with the source text (Wølch and Schjoldager 2011).

In accordance with what emerged from my experience as a native translator in this project and conversations with Giunti's chief editors, it is probable that the Chinese experts conducted a time-consuming comparative revision of the first chapters to check the capability of the Italian translators to produce accurate and faithful target texts; it is likely that they then referred less systematically to the source texts in revising later chapters. In this regard, it is interesting to note that, while the first revised chapter contained around 670 corrections, a few weeks later the revisor made less than one third the number of corrections to Chap. 11. Nonetheless, it is understandable that the language and content of the supreme leader's speeches—which in China are a subject of study sessions—must be well-known to any Chinese institutional translators even without systematically consulting written texts.

In December 2015, the Chinese party notified the Italian chief editor of the corrections made during the revision of the first chapters. Since the scope of the changes made to the editable text was quite significant both qualitatively and quantitatively, at the initial stage of the process the Italian publisher—in concert with the Italian translators—attempted to discuss and defend some of the translation choices, since the modifications were sometimes perceived by native speakers as not in line with the idiomatic sensitivity of the Italian language.

This was the case of the translation of a few slogans, such as *kēxué fāzhǎnguān* 科学发展观, *sān gè dàibiǎo* 三个代表, and *mínzú fùxīng* 民族复兴. The Italian translators tried in vain to persuade the Chinese revisor of the adequacy of the first translations (*visione di sviluppo scientifico* [vision of scientific development], *tre rappresentatività* [three representativities], *rinascita nazionale* [national renaissance]) by providing as reference a number of scientific papers published by eminent Italian scholars that featured the same translations (e.g., Miranda 2007; De Giorgi 2010; Bulfoni 2011). In the first draft the Italian translators had prioritized a plain lexicon in keeping with the recommend principle of readability, and they similarly suggested that expressions too similar to the CCP rhetorical tradition be avoided. Hence, for instance, for the word *jīngshén* 精神 (literally “*spirito* [spirit]”) the Italian translators proposed the more neutral word “*principio* [principle]”; for *fèndòu* 奋斗 (literally “*lotta* [struggle]”) they recommended a wording less close to the communist lexicon and more in line with the Italian way of talking about politics (the word “*battaglia* [battle]” or verbal phrases such as “*per cui lottiamo* [we strive for]”); for the recurrent verb *jiānchí* 坚持 the translators tried to avoid the literal translation “*perseverare in* [persist in, persevere],” which in Italian might evoke the rhetoric of religion and refer mainly to persistent misconduct (“*Errare humanum est, perseverare autem diabolicum*”) and instead proposed the verb “*sostenere* [uphold/support].”

Another point in these early discussions was the word *xuānchuán* 宣传, which the Italian translators had translated with the literal rendering of “*propaganda*” and the Chinese experts changed to “*comunicazione* [publicity, communication].” In this case, the revisor applied a specific guideline according to which the official translation of *xuanchuan* must not correspond to “*propaganda*” because this term has negative connotations in most of the Western languages. That is the reason why, for instance, official RPC documents have always referred to the *xuānchuánbù* 宣传部 as the “Department of publicity” since the 1990s, while in the Italian linguistic sphere it is still known as the “*Dipartimento di propaganda* [Department of Propaganda].” However, the Chinese revisor did not accept this recommendation to avoid using the word “*comunicazione*,” because it may sometimes cause a linguistically alienating effect for Italian readers. In fact, despite multiple attempts by the Italian actors, the Chinese revisor brought all of these expressions back to their literal translations, and the print version thus features the following:

- “*lo spirito del XVIII Congresso Nazionale* [the spirit of the 18th National Congress]” as equivalent to the Chinese “*dǎng de shíbā dà jīngshén* 党的十八大精神”
- “*l’aspirazione del popolo ad una vita felice è l’obiettivo della nostra lotta* [The people’s aspiration for a happy life is the goal of our struggle],” as equivalent to the Chinese “*rénmín duì měihǎo shēnghuó de xiàngwǎng, jiùshì wǒmen de fèndòu mùbiāo* 人民对美好生活的向往, 就是我们的奋斗目标”
- *dare la priorità alla comunicazione positiva* [prioritizing positive communication], for “*Zhèngmiàn xuānchuán wéi zhǔ* 正面宣传为主”.

At the end of March 2015, after several fruitless interactions with the Chinese revisor, Giunti’s chief editor decided to cease discussion and accept the revisor’s

choices unless they were actually grammatically incorrect, even though they sometimes sounded obsolete in Italian. When he passed the project on to the chief editor of the second volume in 2018, he recommended avoiding any form of conflict with the Chinese actors. It is thus no wonder that, unlike what had happened in 2015, in the second project the Italian native translators were never involved in the revision process.

As may happen in institutional translation, the dynamics between the two parties was unbalanced: the one embodying the institution's prestige and ideology—the Chinese experts and revisors—overrode the concerns about effectiveness in interlingual communication raised by Italian professionals. Overall the book was official propaganda. The goal of the Italian counterpart as to favor the readability of the text only in cases where the institutional guidelines allowed it. The Italian free-lance translators had received only generic indications as to the translation strategy to follow (basically summarized as “respect principles of faithfulness and readability”), while the work of the Chinese experts had the objective of imprinting institutional value on the target text. In particular, the revisors involved in the second and fifth stages of the process unquestionably not only followed general principles of accuracy and communicative effectiveness, but also considered the political purposes and ideologies the text was expected to convey as representative of a political institution.

In this case it is clear that, in the practice of institutional translation, the figure of *the translator*—as an individual making solitary choices—could be misleading, not only because the translation output is collectively produced, but also because the real forces at play, along with their relative decision-making power, are never clearly outlined in the book.

6.2 *The Revisor's Changes: An Overview*

Since, as noted above, *The Governance of China I* is mainly meant to serve as external propaganda and its intended communicative goal is to “better explain China's development concepts, development path, and domestic and international policies, and to answer the international community's concern”,¹¹ this section considers in particular the amendments made to the speeches included in sections 11–15 of the first volume, those presenting the main foreign policy-relevant features of Xi's thought: peaceful development, new model of major-country relations, neighborhood diplomacy, cooperation with developing countries, and multilateral relations.

The data gathered here are the result of a systematic comparison between the first drafts of the book and the revised texts. As Parra argues, in fact, the specific moment in which the text is being revised also has an impact on the final version, since different stages of the translation process can entail different revision procedures. Parra distinguishes between half-finished and finished texts and notes that corrections

¹¹The quotation is from Cai Mingzhao, former head of the State Council Information Office (and a possible compiler and editor of the book). Quoted in Swaine (2015), 1.

should be executed on the half-finished text (Mateo Martínez 2016). The examples given below, therefore, are all from the first revision made by Chinese experts (point 3 in the process described in Sect. 6).

Previous studies have sought to identify well-defined and objective criteria to be used by revisors in assessing translation quality. Although the terms and degree of complexity differ, most scholars agree that the main criteria should include parameters of accuracy, the correct use of the target language, and readability and adaptation to the target audience (Mateo Martínez 2016). Other parameters include tone (Horguelin 1978), transparency (Hosington and Horguelin 1980), profitability (Horguelin and Brunette 1998), content, and presentation (Mossop 2001).

As already observed, accuracy is considered a governing norm in the Chinese context as well, and it is frequently associated with the concept of ideological correctness. As Zheng Xiong claims, political translation must ensure not only the effectiveness of cross-cultural communication, but also the “accuracy of the information and ideological correctness (*xìnxī de zhǔnquèxìng yǔ yìshí xíngtài de zhèngquèxìng* 信息的准确性与意识形态的正确性)” (Xiong 2015, 77).

A brief look at the examples provided in the previous section seems to demonstrate that the Chinese revisor prioritized the parameter of accuracy (often considering it in terms of “faithfulness”) in his/her work while overlooking the other—equally essential—parameters of readability and adaptation. In the following section, I provide an overview of the revisions made to Chaps. 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 to confirm/deny this preliminary hypothesis and offer some insight into the communicative effect that these changes produced in terms of the book's ability to reach foreign readership as well as its achieving the declared goal of responding to global concerns about China's rise.

6.2.1 The Translation of Political Slogans

Political slogans (*tǐfǎ* 提法 or *kǒuhào* 口号 in Chinese) have always been a constant feature of Chinese domestic politics. From Mao's era to the present, political slogans have always been a “key to governing” (Tiezzi 2013): each generation of leaders has marked its term with an original slogan that was later incorporated into the PRC constitution. Recently, Chinese leadership has been trying to deploy slogans beyond domestic boundaries to reach foreign audiences. Slogans are a double-edged sword, however. On the one hand, by condensing entire political ideas or positions into a short phrase, they can potentially transfer the core of complex content in a manner that is easy to understand. On the other hand, the same condensation increases the risk of losing control over the message (Falk 2018). Translating political slogans is thus an intricate task that deserves particular attention.

The slogan “*sān gè dàibiǎo*,” attributed to Jiang Zemin, was introduced in 2001 to meet the CCP's need to overcome the Leninist conception of the party as the vanguard of the proletariat and embrace a new interclass identity that would allow it to represent the various social strata that have emerged over the period of reform, such as private entrepreneurs and technical experts. Through this transition, the party

acquired the capacity to represent “advanced productive forces,” “advanced culture,” and “the basic rights of the majority of the Chinese people” (Fewsmith 2003).

As previously mentioned, in *Governare la Cina I* the Chinese revisor modified the word chosen for “*dàibiǎo*” from “*rappresentatività* [representativeness]” to “*rappresentanze* [representation].” In Italian, the lemma “*rappresentatività*” refers in general to the “fact, condition of being representative; representative capacity and function,” while the word “*rappresentanza*” specifically indicates the “fact of representing one or more persons, or groups, entities and bodies, institutions and companies, i.e., to intervene in their stead and on their behalf, and to carry out their functions, or to act in their interest” (Treccani online, *subvocem*). In legal and political contexts, the term is conceived as a factual condition that derives from formal procedures. Therefore, the translator’s chosen term could be considered more consistent with the vague and conceptual nature of the Chinese slogan. Moreover, the high incidence of the translation “*tre rappresentatività*” in Italian academic literature demonstrates the ‘authoritativeness’ of the choice.¹²

The translation of the slogan “*kēxué fāzhǎnguān*” was changed from “*visione di sviluppo scientifico* [vision of scientific development]” to “*concetto di sviluppo scientifico* [concept of scientific development].” The formula, attributed to the former leader Hu Jintao and ratified in the CCP Constitution in October 2007, has been understood by scholars as an attempt by China’s leadership to redefine the notion of development in light of the economic imbalances and social inequalities caused by the unbridled economic growth characterizing initial reform programs. From this perspective, it is quite evident that the aim of the slogan is not so much to introduce a brand-new “concept” as to propose a more sustainable and balanced approach (vision) to pre-existing questions of reform and development. The choice of the translator was determined by factors of faithfulness and, again, ‘authoritativeness’ (e.g., De Giorgi 2010; Bulfoni 2011). Indeed, “vision” is the literal translation of the Chinese term “*guān*”, the first meaning of which is “to see/observe,” and it is etymologically composed of a semantic part 見 (*jiàn*, to see) and a phonetic part (guàn 觀) (*Shuowen Jiezi*, *subvocem*).

The slogan *mínzú fùxīng* has a long history in CCP rhetoric, as its use can be traced back to Mao Zedong’s and Sun Yatsen’s talks. It has recently been brought back into the limelight and is now associated with another slogan, the “Chinese dream,” launched in 2012 by the current leader. In *Governare la Cina I*, the Chinese revisor changed the translation of the word “*fùxīng*” from “*rinascita* [revival]” to “*ringiovanimento* [rejuvenation].” According to the *Xinhua Xiandai Hanyu Cidian* (*Modern Chinese Dictionary*), the term “*fùxīng*” means “reflourishing after a period of declination (*shuāilùò hòu zài xīngshèng qǐlái* 衰落后再兴盛起来)” and its literal translation is “*revive, reinvigorate, rejuvenate*.” However, as the long list of examples given in the *Dizionario Cinese-Italiano* (Casacchia, *subvocem*) demonstrates,

¹²The equivalent “*Tre rappresentatività*” can be found, for instance in the paper “*La Cina dopo Deng Xiaoping* (1997–2006),” by prof. Guida Samarani (Ca Foscari University of Venice, 2006, *Il Politico* 71 (3): 213, Rubbettino Editore) or in “*Classi e strati nella società cinese contemporanea: il contributo di alcuni studi recenti*” by prof. Marina Miranda (University of Rome, 2005, *Rivista degli studi orientali*, Nuova Serie (78) ¾: 363–376) among others.

it may have a number of equivalents in Italian depending on how it is positioned and used. Hence, *wényì fùxīng* 文艺复兴 means “*rinascimento letterario e artistico* [literary and artistic renaissance],” *jīngjì fùxīng* 经济复兴 “*risanamento economico* [economic recovery], *Ōuzhōu fùxīng* 欧洲复兴 “*Rinascimento europeo* [European Renaissance], and *Yìdàlì fùxīng* 意大利复兴 “*Risorgimento italiano* [Italian Risorgimento] etc. Even if “ringiovanimento” is one of the possible translations, in *Governare la Cina I* the translator preferred another equivalent because in idiomatic Italian the term almost univocally evokes a person's external appearance while the original Chinese never entails the connotation of “being young again.” In reality, the term “*fùxīng*” etymologically seems to retain the idea of “going back” (*fù* 复 represents a foot pointing downwards and “raise, lift, prosper”, the traditional form of *xīng* 興 represents hands lifting the character “*tóng* 同,” which means “same”) (Karlgrén 1923); in official texts it suggests the idea of returning to the national glories of the past and is often described in light of the Century of Humiliation that began with the 1840 Opium War. It was in view of these considerations that the translator recommended using “*rinascita*,” which indeed means “to be reborn, to resume again after a period of weakness and depression” (Treccani online, *subvoce*m).

The expression “*Sīchóu zhī lù jīngjì dài* 丝绸之路经济带 [silk road economic belt]” has given rise to the term “belt” in the famous slogan “*yī dài yī lù* 一带一路 [the Belt and Road Initiative]” announced by Xi Jinping in 2013 to inaugurate a global plan of infrastructural development led by the Chinese government and involving nearly seventy other countries. For this particular formula, the Italian translator proposed the Italian words “*striscia* [strip]” or “*corridoio* [corridor]” as equivalent to the character *dài* 带, while the Chinese revisor instead corrected all the instances to read “*cintura*.” In this case, the revisor probably wished to preserve the reference to the slogan “*yī dài yī lù* [*una cintura una via*],” not taking into account the fact that most Italian texts actually employ the English formula “one belt one road” without translating it into Italian.

For all the instances in the book in which Xi Jinping, speaking about diplomacy, quotes the formula “*dúlì zìzhǔ de hépíng wàijiāo zhèngcè* 独立自主的和平外交政策 [an independent foreign policy of peace]—attributed to Zhou Enlai and used in the state constitution to formally proclaim China's foreign policy—the Chinese revisor indicated the Italian phrase “*una politica estera di pace indipendente e autonoma* [an independent and autonomous foreign policy of peace]” as the only correct translation and did not accept any form of omission or adaptation.

The examples analyzed so far confirm that, in translating political slogans, the Chinese revisor's main consideration was ideological correctness and that this parameter prevailed over any other criteria. In the particular case of slogans, ideological correctness does not always coincide with the general notion of accuracy: in some cases, the revisions actually made the target text less literal. The institutional revisor seems to have understood “accuracy” as meaning “fidelity” to a shared tradition of political translation. To identify these official guidelines, s/he looked to well-consolidated translations that could not be questioned, even if they sounded unnatural—and thus communicatively ineffective—in the target texts.

This would have been quite expected a few years ago when, as some Italian sinologists still recall, PRC bureaucrats still referred to the “*Mao Zedong Pensiero*” using an incorrect—but official—translation that distorted the syntactical structures of the Italian language.¹³ Nowadays, however, one might reasonably expect Chinese institutional revisors to grant more attention to adaptation and readability as compared with the past. Moreover, a brief look at the English version of the book seems to confirm that it reflects a different approach. For instance, the slogan “*dúlì zìzhǔ de hépíng wàijiāo zhèngcè*” that the revisor insisted not be adapted by the Italian translator was translated in English as “an independent foreign policy of peace”; in this case, the translated expression was allowed to discard the pleonastic translation of *zizhu* “autonomous” and thereby gain a certain degree of readability. On the contrary, in the Italian translation the Chinese revisor did not tolerate any deviation from the orthodox nomenclatura.

6.2.2 The Translation of Conventional Collocates

Even when the texts contain not pure slogans but conventional collocates, such as the formula *hùjiàn* 互鉴 or the attributive verb *bāoróng* 包容 which are frequently used in speeches about neighborhood diplomacy, the Chinese revisor did not accept the use of synonyms but instead promptly changed them to “*inclusività* [inclusiveness]” and “*mutuo apprendimento* [mutual learning],” respectively.

Similarly, when illustrating one of the two centenary goals of the CCP, the Chinese revisor paid great attention to the translation of the adjective *fù* 富 (literally “*ricco* [rich]”) and did not accept any translation other than “*prospero* [prosperous]”: *jiànchéng fùqiáng mínzhǔ wénmíng héxié de shèhuìzhǔyì xiàndàihuà guójiā* 建成富强民主文明和谐的社会现代化国家 “*costruire un Paese socialista moderno, prospero, forte, democratico, culturalmente avanzato e armonioso* [build a modern, prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced and harmonious socialist country].

In this case, it is possible that the choice of the Italian adjective “*prospero*” (the equivalent of the English “prosperous”) was appropriate for drawing a line of continuity between the contemporary goals of the CCP and those set decades earlier by paramount leaders of the past, such as Deng Xiaoping. For instance, the generally accepted translation of the notion of *xiǎokāng shèhuì* 小康社会—used by Deng to indicate the long-term objective of China’s modernization—is “a moderately prosperous society [*una società moderatamente prospera*].”

In general, it is quite plausible that the revisor deliberately paid greater attention to those terms that refer directly to CCP’s history or China’s position, such as the slogan “*xīnxíng dàguó guānxì* 新型大国关系 [new model of major-country relations].” Presented in 2012 by Xi Jinping as a new perspective on the USA-China relationship, in the book this phrase was always translated as “*nuovo tipo di relazioni*

¹³The correct translation is “*Pensiero di Mao Zedong*,” since in Italian language noun phrases tend to be head initial.

tra grandi Paesi”; the main concern of the Chinese revisor was the equivalent for the item *dàguó*, which refers to China's new international identity on the international chessboard. Although the literal meaning of the term is “great nation/state,” neither the equivalent “*nazione* [nation]” or “*stato* [state]” nor “*potenza* [power],” as proposed by the Italian translator, were deemed acceptable. The only translation considered adequate in the book was “*paese* [country].” Similarly, in Chap. 12 where the theme was the relationship between China and Russia, the revisor contested the translation “*le migliori relazioni possibili tra potenze* [the best possible relationship among powers] for “*zuì hǎo de yī zǔ dàguó guānxì* 最好的一组大国关系” and replaced it with “*migliori relazioni possibili tra grandi paesi* [great countries].”

6.2.3 The Translation of Politically Sensitive Concepts (Power and People)

Generally speaking, it seems that the translation of a few specific, potentially politically sensitive concepts, such as the notions of power and people, provoked apprehension on the part of the Chinese revisor. As a case in point, it is interesting to notice that the word “*potere* [power]” was often changed, replaced by synonyms. One example is the original concept of *wǒguó zònghé guóli* 我国综合国力, which some scholars consider a ‘precursor’ of the now much more fashionable theory of “soft power.” In the book, this idea was never translated as “*potere nazionale complessivo della Cina* [China's comprehensive national power],” which is by large the most common equivalent in the Italian literature on this theme. Rather, the revisor preferred “*potenza nazionale complessiva*” [comprehensive national strength]. On the contrary, when referring to developing countries, the revisor did not hesitate to use words imbued with an imaginary of power. In Chap. 14, where the translator had proposed omitting the translation of the Chinese word “*youshi* [advantage]” in a sentence about African countries (“*bǎ zīyuán yōushì zhuǎnhuà wéi fāzhǎn yōushì* 把资源优势转化为发展优势”), the revisor changed the translation from “*trasformare le risorse naturali in risorse di sviluppo* [transforming natural resources into development resources]” into “*trasformare la supremazia delle risorse naturali in supremazia di sviluppo* [transforming natural resources supremacy into development resources supremacy].”

It is also worth noting the attention devoted to sentences that included any sort of mention of the notion of “people.” In the recurrent nominal syntagma “*rénmín qúnzhòng xīn qīdài* 人民群众新期待,” for instance, the only accepted translation for “*rénmín*” was “*popolo* (people: *nuove aspettative del popolo* [new expectations of the people]), rather than “*gente* [folk]” or “*persone* [persons].” For the phrase “*gǎishàn mínshēng* 改善民生,” only the variants “*miglioramento delle condizioni di vita della popolazione/dei cittadini* [improvement of the living conditions of the population/citizens]” were accepted; any omission or condensation in the translation was immediately supplemented by adding the word “*popolo*.”

6.2.4 Mistake Correction and Natural Lexicon

Obviously, the revisor did not only intervene in politically loaded expressions. S/he also corrected mistakes in the draft translation. In Chap. 12, for instance, s/he inserted a two line-long paragraph that had been accidentally omitted by the translator. In Chap. 11, s/he corrected the translation of “*hé ānquán* 核安全” from “*sicurezza nazionale* [national security]” to the correct equivalent “*sicurezza nucleare* [nuclear security]”

Elsewhere, the revisor also modified the Italian translation of neutral expressions: in Chap. 12, for examples, the locution “*Xiàng wèilái de* 向未来的,” here referring to bilateral Sino-Russian relations, was changed from “*lungimiranti* [far-sighted]” to “*che guardano al futuro* [which look to the future].”

In this case as well it seems that particular attention was devoted to those portions of text that directly regard China’s position in the world. In Chap. 12, when talking about China’s engagement in bolstering institutes of traditional Chinese medicine in the member states of the Shanghai Organization for Cooperation, the translation of the verb *yuànyì* 愿意 was changed from “*sperare* [hope]” to “*desiderare* [wish].” In Chap. 11, where Xi Jinping refers to China’s participation in the construction of an international system of nuclear security, the revisor changed the translation of the verbal phrase *jiāng jiāndìng bù yí cānyù* 将坚定不移参与 from “*parteciperà con decisione* [will participate firmly]” to China “*resterà fermamente coinvolta* [will remain resolutely involved].”

The preliminary analysis of the changes the Chinese revisor made to the first drafts of Chaps. 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 indicates that the corrections were focused on lexical choices much more than syntactical structures, and that most of the time they were inspired by considerations of a political nature.

The results on the rectified texts can be seen not in term of shifts in meaning, but in terms of stylistic and communicative shifts in that they often accentuated the propagandistic tone of the volume. This shift arguably runs counter to the declared aims of the promotional campaign launched abroad, which presents this publication as the perfect tool to understand “where China is now, and where China is trying to go” (Wang 2017).

The institution’s prestige and ideology seem to have overridden any parameter of functional adaptation and readability, and the institutional revisor promptly intervened anywhere an ideologically loaded element appeared in the text—often in the form of a slogan—with the main aim of ensuring that the official translation always prevailed over the translator’s proposals, but without having a clear translation strategy in mind.

A comparison with the English version reveals very different approaches. The English team, in fact, adopted more flexible and appropriate translation strategies to prioritize the readability of culturally-loaded words and political terms, and used translation tools such as omission, amplification, adaptation etc. when necessary. In the English version, “the Chinese translators seem to pay more attention to the *skopos* of the translation” (Yu 2020, 12). A telling example comes from the adaptation of lengthy classical quotations: these were almost always reduced or omitted from

the English edition, while Italian version always maintained them. For example, an excerpt from the Classic of Songs (*Shijing*) quoted in a speech given in 2014 does not appear in the English version, but it has been translated into Italian in its entirety (Xi 2016, 158).

It is certainly true that the translators on the English team, working in China and often in the same administrative organ (FLP), were able to virtually communicate about and discuss translation choices often, even on a daily basis. Moreover, it is quite likely that even top-level officials in China are sufficiently skilled in English to express their opinions (approval/refusal) about the translation choices and strategies used in the English version. These working conditions undoubtedly constituted an advantage in that they enabled all the members of the team to understand the communicative purpose of the translation and granted them greater authoritative and leeway in choosing how to employ translation strategies. Nonetheless, neither physical distance, the creativity of individual translators or the different nature of the target readers¹⁴ are sufficient to explain such a significant discrepancy between the English and Italian versions. As we have seen, in fact, the Italian translators and chief editor initially made efforts to discuss the Chinese revisions, but—albeit in an atmosphere of highly positive collaboration and professionalism—they ended up largely frustrated by the mechanistic character of Chinese institutional translation procedures.

These dynamics may explain both the lack of a clear translation strategy and a certain stylistic and idiomatic heterogeneity in the Italian book as it alternates between redundant and allusive language in some places and a plainer and simpler lexicon in others.

Any further consideration of the quality of the translation would be beyond the scope of this paper. What it is important to underline here is that the translation product was profoundly influenced by factual translation policies and processes typical of the collective mode of institutional translation, and that it is always necessary to examine such aspects in depth to unveil all the factors that contribute to generating a specific translation product.

7 Concluding Remarks

The purpose of this chapter was to reveal the role of group dynamics in the institutional mode of translation, taking as a case study the Italian translation of the book *The Governance of China I*.

Taking as its starting point in the long tradition of collective translation that has characterized the history of translation studies in China, this chapter argues that,

¹⁴Previous studies have observed that probably the Italian readers of *Governare la Cina* have an average level of understanding of China's situation much higher than the much more numerous and diversified English readers, and this point might have contributed to the choice of a relatively more conservative translation in the Italian edition (Zappone 2018).

when dealing with political translation (understood in this case as a sub-type of institutional translation), translation studies should always go beyond the analysis of the final text to also investigate the processes which have given rise to that text.

Political translation is a means of political action that is likely to increasingly gain importance in the contemporary globalized and mediatized world, where issues of growing concern are raised and discussed globally. Understanding the institutional logics that drive this form of political action is even more crucial when referring to a country like China, considering it is expected to play an increasingly significant role on the world stage in the next few years.

This paper has thus sought to shed light on the growing use of political translation as a tool of external PRC propaganda by exploring not only the strategic narratives conveyed, but also the role of the institutions involved.

Taking advantage of the author's experience as a native translator for the Italian edition of the collection of speeches *The Governance of China*, the paper has outlined the dynamics of collaborative translation practice at different stages of the translation process. Specifically, this study has explored the organization of the translational act, providing insight into the selection and identity of the translators, the steps comprising the translation process, and the type of interaction that characterized the relationship between Italian translators and Chinese revisors. A preliminary assessment of the impact of this interaction on the translation product has been given along with some considerations about the effectiveness of the final text as a means to reach Italian readers and to appeal to their tastes and sensibilities.

The analysis is intended to contribute to translation studies by showing how misleading it can be to approach the analysis of political discourse as if it were constituted by monolithic "target texts" and to understand political translation as a solitary act performed by an individual. In contrast to such approaches, the paper has attempted to point out the crucial importance of systematically investigating the translational act as a multi-stage process by conceiving it as a text in itself, a text that needs to be scrutinized and understood as the result of the work of very different authors motivated by extremely complex relations, carried out within an often highly intricate web of institutional practice.

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Translation and The Public Realm



Wolfgang Kubin · Translated by Martin Woesler

Abstract Translation Studies is a young discipline, starting in the 1950s and being introduced into Chinese Studies in the 1980s. In Germany, we have the University of Mainz with its own research program in translation and interpreting studies. Translation encounters several problems, which often lead to a failure. In this paper, I introduce several translation projects within the framework of the initiative “Go Global,” e.g., the not-for-sale German version of the literature review magazine *Pathlight*, a retranslation project of eight volumes of Chinese literature from English into German by Austrian authors without knowledge of Chinese and without the permission to check the Chinese original. I argue against the Chinese criticism of foreign translations. Germany, since Goethe 250 years ago, is a country of translation, which has also informed German Chinese Studies. France and Germany translate a lot of Chinese literature. The USA never has been a country of translation with a rich translation culture and lecturers. In this essay, I also plead to translate only into one’s mother language.

Keywords Translation · Go global · Pathlight · Retranslation · Foreign translations · Translations in the France/Germany/USA · Literature translation

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Just as all speech aims at a counterpart, translation also seeks its partner.¹ This search is linked to a sales system. If this is not adequately served, it threatens that the work carried out has only an originator, but will not find a buyer. This has sometimes been the plight of the translation publisher Waiwen chubanshe 外文出版社 (Foreign Languages Press) in Beijing. In 2015, it published the first edition of *Leuchtspur* (Chin. *Ludeng* 路灯) with the subtitle “New Chinese Literature.”² Whether we are dealing with a magazine or a yearbook is not clear. Although the edition in question is sufficiently beautiful, it reveals from the outset the shortcomings that are so detrimental to the business of translators and intermediaries.

This product must be seen as part of the “zouchuqu” 走出去 campaign launched in 1999. “Schwärmt aus!” Is what you say in German, “Go out Policy” or “Go Global Strategy” is what it sounds like in English. Even if this politically coined endeavor extends to many, especially material, areas, we are only interested here in the spiritual scientific aspect, and that is primarily that of literature and philosophy. Classical works from the Middle Kingdom have now been selected by the Chinese themselves, mostly translated by themselves, produced in any case and above all made known by themselves. In this way, one thinks one can present one’s own culture better, more objectively and perhaps even more attractively abroad.

First of all, back to the topic “tracer.” For decades I was a reader of the monthly magazine *Chinese Literature*, published in Beijing between 1949 and 1999. I very much regretted the end of its publication in 2000. Even if the English translations from the pen of Chinese collaborators were not very poetic, they still offered a nice wealth of interesting information. So, when I was told the good news last summer [2015] that a kind of German edition was even being considered, I rejoiced. It has remained so until today. Two of my colleagues told me very early that the first edition had been published, but that you couldn’t find it anywhere, not even on the internet. Even a participating translator confirmed the sad facts, even though she recently handed me one of her complimentary copies.

But I did not let up, I consulted the internet. It was reported that the tracer was only available online from the Viennese Löcker Press, where I also publish. It was further reported that the publication was represented with a single copy at the German Embassy School in Beijing. And finally, it reported that the Foreign Language Press had the work “out of stock.” So, although the information I had received so far was not fully correct, but largely. I asked the editor I knew at Löcker Press. Answer: *Mari had received twenty copies from Beijing and sold eighteen of them. The Foreign Language Press is silent about whether they will continue to supply you or whether you will receive new editions in succession.* I conclude from this that a small number of copies were distributed only to the translators involved as complimentary copies and to a single publisher, and even abroad. In this respect, the work does not appear

¹This paper goes back to a speech I gave in Chinese at Vienna University on November 4, 2014 at the conference “Chinese Culture in the world.” A censored version was published in Chinese in the Shandong Newspaper Qi-Lu Wanbao 齐鲁晚报, a full German version in *Orientierungen* 2015, 15–28. The current paper has been updated and revised for this publication.

²Translated from Chinese by eleven German translators, 286 pages.

to have made it to the book trade in China, and so it does not appear to be in stock any more.

Strange enough. But perhaps even stranger is the name *Leuchtspur*. It is the successor to the English edition *Pathlight*, which will be published in 2011 and is a foreign language counterpart to the monthly *Renmin wenxue* 人民文学 (popular literature). However, “Leuchtspur” is not the translation of the English expression, which does not seem to exist in the Anglo-American world and, if not a new creation, offers a Sinism based on the Chinese title “Ludeng” (street lamp). Either way, the German name has nothing to do with an illuminated path. The turn comes from the *Waffenkunde*: It is well known that pistols and rifles leave a trail of light after use.

But not enough with that: we should actually think that a large and rich publisher like Foreign Language Press, as in the case of “Leuchtspur,” translates from Chinese or has it translated from Chinese. But this is not always the case. In cooperation with the Wiener Confucius Institute, the aforementioned publisher has scheduled an eight-volume edition of contemporary Chinese literature. Six volumes have been published to date by Löcker Verlag.³ They have been translated from English, mainly by Viennese writers, i.e., by authors who have no knowledge of Chinese, have hardly been to China, and have done little work on Chinese literature otherwise. But why were they used for this task at all? Two reasons were decisive:

1. The authors had experience in translating and mastered their mother tongue. In the case of sinologists, this cannot always be claimed.
2. The publishing house wanted to avoid the royalties incurred for a translation from Chinese since the work had already been translated into English and the copyright had been acquired, there was no need to pay the Chinese publishers and writers again. In this respect, it was expressly forbidden to take a look at the Chinese original.

Conclusion: If a translated and printed work is not sufficiently distributed, it does not exist for the book trade and the readership. If secondary translation is explicitly demanded and financially supported, this is a betrayal of the Chinese writers. One cannot present oneself abroad unprepared like this. So, one becomes an easy target for critics. In the past, I have commented on matters such as these mockingly as follows: the true despisers of contemporary Chinese literature are not, as is often heard, abroad, but rather are to be found in Beijing’s publishing industry. Otherwise only the usual rebuke would be possible: lack of language skills, lack of specialization, socialist sloppiness. In short, that’s no way to run a state.

Actually, the recent Chinese cultural policy is characterized by hostile hermeneutics. In the case of the eight-volume series of contemporary Chinese literature, an exception has been made. But not unconditionally for the benefit of all participants. For the publisher the matter means a loss of face, for the Confucius Institute a disgrace, since it has given way to the worldwide trend to elevate the English language

³Vol. 1: Shi Zhanjun (Eds.): *The Wedding in Rubber Stills*; Vol. 2: Xie Youshun (Eds.): *Plums rain-damp*; Vol. 3: Bing Feng (Eds.): *A fallen leaf*; vol. 4: Liu Tao (eds.): *street magician*; vol. 7: Zhang Yiwu (eds.): *Jade light and love knot*; vol. 8: Zhang Yiwu (eds.): *Up, into the City*.

above all other languages, thus also above Chinese, and thus to crown it as the only saving language at all. For the readership, this measure is an affront, especially since, as was already the case with the then monthly magazine *Chinese Literature*, texts were not translated in their entirety, but rather in abridged form, sometimes *ad usum delphini*.

But what do I mean here by hostile hermeneutics? Beijing distrusts the (foreign) sinologists. Not only politicians, but also scientists there accuse our guild of having insufficient language skills, a wrong view of China, low empathy, etc. Yes, here and there is the talk about a “master plan,” with the help of which science could be abused to the detriment of China. In short, one feels once again like a victim.⁴ All this is about the tiresome issue of representation. This has to do with understanding and is therefore a matter of philosophy. What we can or cannot comprehend is, if language is used, a matter of interpretation for our counterpart. The latter can turn out to be friendly or hostile. Without wishing to enter into a big debate at this point, I would like to solve the problem in this way: An opinion is only an opinion; it does not represent reality or even the truth. A friendly concept of hermeneutics would therefore endeavor to recognize the achievement as an effort concerning a different culture and not immediately demonize it as “foreign,” “imperialist,” “chauvinist,” “Eurocentric,” as is usual according to the theory of post-colonialism.

To give an example: Liao Yiwu 廖亦武 (born 1958), winner of the Peace Prize of the German book trade in 2012, claims that his works are documentations of the “true China.” I have dared to contradict this publicly, because his friends in Beijing, who visited him in prison, consider his “stories” to be at least partially or even largely fictitious. Now fiction is the medium of literature. Thus, we read only one picture that the author of China has, namely his picture. There would be nothing to object to if publishers and readers weren’t of the opinion that in books like “Fräulein Hallo and the Bauernkaiser” (German 2009) the terrible reality of Chinese society was presented. In this case a friendly concepts of hermeneutics would sound as follows: the reader would understand the work of Liao Yiwu as one possible image among many possible images of China. This would be his image, but not necessarily that of the publisher and the reader. And a friendly concept of hermeneutics on my part would be the concession that despite some fictional moments the narrator wrote well.

Or take another example. When the footballer Stefan Effenberg (born 1968) 1994 gave the German public the finger after an international match he was dismissed from the national team. In contrast, Beijing artist Ai Weiwei 艾未未 (born 1957) in 2014 with his exhibition at the Gropiusbau of Berlin went undisturbed: On one wall hung a photomontage showing the master in front of the most famous buildings in the world, including St. Peter’s, with the finger of a fox. There is no more forceful way to express one’s contempt for Western culture. Be that as it may, in one case a hostile type of hermeneutics is at work, in the other a friendly one.

But the starting point of the campaign “Go Global!” is not a friendly but rather a hostile form of hermeneutics. Without having an in-depth knowledge of it, not a few Chinese politicians who are not familiar with it call sinology abroad “foreign.” This

⁴Cf. the new stocktaking in Giglione 2016.

sounds tautological, but “foreign” is meant pejoratively here. One is mistaken in the belief that nationality still plays a role in the qualification for a scientific discipline. But this is no longer the case. We have long since entered the age of specialists. A Chinese expert for German history will have more to say about Germany than a German bee-keeping expert. Conversely, an American specialist in the sealing of the Tang era will have more insight into the poetics of the Chinese Middle Ages than a Chinese lover of French novels of the nineteenth century.

To be able to “go global” sensibly, it therefore requires exact knowledge of what has been researched, translated, and published abroad in China, but there is a shortcoming: the language barriers have led to a concentration on English language, especially American sinology. Between Beijing and Canton it is assumed that if you know US-based sinology, you know the one of the entire “West,” but that is not the case at all. Czech and American sinology differences are huge. Since the Goethe era (1770–1830) at the latest Germany has become a translator nation, the USA has never been one. 70% of all German-language publications are translations; in the Anglo-American world, however, the figure is only 3%. Translating for the foreign book market itself therefore requires precise knowledge of the state of sinology in the current cultural circle. However, there are hardly any such experts on the mainland.

This is why the underestimation of the knowledge available in countries like Japan, Korea, or France is negative for China.

The Shanghai essayist Yu Qiuyu 余秋雨 (born 1946) once published a noteworthy contribution after his visit to the Expo in Hanover (2000). He asked himself the question why the pavilion of the People’s Republic of China was so poorly frequented, whereas other exhibitors had many visitors. He came to the conclusion that the Chinese exhibits were not aimed at representatives of the host country at all, but at patriotic Chinese abroad. He may be right there. We experience things like this in other cases as well. There, Chinese professors publicly ask the question of how best to convey the history of the Chinese revolution abroad. But do we need it? The history of socialism in German countries is longer and older than the Chinese. We don’t need any teaching there. Moreover—and this is even more important—who is to inform himself on modern or contemporary China, may not trust too much on Chinese accounts. Many archives are closed, some subjects are taboo, and historians have to follow the party’s guidelines. Due to numerous omissions, publications and translations oftentimes are not to be trusted.

Back to the problems of the Expo: what the Chinese need in Hanover would have been an experienced agency with advice and support if you didn’t have the appropriate experts yourself. This also applies to book fairs. Except for 2009, when China was guest of honor, the Frankfurt Book Fair with its Chinese publishing companies is not particularly interesting for a general public. In short, there is a lack of awareness of marketing in the positive sense. This is especially true for the production and distribution of books.

Here we come back again to the question of “translating yourself.” Theoretical support for such a project is now provided by theoreticians such as Doris Bachmann-Medick (born 1952).⁵ This literary and cultural scientist, who now teaches at the University of Giessen, is of the opinion that we Europeans, especially Germans, translated so much and had so much translated already that we now have a monopoly and do not give the “locals” any room to transfer on their own or to transfer themselves. They should now be given the privilege of translating from their mother tongue into a foreign language.

Here again proves true what the Chinese vernacular describes as follows: he who does much, makes many mistakes; he who does little, makes few mistakes. Since Americans do not translate, or translate very little, because they do not recognize translations as (scientific) achievements in the academic field, they cannot be criticized by Doris Bachmann-Medick. However, from the Chinese side, which does not distinguish between North America and Europe, “we” are being criticized with regard to the US Sinology: “We” would not do anything or not enough to promote contemporary Chinese literature. Since German and French are not usually part of the medicine chest of Chinese professors, “we” are easily lumped together, i.e., perceived from the USA and equated with the USA. Our many transmissions are little known, American ones hardly exist. Whatever “we” do, we seem to be doing the wrong thing. Let’s translate, let’s dominate, let’s not translate, let us be Eurocentric. We can pick and choose the accusations as we please.

But what about “translating yourself” in theory and practice? The Association of German Translators (since 1954), of which I am a member, has issued ten commandments for my guild. These include the demand that I only translate into my mother tongue. Why? Because we are more familiar with it than with any other language. It’s not enough to speak English or Chinese 99.9%. The icing on the cake, the essence of a text, lies hidden in the 0.1%. The championship is decided here. I do not deny that certain Chinese translators or interpreters speak and write excellent English or good German, but when we look at their printed products, we find two things:

1. The New Fibres tongues of ancient Chinese philosophy often follow existing English-language guidelines, for example the outstanding patterns of the American Burton Watson (born 1925). Then, a few words are exchanged by Chinese hand. Under these circumstances, one could talk about plagiarism.
2. A lack of self-criticism can lead to an overestimation of one’s own linguistic abilities. One does not consult a native speaker out of self-confidence or does not let a native speaker proofread the text. The result: useful German, but full of small mistakes.

Small mistakes are actually something normal, but when they accumulate from sentence to sentence, the reader puts a book away. The lack of control is probable due to the fact that a publisher like Foreign Language Press does not have a native speaker or does not use one for the necessary reading advice. Unedited German-language publications written by a Chinese are illegible and produced for the paper waste. But

⁵Bachmann-Medick 2009, especially 238–283.

there is a model that could be followed: the *China Daily*. The brilliant English of course owes a lot to the many native speakers, who work as proof readers for the many journalists and publicists.

China has produced little known translators after 1989. But a good translator is like a brand name that publishers can rely on to sell their products profitably. The American-Chinese couple Gladys Yang (1919–1999) and Yang Xianyi 杨宪益 (1915–2009) have worked for the Foreign Language Press since 1954 and among others have edited selected works by Lu Xun 鲁迅 (1881–1936) in English.

The four volumes were not nicely presented, but they were easy to read. In the past I used to chew blindly on both translations. I no longer do that in a Chinese bookstore that sells foreign language books, but now the translator's name counts for me. Just like in Germany.

In the meantime, Chinese authors have noticed that if they want to be successful abroad, they need an experienced and well-known mediator. Howard Goldblatt (born in 1939), the second author of Nobel Prize winner Mo Yan 莫言 (born in 1956) is probably the best known and most successful translator of contemporary Chinese literature in the “West.” The American interference in the drafting process is so significant that it is no longer possible to speak of him as a translator, but that one must see him as a co-author. Word of the quality of his texts has spread internationally. They have also prompted German publishers to spontaneously acquire the copyright. An author like Jia Pingwa 贾平凹 (born 1952) was successful in enforcing that two already completed transcriptions of one of his best-known narrative works were not published in America and instead Howard Goldblatt had to take over the third transcription.

In the German-speaking world there are many translators who have become trademarks, even in sinology. Although the theory is that a translation is outdated after thirty years, the classical Chinese novels under the name of Franz Kuhn (1884–1961) and the ancient Chinese philosophers under the name of Richard Wilhelm (1873–1930) continue to be published even after more than eighty years, indeed after more than 110 years, and are satisfactorily distributed in respect to all involved parties. What might be the reason for this? Although new translations are currently in vogue among German publishers, they are subject to a special policy.⁶ These are only entrusted to well-known and experienced translators, because it is to be feared otherwise that the new translations will not find a market because of a preference for familiar translations. Both Franz Kuhn and Richard Wilhelm are draft horses because they are masters of the German language. It is difficult to compete with them, even if “we” today could perhaps translate more “correctly” due to increased knowledge and better lexicons. Readers may cling to old translations as if they were an old love, even if they reveal major shortcomings, for example, through numerous omissions.

Among sinologists there are still some simple-minded ideas about the transmission of foreign texts. Thus, one still hears the demand for a literal translation. As if there were one literal word! Especially a Chinese word (character) has sometimes a history of more than three thousand years. Many different meanings have been deposited

⁶Höbel 2015, 91–98.

in it, which cannot be grasped by a single encyclopaedia. Only the context can help here. One still hears the call: translate what it says! Yes, but what does it say? In order to know “what it says,” you first have to understand it. But translating does not only mean understanding, it also means to interpret. And this brings us to hermeneutics, which tells us that we are basically not transmitting a text, but our understanding of a text. Thus, translation becomes a philosophical interpretation. It is the philosophy that confirms that all understanding is a distant understanding, i.e., we never come to an end with our understanding, there always remains a remnant that others may try to clear up after us. Therefore, there will always be new translations, just as there are always new interpretations even after hundreds of years.

This thesis of a limited understanding is not only valid for the translator or the readership, but also for the author! Quite a few contemporary Chinese poets have told me when I asked them: they themselves would not be able to understand what I did not grasp in their works. They would not know how to say how they had written this and that. They would not be able to understand the meaning of what was perhaps originally meant. This happened in the past with Zhang Zao 张枣 (1962–2010) and most recently Ouyang Jianghe 欧阳江河 (born in 1956). If both are not able to explain “what it says,” how can I know better “what it says”? The task of translating—at least it seems to us that way—should actually be the realization of what a text has to tell us. But often we can’t find out what an author has thought, if he is no longer alive, if he is unwilling to provide information, if he doesn’t see through himself (anymore); in short, if he or she can’t help. Therefore, I have resorted to a picture once again: a word cannot be taken from an encyclopaedia in the same way as we pick up a parcel from the post office and unlace it. A reference book offers only a small selection of possibilities, it does not have an individual language contradicting conventional logic, but is the essence of a good style.

In the case of the dark poets, we can use a famous word by Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) from 1917: the ego is no longer master in its own house. The ego is not one, it is divided into many different forms of consciousness.⁷ And that means: as little as a text can be interpreted once and for all, as little as a transmission is ever to be completed. Interpretation and translation can be changed at will throughout a lifetime according to our changing standards. The aim is to reach the “art” via the “craft.” In this respect, not everyone can translate, but only those who have received appropriate training, gained experience and recognized the complexity of language. “Anyone can translate!” can unfortunately still be heard at Chinese universities today. This assertion is an expression of contempt. That is why a Chinese professor does not translate himself, but has his or her works translated. His students produce a source text, which he edits and publishes under his name. The result knows many producers. We also know this practice from our own country.⁸ It rarely produced useful results.

Last but not least: wither way, the project “Swarms out” is doomed to failure. The establishment of a translation center, as happened in Qingdao in 2014, will no longer help. Nor will the establishment of a hundred or so chairs of translation

⁷Precht 2007, 69–72.

⁸Cf. Neeb and Schmidt 2015.

studies at various universities help. Translators in China are not getting “old.” They start at twenty and turn to a bread-and-butter profession at thirty. German-speaking translators, on the other hand, become very “old.” They are offered all possible conveniences: a translation center as in Straelen (since 1978), colloquia as in Wolfenbüttel, courses and seminars as offered by the Association of German Translators, and high prices as offered by the German Academy for Language and Poetry in Darmstadt.⁹ They translate for a lifetime and are supported both practically and mentally by expert editors. Accordingly, the skills that a young translator has to acquire increase with age.

However, the shortcoming of the said project is not only due to the lack of theory and practice in translation, but also to everyday matters such as the book market and book revival. Chinese publishers do not know the market, they know very little about potential readers. The German readership, for example, is female. Books have to be beautiful, Chinese books often aren't: they weigh too much, they don't smell good, the paper feels clumsy, the cover is old-fashioned, the typesetting is not attractive. In short, they do not bring joy, so they neither become a friend nor are suitable as gifts. So, there should be a bookstore in China, which will first find out who and how it could win a reader abroad with what. This would require visits to foreign publishing houses and bookstores, to learn that every book market is differently positioned.

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⁹Cf. Peeters 2015; Behringer 2015; Passet 2015.

Contemporary Translation Practice

Revising the Chinese Translation of Verdi's Opera "La Traviata" Linguistic and Methodological Issues



Sabrina Ardizzoni

Abstract This essay deals with the methodological and linguistic aspects of the translation into Chinese of the original libretto of Verdi's *La Traviata* written in 1853 by Francesco Maria Piave. The translation is performance-oriented, so it is part of a field of study that is still scarcely investigated today, and requires careful reflection and accurate guidelines (Desblache in *A tool for social integration? audio-visual translation from different angles*, pp. 155–170, 2007; Golomb in *Songs and significance: Virtues and Vices of vocal translation*. Rodopi, Amsterdam/New York, pp. 121–161, 2005; Mateo 2012). Starting from a reflection on the tradition of translating opera librettos in China, the author highlights the historical and social significance of Verdi's opera. *La Traviata*, key access-point of Italian melodrama onto the Chinese cultural scene, becomes here the field in which specific trans-cultural elements of an artistic language are expressed, a language that, despite having defined rules, remains open to numerous semantic variations. After a historical excursus on the translation of the work, the study focuses on the linguistic analysis of the criticalities in the Chinese translation of the text when aimed at stage performance. The aim is to update a translation dating back to the last century already reviewed by Chinese conductor Zheng Xiaoying, but with special attention to the transcoding of sociolinguistic and cultural elements in a diachronic and diamesic key.

Keywords Opera in china · Translating opera for the stage · Chinese translation strategies · *La traviata*

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1 Introduction

The present paper¹ deals with the methodological and linguistic aspects of the Chinese translation of Francesco Maria Piave's 1853 libretto of *La Traviata*; it is therefore relevant to a field of studies that is currently in need of careful consideration and accurate guidelines (Desblache 2007; Golomb 2005; Mateo 2012). On the one hand, studies on audio-visual translation from Italian to Chinese have bloomed from the 1990s onward (Jin and Gambier 2018, 36), and much research has been dedicated to the translation of films, both from a historical and a methodological perspective (Jin 2013; Xiao 2016), and also to surtitling of opera (Rędzioch-Korkuz 2016; Bogucki 2016); on the other hand, the micro-area of translation into Chinese of Italian opera librettos remains to this day mostly *terra incognita*.

It must be taken into consideration that, within the three elements that connote the multimedia genre of melodrama, i.e., libretto, music, performance, the compilation of the libretto may take place before, after, or in parallel with, the music, but always highly integrated with it (Marschall 2004; Mateo 2012; Huang 2013). These three elements, according to Rossi (2018, 41), are equivalent and may not be ranged hierarchically.

As far as western melodrama is concerned, *La Traviata*, back in 1907, was the first to be performed in Chinese translation, in Japan. The Chinese libretto was staged again in China in 1956,² and, after a long hiatus, again in 1978. Since then, the opera has been performed numerous times, more often than not in Italian.

The analysis proposed here responds to an ad hoc request linked to a project by Orchestra Director Zhèng Xiǎoyīng 郑小瑛 (1929-), and is part of a wider field of reflection on the way melodrama is represented in contemporary China: the theaters of the great megalopolises like Beijing, Shanghai, and Canton, attract an audience fond of the Western melodrama genre; the tendency is therefore that of staging operas in their original language, with surtitles in Chinese, inviting Western singers, or Chinese singers who have studied in Western countries. In less globalized cities, where musicians of great caliber operate, such as Zheng Xiaoying herself, local audiences prefer translated works, and singers who are not trained in the original languages of those librettos perform better in their native language.

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²Following the guidelines of Culture Secretary Mao Dun 茅盾 (1896–1981), several Italian literary works were translated in the Fifties of the twentieth century, but from intermediate languages (English or Russian). Wen (2008, 215–216) quotes Zhu Weiji's translations from the English of the librettos of *Madama Butterfly* (1958) and *La Traviata* (1959). In 1962 he also translated the *Divina Commedia* and the *Decameron*. But his translations of the librettos have never been staged.

Revising the translation involves two phases: analysis of the translation in use—identifying signifiers and parts that were omitted or modified in previous translations—and reconstruction of identified parts within a new version. The first phase saw the involvement of the present writer, as translator in the two languages, and of the director, who pointed out the critical points. The second phase took place as a collaboration between the director, the singers, and the stage director, and had to be integrated with the musical score.

Maestro Zheng Xiaoying's involvement in the translation, apart from being aimed at improving the transmission of the narrative plot, was especially directed at conveying the “nuances” that bind the opera's characters—their inner world, and their psychological make-up—to the music.

2 The Translation Issue from a Historical Viewpoint

First of all, one must analyze the subject matter from a diachronic point of view, and enquire on how the tradition of translating Western literary works originated in China, and what this implies linguistically and inter-linguistically.

In China, translation projects in the years between the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries developed under the influence of the intellectual political paradigm, which had among its adherents Yan Fu 严复 (1854–1921) and Lin Shu 林纾 (1852–1924), faithful to the principle of “Chinese knowledge as substance, Western knowledge for application.”³

In 1898, Yan Fu framed the three founding principles of Chinese translation theory—to this day important reference points for translators at large—faithfulness (*xìn* 信), expressivity (*dá* 达), elegance (*yǎ* 雅).⁴

From this moment, Western cultural works elicited a deep and widespread interest in late nineteenth-century China, stimulating reactions to the intellectual and political crisis which permeated the last years of the Manchu empire.

Many of the young students who had participated to the study-abroad program, attending university courses in Japan, Germany, or France became translators of works they felt the need to introduce in the rapidly changing Chinese cultural scene. Translations were mainly mediated by a third language, especially Japanese. In the first years of the twentieth century, in the research of a literary dignity of the *báihuà*—the vernacular style—, Yan Fu and Lin Shu's translations in *wényán*—classical Chinese—contrasts with the ideas of the young intellectuals that, from 1915 onwards, had given birth to the New Culture Movement (*xīn wénhuà yùndòng* 新文化运动). The latter were inclined to experiment in literary works written in *báihuà*,

³ *zhōngtǐ xīyòng* 中体西用.

⁴ Yan Fu introduced these cardinal principles in the foreword to his translation of T.H. Huxley's, *Evolution and Ethics* (1898). See Elizabeth Sinn, 1995 “Yan Fu” in Chan, Pollard 2001 (1995) *An Encyclopedia of Translation*, 429–447. Also Brezzi (ed.) 2008.

and to conceive new literary styles, free and unencumbered by the rigidity of the classical dogmas.⁵

Among these, Lu Xun (1881–1936) stands out both for his original productions and for his translations in the vernacular. Lu Xun and the other translators of the first 20 years of the twentieth century felt the need to find a language medium capable of making a text both accessible and enjoyable, and of stimulating the Chinese reader's interest (Lundberg, 1989; Pesaro and Pirazzoli 2019).⁶ Likewise, in his 1922 translation of *Through the Looking-Glass*, Zhao Yuanren (Chao Yuen Ren) 赵元任 (1892–1982) not only used vernacular Chinese for the transfer of contents, but also paid special attention to the sounds of the original work's and to its extralinguistic aspects, for instance, Lewis Carroll's imaginary words (Chao 1976, 166–168).

That was the spirit of the times. Translators spoke to readers who were all literati, educated individuals who paid a great deal of attention to textual elegance and contents, but were frightfully few in numbers.⁷ Literacy levels in the population at large was very low, and only 10% had access to written texts.

The opera, especially by means of its multimedia nature, was very well adapted to the purpose of conveying new and engaging meanings. In analyzing Chinese translations of opera librettos, one must keep in mind the three features that characterized the onset of western melodrama in China.

1. Innovations in language; the shift from *wényán* to *báihuà* was fluid and gradual, and for a long time admitted the presence of both variants within the same text.
2. Innovations in the arts: forms which had hitherto been considered “high” gave way to other forms of expression derived from folk culture and previously denied the full status of intellectual dignity. Within this process, different styles, dialogues, narrations, poetics, and music mixed and mingled.
3. Innovations in thought and ideas. The intent is that of involving a wider section of the population. The stimuli represented by the yet little-known West, seen as a passionate, optimistic representation of the world, were enthusiastically welcomed. Western culture—inasmuch as linked to the French Revolution and its ideals of liberty, equality, fraternity, and awash with the populist, and nationalistic principles of latter-day romanticism—was seen, by some of the intellectuals of

⁵The drive for the adoption of *báihuà* became one of the banners of the New Culture Movement, but it had already begun in the second half of the nineteenth century. This variant of vernacular language derives from Tang dynasty (618–907 CE) operas (*huàběn* 话本), and had been used in novels written in the Ming (1368–1644 CE) and Qing (1644–1911 CE) periods.

⁶After his return from Japan, where he had studied from 1902 to 1909, Lu Xun dedicated himself mainly to a literary production for the spiritual betterment of the Chinese people. He developed a narrative style of his own and a straightforward literary language close to the common speech, thereby influencing the whole literary framework of the Chinese twentieth century. Please refer to Nicoletta Pesaro's contribution in this book.

⁷Men, for the most part; but during this period, the translation of foreign texts and the linguistic innovations in *baihua* also influenced the development of a literary production by female authors, among whom we may mention Ding Ling, Bing Xing, and Huang Luyin. (Goldman 1977; Biasco 1983; Hu 2000).

the day, as a window onto a new, young world, and conveyor of positive ideals for the birth of the nation.

In the following paragraph we will see how the translation of *La Traviata* is representative of an age, and how its contribution to operatic culture in China is both meaningful and important.

3 *La Traviata*: A Key to How Melodrama Entered China

The origins of the theatrical form of melodrama lie in nineteenth-century Italy, whence it spread all over Europe.⁸ The genre's main characteristic is its widespread diffusion in a popular environment: born in the blooming season of bourgeois culture, it often represents the contrast between courtly life and that of the common people, thereby kindling in the souls of the public the fires of romantic culture and budding nationalism. The genre gained a fast foothold in Italy and thence spread in other European countries, where Italian librettos got translated and others written directly in various national languages. According to Minors 2012, the circulation of opera librettos in the beginning of the twentieth century was strictly linked to the ongoing development of national identities. Indeed, she writes that:

In the late nineteenth century, and the early twentieth century, foreign elements of operas were essential either way: as exotic features of art allowing distancing from everyday customs and tradition, linguistically and culturally; and/or as ways of providing an international platform for visibility to national cultures in the making. (Minors 2012, 14)

In China, as we will see, Western opera arrived later, in the first half of the twentieth century, but the knowledge of themes and style-features of nineteenth-century bourgeois Italian melodrama was present already at the beginning of the last century, in a period of vast intellectual excitement and cultural renewal throughout China. *La Traviata* was the first Western opera to be performed in China in Chinese.

By what route did Piave's libretto take to land on a Chinese stage?

In nineteenth-century China, the influence of Italian culture was practically nil: attention for the West was primarily focused on Great Britain and on the United States; but between 1895 and 1910, an echo of Italian culture reached China through Japan. The Chinese intellectuals in Japan developed a keen interest in Italy, and contributed to spreading a positive image of Italian culture (Masini in Brizzi 2008, 198). In 1899, Lin Shu translated Dumas's *La Dame aux camélias* (1848) with the title *Bāilí cháhuā nǚ yíshì* 巴黎茶花女遺事 [The Paris adventures of the Camellia lady]. His translation was several decades subsequent to Verdi's 1853 operatic composition of *La Traviata* on Piave's libretto, which also stemmed from the French novel.

The libretto was recast in Chinese with many adaptations and staged, of all places, in Japan in 1907. The author was Lǐ Shūtóng 李叔同, a.k.a. Hóng Yī 弘一 (1880–1942), an artist with a wild love for western music and founder in Tokyo of the

⁸We will not take into consideration here the earlier forms of melodrama, which had different stylistic features and social purposes.

Chunliu Opera Society (*Chūnliǔ shè* 春柳社) (Lee in Goldman 1977, p. 29). In 1956, with the collaboration of several Soviet musicians, Beijing's Tianqiao (*Tiānqiáo* 天桥) experimental theater staged the *Traviata* with lyrics translated by Miáo Lín 苗林 and Liú Shīróng 刘诗嵘 from Russian and English, but heavily influenced by Hong Yi's earlier work. It was the first time that a western opera was put on stage in Chinese (Chen and Shao 2011, 1–8). It was an indirect translation, inspired by the revolutionary and progressive spirit that characterized the panorama of Chinese translations of Western works in the 1950s (Wen 2008, 215–216). In the ten years that followed, *La Traviata* was performed many times in China, but not between 1966 and 1978. Conductor Zhèng Xiǎoyīng 郑小瑛 remembers that in those years musicians and opera singers had no chance to put their western-opera artistic skills to work. Thanks to the collaboration of an American conductor, a woman, the opera was once again staged in 1978—for the first time in 28 years—in the auditorium of a factory on the outskirts of Beijing, for a public of factory workers. These were used to attend popular theater shows in total relaxation, munching on snacks and chatting among themselves; but faced with the grandeur of that tragic love story, they were immediately fascinated, and a dead silence fell upon the public. This is what the tenor who played the leading role of Alfredo in the 1978 show remembers. And then, having passed the scrutiny of the factory workers, *La Traviata* became the first opera, in all of contemporary China, to be subject to analysis for the purpose of a staging according to the Western operatic style. Zhèng Xiǎoyīng, in the Beijing National Opera Theater put it again on stage after a meticulous study of the opera's characters, its music, and a first revision of the translation. Subsequently, she kept on adding revisions to the libretto, until 2011 when in Xiamen she staged the latest Chinese revision, a version she had worked on personally to make the lyrics fit the music and the rhythm better, and make the whole opera more suitable—that is, “comprehensible” and engaging—to a Chinese public.

In 2018, Zheng Xiaoying felt the need to involve a bilingual expert to check out the version, and correct errors in the translation which had led to misunderstandings, both at the textual and co-textual level. This is how the current re-translation came about; it has therefore taken on the characteristics of a focused study, raising the following queries:

1. What translation issues may be the object of negotiation on the part of experts involved in re-translation (translator, conductor)?
2. What components of the language-message must be mandatorily conveyed in the new Chinese text, and what kind of “freedom” may the translator grant the musicologist?

4 Language Transfer and *Intentio Operis*

The translation contained errors, at various levels. The most obvious appeared already in the first act, when Gastone introduces Alfredo to Violetta and says to her:

Egra foste, e ogni dì con affanno qui volò, di voi chiese.

You were ill, and every day he flew here in anguish, and asked about you.

The sentence implies that Violetta, in her illness, is staying at home, and that Alfredo, unbeknownst to her, visits the house to get news of her. But the Chinese version, after many manipulations, comes out like this:

你在医院里养病的时候他每天送来花

Nǐ zài yīyuànli yǎngbìngde shíhòu tā měi tiān sòng lái huā

While you were in the hospital, he'd send flowers every day.

This is a semantic error, and should obviously be corrected. But what caused the “error”? In our opinion, this flaw bears the burden of an enthusiastic and optimistic viewpoint, a positive ideal that the then-translator was expressing with regard to Western society.⁹ A sick person, in Violetta's world, would certainly receive treatment in a hospital, and not at home. This is a language-transfer error that allows the *intentio operis*,¹⁰ the work's intent, to seep through, i.e., the meaning of importing the operatic genre into China.

Next, we will focus on the scenic adaptation of the duet in the 5th scene of the second act; it allows a quantitative appraisal of the ratio of Chinese vs. Italian, and elucidates an aspect which at first might appear to be strident from the point of view of translation rendering: the insertion of “new” expressions and the relocation of information within the text. It will be seen how such insertions are actually necessary in the light of the multimedia nature of the lyrics.

Violetta and Germont, Alfredo's father, have decided, without Alfredo knowing, that she will find an excuse to leave him, so as to mend his sister's reputation, damaged by the disgrace of her brother's relationship with a woman of low social status and little moral virtue. In the 2011 revision, Zheng, when weighing out the connection between the verbal part (libretto) and the musical one (score), had worked on the basis of a “one note/one syllable/one word” correspondence, and on the expression of the two contrasting worlds the characters belong to. Violetta conveys the tragedy and suffering of the moment in which she realizes she'll never see her loved one again; Germont emerges triumphant and full of self-conceit, knowing that he's secured, first of all, a moral victory for his and his family's well-being, but also a personal achievement, where a man's superiority over a woman (he stands over the female character, who remains sitting) as well as his social class (he's a nobleman, she is low-born) are brought to the fore (Table 1).

The first obvious aspect is how Chinese uses more words to render the same musical piece: the Italian text has 28 words, while the Chinese one uses 54.

In the original Italian, the melodic effect is brought about by the greater number of vowels, and through the use of polysyllabic words, at times formed through “creative” juxtapositions in the morphology.

⁹This observation is shared with other analyzes of translations from the 1950s, among which Wen in Brezzi 2008.

¹⁰I refer here to Eco 2003.

Table 1 Act 2, Scene 1

Italian original	Chinese translation	Interlinear translation of the Chinese
<p>Violetta: Dite alla giovine ~ sì bella e pura ch'avvi una vittima ~ della sventura, cui resta un unico ~ raggio di bene... che a lei il sacrifica ~ e che morrà! (<i>repeated twice</i>) Violetta: Tell that young maiden ~ so beautiful and pure/That there's a victim of sorrow ~ who has only one ray of goodness left.../And that she will sacrifice it to her ~ and that she'll die</p>	<p>薇: 1.我请你告诉她,那纯洁的姑娘,一颗孤独的心布满着创伤,为了她的幸福,我牺牲了仅有的希望,生命已值得我再留恋,前途就是死亡! 2.我求你告诉她,那纯洁的姑娘,一颗孤独的心布满者创伤,为了她的幸福,我牺牲了仅有的希望,生命已值得我再留恋,前途就是死亡 (<i>she adds</i>) 死亡能为我解脱痛苦! (<i>repeated twice</i>) 前途绝望,前途绝望,离开人间才能得到安详!</p>	<p>1. Please, say to that pure young woman (that there is) a broken lonely heart. For her happiness, I've sacrificed all hope, life will never bring me love again, in my future there is naught but death 2. I beseech you, say to that pure young woman (that there is) a lonely wounded heart. For her happiness I've sacrificed all hope, life will never bring me love again, in my future there is naught but death Death will free me from sorrow! (<i>repeated twice</i>) My future is hopeless, hopeless; only by leaving this world shall I find comfort</p>

The Chinese language uses mono-phonemic and mono-morphemic words, with a single vowel or diphthong. The translated text therefore needs a higher number of words than the Italian one, where the words are longer, have more vowels, and have wider prosodic extensions than the Chinese ones. Moreover, as the (Chinese) syllable is the minimal meaningful unit, indivisible and unmodifiable, it is not possible to represent each word with variations in the standard form; but one can elaborate shades of meaning using synonyms and less common polyrhemic constructions. In translation, the possibility—often adopted by operatic Italian—of creating new sounds, and resorting to lofty, ad hoc expressions that make the text “exotic,” i.e., distant from common speech, is practically nil. In this piece, a notable example is the (ungrammatical) expression *ch'avvi* (“that one has” = “that there is”) coined by the author especially for this text, and most probably not to be found elsewhere in other communication contexts.

The morphological characteristics of the Chinese language justify, in the translation, the insertion of many repetitions. Eschewed in Italian, they are not so in Chinese; we might add that these repetitions are—borrowing Jacobson’s terminology—*phatic*: that is to say, they are meant to keep the listener’s attention aligned with the music. In other words, they make the lyrics fit the tune.

Even if the correspondence at the semantic level is not complete, the central role played by correspondence with the music, together with the intrinsic characteristics of the Chinese language, allow us to consider this translation successful at the multimedia level.

Table 2 Act 2, Scene 1

Italian original	Chinese translation	Interlinear translation of the Chinese
Germont Piangi, piangi, piangi, o misera... ~ supremo, il veggo, è il sacrificio ~ ch'or io ti chieggo... Sento nell'anima ~ già le tue pene... coraggio e il nobile ~ cor vincerà <i>Cry, cry, cry, you poor thing... supreme, I see, is the sacrifice I now ask of you. In my soul, I already feel your grief... be brave, and the noble heart shall prevail</i>	1. 哭吧, 哭吧, 哭吧, 可怜的人, 哭吧, 眼泪能给你安慰。眼泪能治疗痛苦和伤悲 (repeated twice)。 离别的痛苦, 我都能体会, 这样的牺牲是多么可贵, 是多么可贵 2. 眼泪给你安慰 (repeated twice) 眼泪能治好痛苦和伤悲, 离别的痛苦啊, 我都能体会, 这样的牺牲是多么可贵。哭吧, 哭吧, 哭吧, 可怜的人, 这样的牺牲是多么可贵! 哭吧, 哭吧, 哭吧, 可怜的人, 痛苦将随着时间消亡, 请相信我的话, 那一切痛苦将随着时间消亡	1. Cry, cry, cry, you poor thing, cry, tears can comfort you Tears can heal sorrow and grief. (repeated twice) In the sorrow of separation I can feel the nobleness of this sacrifice, the nobleness of it 2. May tears bring you comfort. (repeated twice) Tears may heal sorrow and grief In the pain of separation I can feel the nobleness of this sacrifice Cry, cry, cry, you poor thing, this sacrifice is so noble! Cry, cry, cry, poor thing sorrow will vanish with time, I beg you, believe my words, with time all sorrows shall vanish

In the following section we will consider other points that may appear as faults from a linguistic standpoint, but effective from a textual standpoint. The following piece brings to light how the translation is functional at rendering the musical impact of the opera. It also sheds light on the translation strategies used for transferring the *intentio operis* (Table 2).

Insertions stand out here, i.e., additions of sentences that neither add nor subtract to the meaning of the narration, but have the purpose of adapting the lyrics to the music.

眼泪能给你安慰	tears can comfort you
<i>Yǎnlèi néng gěi nǐ ānwèi</i>	
眼泪能治疗痛苦和伤悲	tears can heal sorrow and grief.
<i>Yǎnlèi néng zhìliáo tòngkǔ hé shāngbēi</i>	

And this insertion is particularly functional to rendering the music, as the two lines, rhymed in Chinese, follow the course of the score and its rhythm: even the placement of vowels favor the singer's enunciation.

The same may be said for the relocation of information clusters within the sentence: *kěguì* 可贵, the expression that indicates the nobleness of Violetta's *cor*; "heart," is attributed to her "sacrifice" and replaced the end of the sentence. Moreover, some parts that have been "sacrificed" in the name of musical modulation: we may highlight here the expression *ch'io chieggo* ("that/which I ask") that in the Italian

version puts the blame of the sacrifice on Alfredo's father Germont. This is not made explicit in the Chinese version, but in the second repetition he asks Violetta to believe his words:

请相信我的话 I beg you, believe my words
Qǐng xiāngxìn wǒde huà

This last phrase is absent in the original but is aptly located in terms of the duet's musicality. The original lyrics and their translation in the target language may not overlap, but this strategy is a well-wrought "stage performing effect."¹¹

As far as language register is concerned, the translation uses a colloquial form of speech, much more intelligible than Piave's, which has all the characteristics of nineteenth-century librettos. According to Fabio Rossi (2018), the Italian opera libretto:

ha una sua immediata riconoscibilità, per l'elevato tasso di forme desuete, antirealistiche e le oscure contorsioni sintattiche".

is immediately recognisable for the high rate of its obsolete, counterintuitive forms and *obscure syntactic contortions*. (Rossi 2018, 67)

The more libretto-language diverges from common speech—Rossi goes on to say—the higher its effectiveness. It displays

preferenza per forme fonetiche e morfologiche arcaiche, alla selezione di un lessico aulico, all'ordine delle parole caratterizzato da spezzatura e inversioni (iperbati), scarso peso dato all'agentività del soggetto, alla manipolazione della transitività verbale, all'ellissi, o viceversa, alla ridondanza di forme pronominali.

a proclivity for archaic phonetic and morphological forms, for selecting a high-prose vocabulary, for resorting to broken up word-orders and inversions (hyperbaton), for scarce attention to [grammatical] subject agency, for manipulating the transitivity of verbs, for ellipsis, or—vice versa—for redundancy in pronominal forms (Rossi 2018, 67)

The Chinese translation, on the other hand, is penned in a straightforward, vernacular language, with many repetitions, few synonyms, and little use for figurative speech. Piave's *raggio di bene*, "ray of goodness," remains untranslated. The Italian libretto's author constantly seeks equivalent synonymic expressions, draws from a high vocabulary register, is quite partial to contracted constructions in phonetics and morphology (ellipsis, exchange of consonants or vowels, like in *cor*, *sacrifizio*), to vowel endings that follow the course of the music (*io avea*), semantic contractions, allotropic verbal forms (*veggo*, *chieggo*), and invented forms borrowed from a high-register vocabulary, but concentrating meanings derivable only from that specific libretto-context.

This may be gleaned also from the following excerpt, taken from the fifth scene of the first act, where, in the Chinese version, the condensed meaning and lexical invention contained in the expression *le egre soglie* ("sick thresholds") is not conveyed. In this case, there is no mention of Violetta's sickness; what remains is a shade of warmth and vitality (Table 3).

¹¹Wang 2013 in <http://translationjournal.net/journal/65hamlet.htm>.

Table 3 Act 1, Scene 5

Italian original	Chinese translation	Interlinear translation of the Chinese
Lui che modesto e vigile ~ all'egre soglie ascese, e nuova febbre accese ~ destandomi all'amor. <i>He who, modest and attentive/came up to my sick thresholds/and kindled a new fever/awakening me to love</i>	我记得你明亮的眼光, 你说话热情奔放, 使我的心情欢畅	I remember your shining glance, your kind and unrestrained speech, which made my soul leap with joy

In this passage, *febbre* (“fever”) and *destandomi* (“awakening me”) are rendered by *rèqíng* 热情 (“kind,” “warm,” “passionate”), *bēnfàng* 奔放 (“unrestrained”), *huānchàng* 欢畅 (“jubilant,” “excited”). Thus, the general meaning of the sentence gets “reinterpreted” with enhanced attention to the categories of *da* (expressivity) and *ya* (elegance), to the detriment of *xin* (“faithfulness”)—going back once more to Yan Fu’s categories. In other terms, it would seem permissible to detect here—in this choice of translation pointed in the direction of functionality (*skopos* theory) (Reiß and Vermeer 2014 [1984]; Vermeer 2000)—what Chao defined as a “functional” (rather than semantic) “faithfulness” (Chao 1976, 149): the choice of retaining some identifying textual signs, by transferring them into semantic clusters or to a different paratextual level, furthers a positive outcome in the stage performance.

Moreover, as we have already seen, adhering to a straightforward register responds to the cultural context of the historical moment in which the work was introduced to China.

5 The Sociolinguistic Aspect

The transposition of hierarchical relationships of the various characters reflects the concept of society current in the translator’s times. In the original Italian libretto, verbal expression between characters does not exhibit sociolinguistically symmetric dyadic exchanges; on the contrary, the relationships among the speakers are marked by expressions that clearly point out a social hierarchy: among friends, the pronoun of address is “*voi*,” as was common at the time, and servants use formulas of respect when speaking to their masters. In the Chinese version, however, the use of pronominal referents reveals an optimistic vision of social relationships in twentieth-century French high society parlors: an ideal of parity among the characters, who are seen as individuals in a society of equals. In fact, sociolinguistic differentiations seem to cancel out in the Chinese translation. In literary Chinese tradition, interpersonal relationships are indeed linguistically marked by pronominal referents functional to the representation of a society with well-defined hierarchies. Characters do not call each other by names, but use pronouns that always reflect the social interplay among

speakers. But in the translation of the libretto, there is an extensive use of the familiar *nǐ* 你 form for “you,” whereas the more formal *nín* 您 is completely absent. Here are some excerpts from the second and third acts (Tables 4 and 5).

Furthermore (Tables 6 and 7).

In Italian, the lines exchanged between Violetta and Annina constitute an asymmetric interaction, and bring out social inequality: Violetta uses the “*tu*” with Annina, whereas Annina addresses Violetta as well as all other characters with “*voi*.” Violetta feels pity for Annina (“Were you sleeping, you poor thing?”). In the Chinese interactions, everyone uses the informal form for “you,” and there are no titles of courtesy.

Table 4 Act 2, Scene 2

Italian original	Chinese translation	Interlinear translation of the Chinese
Alfredo: <i>Donde vieni?</i> Annina: <i>Da Parigi</i> Alfredo: <i>Chi te'l commise?</i> Annina: <i>Fu la mia signora.</i> <i>Alfredo: Whence did you get here?"</i> <i>Annina: "From Paris".</i> <i>Alfredo: "On whose orders?"</i> . <i>Annina: "Twas my lady's"</i>	阿: 阿尼娜,你从哪里来? 仆: 从巴黎来 阿: 谁叫你来的 仆: 我的小姐叫我	Alfredo: Annina, where did you get here from? Maid: From Paris Alfredo: Who called you here? Maid: My missy

Table 5 Act 2, Scene 2

Italian original	Chinese translation	Interlinear translation of the Chinese
Alfredo: <i>Or vanne... andrò a Parigi...Questo colloquio ignori la signora... Il tutto valgo a riparare ancora...</i> <i>Alfredo: "Now be gone hence...I shall go to Paris...Your lady must not know of this conversation... I can still set everything right"</i>	阿: 我现在立刻去巴黎,但是你不要将此事告诉小姐,让我来帮她度过当前的困难	Alfredo: I shall go to Paris immediately. But don't tell your missy anything, let me help her overcome these difficulties

Table 6 Act 2, Scene 6

Annina: <i>Mi richiedeste?</i> Violetta: <i>Sì, reca tu stessa questo foglio</i> <i>Annina: "Did you [formal] call for me".</i> <i>Violetta: "Yes, you yourself [informal] deliver this piece of paper"</i>	仆: 是你叫我吗? 薇: 是,把这封信给男爵送去	Maid: Did you call for me? Violetta: Yes, take this letter to the baron
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Table 7 Act 3, Scene 1

Italian original	Chinese translation	Interlinear translation of the Chinese
Violetta: Annina?... Annina: Comandate? Violetta: Dormivi, poveretta? Annina: Sì, perdonate... Violetta: Dammi d'acqua un sorso. (Annina eseguisce). Violetta: "Annina?...". Annina: "Yes, madam?". Violetta: "Were you sleeping, you poor thing?". Annina: "Yes, madam, forgive me". Violetta: "Give me some water. A sip" (Annina complies)	薇: 阿尼纳! 仆: (醒来) 我在这里 薇: 亲爱的,你太累. 仆: 不,请你原谅. 薇: 请你倒杯水来。(仆为薇倒水)	Violetta: Annina! Maid: (waking up) Here I am! Violetta: Dear, you're too tired! Maid: No, forgive me Violetta: "Bring me a glass of water, please." (maid pours water for Violetta)

Violetta uses terms of endearment for her maid (she calls her here *qīn'ài* 亲爱的, "dear," a term which implies a closeness that does not surface in the original. In these exchanges, Annina is labeled "housemaid" *pū* 仆, even if everybody calls her "Annina" *Ānínà* 阿尼纳. In Italian, Annina refers to Violetta as "my lady," but in Chinese she's *wōde xiǎojiě* 我的小姐. Alfredo, too, when speaking of Violetta to the maid, refers to her as "lady" in Italian and *xiǎojiě* 小姐 in Chinese.

One must remark here that *xiǎojiě* is an epithet that in pre-modern times was used to indicate prostitutes, dancers, or hostelry serving girls; but in the twentieth century it was used for young unmarried women, and to translate the English term "Miss"; like "Miss," it is always followed by the person's name, without a name it is used to call waitresses or salesgirls.¹² Therefore, the way in which Violetta's maid uses it here with regard to her "lady" is incorrect, because it exhibits an ideal of social equality that is absent in the original text. From this choice of translation filters the spirit of the times in which the Chinese text was composed, and this is a common occurrence in other contemporary translations of foreign texts (Wen 2008). In the 1950s, after the foundation of the People's Republic of China, an ideal of equality of gender and class was being widely proposed; thus, linguistically, the use of pronominal titles was leveled out toward more symmetrical sociolinguistic forms of address than in the past. This is the period in which, in "high literature" contexts, the use of the personal pronouns "wǒ," "nǐ" "tā," introduced in the 1920s, became widespread. In the 50s, the feminine third-person pronoun *tā* 她 became mandatory: gender was thus marked only in the grapheme, where the radical element corresponding to *rén* 人, "non-gendered marked person" was substituted with that for "woman," *nǚ* 女. The same sort of process is ongoing today in the non-simplified script (*fántǐzì*) used

¹²This form of address is mainly used in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and South China, and in the North it is increasingly frequent.

in Taiwan and Hong Kong: the second person pronoun, *nǐ* 你, is gender re-marked as 妳: the pronunciation is the same, but the character is once again written with the female-gender component *nǚ* 女, especially in song lyrics and in transcriptions of the jargon of the younger generations.

As a consequence, in the matter at hand, modifications were applied to the text in order to better reflect the sociolinguistic aspects. Thus, in the latest revision, *xiǎojiě* has been changed to *fūrén* 夫人, “lady,” a term of respect that brings out the social disparity between Annina and Violetta. Moreover, in the lines, it was deemed necessary to introduce the courtesy term *nín* 您 for “you,” which is commonly used in today’s spoken Chinese.

6 The Feast in France in the First Half of the Nineteenth-Century

The first act begins with a party/feast in which the guests arrive late, after having lingered at Flora’s home. They all urge each other to have fun and enjoy the party. The atmosphere is genial, and the all-around glee is steeped in abundant quantities of wine. Though mirth is marred by the spectre of Violetta’s illness, she intends to enjoy the moment and not linger on her troubles. In this context, Violetta and Alfredo are introduced for the first time.

We shall now take a look at the expressions used by the Italian author and the Chinese translator, and point out the different modes of constructing the festive event in the original and in the target texts (Table 8).

The translation of this passage drifts away from the expressions used in the Italian lyrics: first, one can see an excessive use of the term “pleasure/joy,” *huānlè* 欢乐, repeated all of four times here. In the original, for Violetta pleasure/joy is the medicine that helps her get over her ills, but this similitude is lost in the Chinese.

Piave uses eight different expressions to describe the event and establishes a festive atmosphere, without ever repeating any of them: *gioia, viva, festa, goder, piacere, i mali sopir, vita, gioir*. One adjective, two verbs, four nouns, and one idiomatic expression (*i mali sopir*). In the translation, thirteen expressions are found, but one word has been repeated six times; we have: *huānyíng* 欢迎 (one occurrence), *huānlè* 欢乐 (six occ.), *jiànkāng* 健康 (three occ.), *jīngshén hǎo* 精神好 (one occ.), *jìnqíng* 尽情 (one occ.). We find here one noun (*huānlè* 欢乐), one verb phrase (*huānyíng* 欢迎), one adjective (*jiànkāng* 健康), one adverb (*jìnqíng* 尽情), one adjectival phrase (*jīngshén hǎo* 精神好).

The original exhibits considerable verbal chiaroscuro, alternating terms for joy and sorrow. In the Chinese, this is not brought out. The task is therefore one of realignment of the translation, conveying these nuances in a more effective way. But this operation must be in synch with the modulation of the music, which is very quick-paced here: it must be therefore carried out by the conductor working with the singers, and this is considered necessary to rendering the general sense in translation.

Table 8 Act 1, Scene 1

Italian original	Chinese translation	Interlinear translation of the Chinese
<p>Violetta: Flora, amici, la notte che resta d'altre gioie qui fate brillar... fra le tazze è più viva la festa...</p> <p>Flora e Marchese: E goder voi potrete?</p> <p>Violetta: Lo voglio; al piacere m'affido, ed io soglio col tal farmaco i mali sopir</p> <p>Tutti: Sì, la vita s'addoppia al gioir.</p> <p><i>Violetta: "Flora, friends, make what's left of the night shine here with other joys...amongst cups the feast is more lively"</i></p> <p><i>Flora and Marquis: "And will you be able to enjoy?"</i></p> <p><i>Violetta "I want to; I commend myself to pleasure, and with this drug am wont to sooth my ills".</i></p> <p><i>All: "Yes, by rejoicing does life redouble"</i></p>	<p>薇: 弗洛拉, 朋友们, 欢迎你们来到! 我们大家尽情欢乐, 快把欢乐的酒杯斟满了</p> <p>弗, 侯: 不妨碍你的健康?</p> <p>薇: 不要紧. 只有欢乐使我精神好, 只有欢乐使我身体健康</p> <p>康</p> <p>众: 对, 欢乐使我们更愉快</p>	<p>Violetta: Flora, friends, welcome! Let us all be merry as we please, quick, fill your cups with the wine of joy!</p> <p>Flora and Marquis: will this not impair your health?</p> <p>Violetta: Don't worry. Joy makes me feel good, Joy is good for my health</p> <p>All: Yes, joy makes us happier</p>

7 Translation as a Vehicle for (Un)Shared Knowledge

Between the source and the target texts, one often incurs in a misalignment between translational knowledge bases (Mazzoleni and Menin 2011, 3). In our libretto, this emerges when, in the dialogues, one finds references to information relevant to mythology, folk-lore, and geography, amply shared by the European cultural milieu of the nineteenth century, but little-known in China at the time of the earliest translations. In the first act, Violetta, while pouring wine to her guests, compares herself to a goddess of the Greek pantheon: Sarò l'Ebe che versa, "In pouring, I shall be Hebe." In the Chinese lyrics this appears as:

现在让我来斟酒	Let me now pour the wine
<i>Xiànzài ràng wǒ lái zhēn jiǔ</i>	

This is a "domesticating translation," according to the categories elaborated, among others, by Venuti (1995): an evasive strategy, due to the fact that most probably neither the translator nor—even more probably—the readers were familiar with the figure of Hebe, daughter of Zeus and Hera, who in Olympus was charged with filling the cups of the gods with nectar and ambrosia.

The second act offers several opportunities for this analysis, where an important part of the opera describes the scene of the gypsy-girls' ball.

*Noi siamo zingarelle venute da lontano
d'ognuno sulla mano leggiamo l'avvenir.
Young gipsy girls are we, come from afar
We read the future on everybody's palm.*

In Chinese this is translated as: (Table 9)

Table 9 Act 2, Scene 10

Chinese translation	Interlinear translation of Chinese
有谁想知道命运, <i>Yǒu shéi xiǎng zhīdào mìngyùn</i> 快来找茨风姑娘 <i>Kuài lái zhǎo Cífēng gūniang</i> 让我们看看手心, <i>Ràng wǒmen kànkàn shǒuxīn</i> 就给你说端详 <i>Jiù gěi nǐ shuō duānxiang</i>	He who would want to know his destiny, let him quickly come to us, the young <i>cifeng</i> girls. Let us read your palm, we'll tell you everything in detail

Cífēng 茨风 is the now-obsolete Chinese term for “Gipsy,” and it comes from a phonetic transcription of the Russian term Цыгань (Cygany),¹³ whereas the term used today is a phonetic loan from the English “Gypsy,” i.e., *Jípǔsài* 吉普赛 or *Jībǔsài* 吉卜赛.

Besides the fact that it fits well with the modulation, keeping the expression *cifeng* is a noteworthy choice; according to Venuti’s categories, it would be *estraniante*, “foreignizing”—thus, it fulfills various translation goals:

1. It has a historical origin that befits the time in which the opera was introduced in China;
2. It expresses the spirit that inspired the *intentio operis* of the translation: making society’s outcasts rise on the stage of art;
3. Inasmuch as it is now obsolete, it represents an exotic term that reflects the character of operatic Italian.
4. It improves the flow of the lyrics.

Among the items that belong to a corpus of (un)shared knowledge are the matadors (*mattadori* in the Italian text), and the relevant geographical information on Spain. In the chorus of the Gastone and the *mattadori*, the “Feast of the Fattened Ox,” is mentioned, but this is untranslated in the Chinese:

*Di Madride noi siam mattadori,
siamo i prodi del circo de’ tori,*

¹³This is the term used in the translation of Pushkin’s 1824 narrative poem *The Gypsies*. The work gained the interest of Qu Qiubai (1899–1935), one of the founders of the Chinese Communist Party, who had studied in the Moscow, at the Institute for Foreign Languages. Qu published a partial translation in the poetry journal *Wǔyùè* in 1937, and then again in a pamphlet, Shanghai, 1939. The complete version was published in 1939 by the People’s Publishing House (*Rénmín wénxué Chūbǎnshè*) in Beijing.

*testé giunti a godere del chiasso
che a Parigi si fa pe'l bue grasso.*
We are the matadors from Madrid
We are the gallants from the bull-circus,
who have come here to enjoy the commotion
they stir up in Paris for the Fattened Ox.

In Chinese, we have: (Table 10)

Table 10 Act 2, Scene 11

斗牛的勇士从马德里来到, <i>Dǒu niúde yǒngshì cóng</i> <i>Mǎdé'ěr lái dào</i> 战胜公牛不知有多少条。 <i>Zhànshèng gōngniú bù zhī yǒu</i> <i>duōshao tiáo</i> 斗牛的英雄我们天下扬名, <i>Dǒu niúde yīngxióng wǒmen</i> <i>tiānxià yángmíng</i> 我们知道一件奇怪事情, <i>Wǒmen zhīdào yí jiàn qíguài</i> <i>shìqíng</i> 喂小姐,你们如要想听, <i>Wèi xiǎojiě, nǐmen rú yào</i> <i>xiǎng tīng</i> 我们就给你听听。 <i>Wǒmen jiù kěyǐ gěi nǐ tīngtīng</i>	The matadors have come from Madrid, who knows how many bulls they have conquered in the fight! The whole world knows the fame of the bullfight heroes. We know a curious tale: hey girls, if you want to hear it, we can tell it to you
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Whereas the term matadors *mattadori* is rendered with a semantic loan (*dǒu niúde yǒngshì* 斗牛的勇士, literally “the gallants who fight bulls”), the whole sentence that refers to the “fattened ox” (*giunti a godere del chiasso che a Parigi si fa pe'l bue grasso*), that is to say, to Mardi Gras, is eliminated and replaced with an invitation to listen, an anticipatory formula that belongs to the style-repertoire of the traditional novel and theater (“We know a curious tale: hey girls, if you want to hear it, we can tell it to you.”).

In this specific case, one feels no need to revise the translation; rather, this passage may be singled out as an example of virtuous translation, inasmuch as it is performance-wise effective, despite it having had to “sacrifice”... the “fattened ox”!

In the following instance, however, the need for revising the translation is felt, because of the obsolescence of the domesticating translation: the evasive strategy, which made sense at the time of the first translation, is now obsolete. It appears in the latter part of the same scene, again with Gastone and the chorus of the matadors:

*È Piquillo un bel gagliardo biscaglino mattador:
forte il braccio, fiero il guardo, delle giostre egli è signor:
D'andalusa giovinetta follemente innamorò:
Piquillo is a strapping matador from Biscay:*

his arm is strong, his eyes are bold, he's the master of the fray.

He fell madly in love with an Andalusian maiden;

Piquillo is translated *Bīkāiluó* 比开罗, that is to say, a phonetic rendering that fits well with the music; but all geographical references have been wiped out, both the *bel gagliardo biscaglino* and the *andalusa giovinetta*. At the time when the first translation was executed, the locations of Biscay and Andalusia were unknown; today, on the other hand, Andalusia (*Āndālūxīyà* 安达鲁西亚) is one of the preferred locations of Chinese tourism in Europe, and the Gulf of Biscay (*Bīsīkāi wān* 比斯开湾) has found a solid place in the knowledge-base of many present and future Chinese opera lovers.

In this case, therefore, effacing the two geographical references gives rise to an obsolete domesticating translation, and brings about the loss of elements of “color” which are important to the original text.

We can see an instance of domesticating translation also in the following case. Flora, one of the female characters, is courting the Marquis; she says:

*La volpe lascia il pelo,
non abbandona il vizio.
Marchese mio, giudizio,
o vi farò pentir.*

A fox may lose its fur
But won't give up its vices.
O Marquis mine, behave yourself,
Or I'll make you repent.

And the Chinese translation is: (Table 11)

In this case, the Italian expression “*la volpe lascia il pelo, non abbandona il vizio*,” an adaptation of the adagio “*il lupo perde il pelo ma non il vizio*” (“a wolf may lose his fur but not his vice,” i.e., “a leopard cannot change his spots”), has not given rise to a search for an equivalent through a similar Chinese saying, whether through *chéngyǔ*, (catch phrase), or *yànyǔ* (proverb) (Lei in Brezzi 2008; Moratto 2010, 2020). The translation is bent on expressing the contrast between the two characters, but the meaning is modified. In the Italian text, Flora hints at the vice of unfaithfulness that

Table 11 Act 2, Scene 10

Chinese translation	Interlinear translation of Chinese text
凡事都有个限度, <i>Fánshì dōu yǒu ge xiàndù</i> 我的忍耐也有尽头, <i>Wǒde rěnnài yě yǒu jìntóu</i> 侯爵啊你要当心, <i>Hóujúé ā nǐ yào dāngxīn</i> 当心我报复你! <i>Dāngxīn wǒ bàofu nǐ!</i>	There's a limit to everything, even my patience will run out, oh, Marquis, rest assured, assured that I'll get back at you

the Marquis is prone to, on which she has no intention of lowering her guard; in the Chinese one she puts up with betrayal, but only up to a point.

8 Conclusion

Many are the points of attention that come into play in a translation of a multimedia text like an opera libretto. Aspects relevant to language, music, and performance, all indissolubly interlaced, require one to operate a selection of the linguistic and extralinguistic information that gets transferred into the target language.

The problems, as we have seen, are:

1. Semantic features that nullify the passage of information;
2. Misalignment of semantic nuances in transmission;
3. Misalignment of linguistic registers in the two languages;
4. Lack of sociolinguistic references and historicized declarative knowledge.

Lü Jia, who studied under Zheng Xiaoying, and was formerly Art Director in Italian opera theaters like the Arena of Verona (today, he is Art Director of the National Center for the Performing Arts), has stated in various interviews that he prefers staging operas in the original language: according to him, the linguistic complexity of Italian librettos is not reproducible in Chinese. Should we then refrain from translating opera librettos altogether?

Maestro Zheng is of the opposite opinion. As we have seen, translation may transmit information conducive to the creation of a highly effective performance on stage, for a public who wishes to know and enjoy the cultural elements of an opera. On stage, knowing the language of the lyrics allows singers to improve their performing skills, in terms of expressivity and ease of pronunciation of familiar sounds.

Granted, transposing Italian melodrama on the Chinese stage is an arduous undertaking, because of the former's specific nature and highly defined styles; however, it also responds to a challenge that a collaboration between translator and musicians are able to meet, to the satisfaction of all.

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The PRC's Go-Global Cultural Policy and Theater Surtitling: The Case of the Italian Tour of Meng Jinghui's *Rhinoceros in Love*



Barbara Leonesi

Abstract This chapter focuses on the question of theater surtitling for Chinese theater performances touring abroad and for Chinese/international theater performances staged at International Festivals in the PRC. In the first part, I introduce the general questions related to theater surtitling and AVT studies research. Then I describe the numerous issues about the theater surtitling connected both to the PRC go-global cultural policy and to the recent flourishing of International Theater festivals in China. Taking the Italian tour in October 2014 of the play *Rhinoceros in Love* as a case study, the central part of this chapter focuses on the analysis of the Italian surtitles prepared for this tour. The purpose of this analysis is to prove that, although the time-space constraints, surtitling plays a role in the esthetic fruition of the performance, far beyond the basic standard of guiding the audience in understanding the general plot. My conclusion is that we should move from the idea of surtitling as a mere communicative tool toward the idea of surtitling as part of the *mise en scène*, as fluid text to be reshaped on the basis of the local spatial constraints and of the supposed audience.

Keywords Theater surtitling · Theater translation · Cultural translation · Meng Jinghui · *Rhinoceros in Love*

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1 Introduction

Over the last few years, the investments of the PRC in the exportation of its cultural products—literary works, movies, art exhibitions, performances, etc.—have steadily grown, ensuring easier access to Chinese culture outside China. The possible reasons behind this go-global policy (diffusion or resistance? Appropriation of the center or resistance to the appropriation of the margins by the center?¹) have attracted the attention of academic circles, politicians, and experts alike. A number of commentators around the world are observing and evaluating these substantial investments, their effects on the PRC's widely discussed soft power and the influence they have on the global cultural sphere and its fragile balance.² In this Chinese go-global cultural project, translation plays a key role, and it is very evident nowadays, as Wang Ning had already written years ago, that in the PRC “Translation has changed its traditional role from translating foreign culture and literature into Chinese to translating Chinese culture and literature into other languages, mostly into English” (Wang 2008, 83).

This essay focuses on the exportation of spoken theater performances and the question of theater surtitling. After a brief introduction about general issues related to theater surtitling, the first part of this chapter discusses the numerous and unfortunately still unsolved questions about theater surtitling connected both to the PRC's go-global cultural policy and to the recent flourishing of International Theater Festivals in China. The second part focuses on the case study of the Italian surtitling for the Italian tour of the play *Rhinoceros in Love*³ directed by Meng Jinghui⁴ (2014 and 2017).

¹See Xie Ming (2008, 27): “There are inherent ambiguities in the notion of the ‘Greater Chinese Cultural Sphere’ (*dà Zhōngguó wénhuà quān* 大中国文化圈) in relation to globalization: it implies both diffusion and resistance; its perspective is both from the assumed position of centrality and from the perceived margin of the peripheral”.

²Taking the literary field as an example, in recent years the Chinese government policy of funding the multi-language translation of contemporary Chinese novels has resulted in the fact that nowadays a number of renowned Chinese publishing houses are able to sell on the world market the rights of certain novels together with their multilingual translations. What will be the effects of this availability of affordable Chinese literature in the long run, and how will it influence the mutual balances in the so-called World Republic of Letters outlined by Pascale Casanova (Casanova 1999)?

³*Liàn'ài de xīniú* (恋爱的犀牛), written by Liao Yimei (廖一梅, 1971) and first performed in 1999. The 2014 edition was a production of the National Theater of China (*Zhōngguó guójiā dà jùyuàn* 中国国家大剧院). The 2017 edition was a production of the Meng Jinghui Theater Studio (*Mèng Jīnghuī xìjù gōngzuòshì* 孟京辉戏剧工作室).

⁴Born in 1968, Meng Jinghui (孟京辉) gained an international reputation through his first avant-garde, provocative, and repeatedly censored productions. After the success of *Rhinoceros in Love* and a series of productions welcomed by a popular audience, he was criticized for his “commercial turn”. Meng stands at the same time inside and outside the mainstream, on a border that Ferrari (2012) defines as “pop avant-garde”. As Conceison underlines, “While resisting the status quo, Meng delivers commercially viable productions, doing so through formal and stylistic experimentation that have become his hallmark” (Conceison 2017, 16). Since 2008 he has been running his own theater in Beijing (*Fēngcháo jùchǎng* 蜂巢剧场), where he stages productions from his own Meng Jinghui Theater Studio: his name on the billboard is enough to guarantee sell out, and his works are followed by a very loyal, young audience.

Then, in the last part of the essay, I will present my conclusion, suggesting that we should push the market to move from the idea of surtitling as a mere communicative tool (and therefore from an idea of communicative translation) toward the idea of surtitling as part of the *mise en scène*, as a fluid text to be reshaped—as all the elements in the performance are, on the basis of local spatial constraints and of the expected audience. As Patrice Pavis has underlined:

We must incorporate the act of translation into the much broader translation (that is the *mise en scène*) of a dramatic text. The phenomenon of translation for the stage goes beyond the rather limited phenomenon of the interlingual translation of the dramatic text (Pavis 1989, 25).

Surtitles fall within the group of different codes (music, sounds, lights, voices, actors' bodies, etc.) that make up the performance, and their function shifts between language accessibility and creativity.

2 Surtitling and AVT Studies

Audiovisual translation (AVT) has become a hot topic in recent years, thanks to the impact of new technologies, although many scholars have lamented the lack of quality theoretical research, as a consequence of the tendency to focus on pragmatic issues.⁵ The recent publication of *The Routledge Handbook of Audiovisual Translation* (2019) has drawn an overall and useful survey of the state of the art in the field. In this voluminous handbook, a whole chapter focuses on surtitling for theater and opera, finally establishing—if only in an implicit way—that surtitles, while sharing many of the characteristics of subtitles, should be studied separately. As Oncinis underlines:

the fact that surtitles will never be a final and static product suitable for every performance, quite apart from the need for a simultaneous synchronization with the source text, makes them a unique topic in AVT Studies (Oncinis 2015, 52).

Whereas subtitles are “finished products” synchronized with the image that do not change from one projection to the next, surtitles are “unfinished products” (see Vervecken 2012): they are broadcast live at each performance, and—when required—adjusted to suit the space, the audience, the actors, or any new requirements that directors might have in terms of position, time, content, colors, etc.

Much of the academic literature concerning surtitling focuses on opera surtitling: indeed, surtitling began in opera houses in the 1980s with the aim of overcoming the linguistic barrier (both interlingual and intralingual) and attract new audiences. The positive response from the general public has now led big opera houses around the world to develop and install in-house surtitling equipment, either on stage or in the

⁵See Baker (2014, XIV): “Most of the literature published by scholars of AVT, while unquestionably useful and welcome, has failed to engage other discipline and lay the foundation for interdisciplinary research and critical theorizing. Understandably, perhaps, the priority has been to address practical needs, with training manuals and descriptive accounts of professional practice dominating the field”.

form of a built-in screen at the back of the seats. Today, the general public expects opera shows to provide surtitles, irrespective of the language of the performance; hence, opera houses have been pushed to develop and invest in their own equipment and dedicated staff.⁶

The situation is rather different in the case of spoken theater: here surtitling is used only in the case of linguistic barriers, for example during performances by foreign troupes; of course, International Theater Festivals commonly and extensively resort to surtitles. Therefore, theaters have not developed in-house devices and normally resort to outsourcing. This raises a series of practical issues like the positioning of the temporary equipment, which may not be perfectly suited to the theater space; or the different surtitling styles and conventions of external companies, which tend to develop their own software and standards.

Basing on the definition of surtitles provided by Griesel⁷, Oncinis identifies two phases in the surtitling process: the elaboration process and the broadcasting process. These two phases are often controlled by different actors; in my experience with theater surtitling in international festivals in the PRC and for PRC productions touring abroad, three individuals often participate in the process: the translator, the editor cutting the translation to make the surtitles fit space/time constraints, and the broadcaster. I will be discussing the consequences of this fragmentation of the process and related issues later on.

The research on language accessibility surtitling in theater⁸ stands at the crossroads between surtitling techniques and practice (Oncinis 2015; Verweken 2012) and theatrical translation studies (Anderman 2005; Carlson 2006; Upton 2000; Krebs 2014). As far as the technique and practice are concerned, theater surtitles share a series of characteristics with the well-explored field of film subtitling, with regard to which there is consensus among professionals and academics alike.⁹ I do not wish to go into details about lines, the number of characters, font, etc.: this is all clearly described in numerous training manuals. Instead, I will outline a series of issues to be discussed in the following analysis of my case study. The first issue is the widely debated question of space and time constraints. All manuals emphasize the need for condensation, and list a series of techniques designed to condense the information/message in the minimum number of words. In order to reduce the message in an

⁶This is true for Chinese opera (*xìqǔ* 戏曲) too: surtitling here developed first for the national audience, to overcome regional dialects and/or difficulties in understanding the sung lines, then for international tours and audience. See Yeung (2009).

⁷Griesel (2009, 123): “Surtitles are prepared and projected onto the stage with the help of special software combined with a video projector”. Actually, this definition has already been become outdated owing to the spread of new devices and technologies like smart glasses, used for the first time for two shows at the Avignon Theater Festival in 2015: they provided multilingual surtitles with the text customized to suit users’ needs in terms of color, size, position, and brightness.

⁸Surtitling supplying other forms of accessibility (like intralingual captions for deaf and hard hearing) deserve a separate in-depth analysis; the research on this topic, together with the continuous development of new technologies, are providing innovative strategies of inclusion tailored on different needs/groups/audience.

⁹Among the rich available literature, see Fong and Au (2009), that focuses on subtitling and dubbing in Asia.

effective way, it is important to take into consideration the performance as a whole, and in particular the acting speed and the action/objects on stage. I wish to underline this point, because in the case of surtitling, the translated text is only one of the many codes of the performance involved in the interaction game. Therefore, translation is bound to consider this plurality, and cannot limit itself to the text. But as the surtitling of the play is not strictly connected and fixed to the images in real time as in films, it often happens that the translation is commissioned without providing the video. Therefore, the translation cannot be integrated into the performance, as it should be. For example, why condense a dense and meaningful monologue that is played very slow, one word after the other?

Second, there is the question of readability: given the particular mode of reception of the surtitled text, readers neither have the full page before them or the context that precedes and follows it, nor can they go back to read the text a second time for reference. All manuals therefore suggest to use phrases with a simple and clear structure, and to structure the lines on the screen as independent units both from a grammatical and conceptual point of view as much as possible. Recent researches show that word frequency and in particular low cohesion within the line play an important role in stimulating a higher cognitive processing effort.¹⁰ Line segmentation is a focal issue, which is commonly and widely discussed: grammatically accurate line breaks enhance readability, whereas poor segmentation provokes a cognitive load. As we will see in the next section, poor line segmentation is a relevant issue in theater surtitling in the PRC.

Actually, the size and position of the surtitle screen is a key factor, because different displays may require adjustments in the segmentation or cutting of the text. This very practical matter (the position of the display depends on the architectural structure of the space) dramatically influences the reception of the play: contemporary theater—particularly post-dramatic theater, which focuses not on the text but on the performance—is very sensitive to reception issues. Printed on stage, surtitles are an addition to the visual channel, and thus compete with other visual codes. They create an alternative center of attention: therefore, oftentimes (as in the case study I propose) the position of the display, the font size and color of the lines during the whole performance have to be discussed with the director, in order to harmonize this code within the performance context. This opens up a wide range of possibilities, which may contradict all the suggestions coming from eye-tracking researches about the most convenient center of interest/attention to place the text: from the extreme case of a display positioned outside the spectators' field of vision, forcing them to look away from the stage in order to read¹¹, to the other extreme of the performance absorbing the surtitles as part of the *mise en scène* (with surtitles

¹⁰Moran (2012). Eye tracking research is yielding increasingly new information and results related to speed, cognitive load and, more generally, the processing of complex polysemiotic texts (like audiovisual one). For the state of the art of the research, see Kruger (2019, 350–366).

¹¹The case of the performance of Brecht's *Sun and Temple* directed by Meng Jinghui at the Wuzhen Theater Festival in 2019 is an interesting example: although the subtitles with an English translation were commissioned by Meng himself from the well-know Chinese theater scholar and translator Claire Conceison—who was present at the performance—the director decided to place the surtitle

projected directly onto the scene, possibly changing in size/color/position together with the scene). From Piscator's and Brecht's early twentieth-century experiments in projecting written material for different purposes—to create multiple focus areas or an ironic counterpoint to the stage action, or to shatter from the illusion of the world on stage—to the language plays of postmodern theater, numerous experiments have been conducted on the pluralism of spoken/written languages on stage.¹² All of them have fueled research on surtitling and translation.

The supertitle (i.e. surtitle), since it operates as a channel of communication, an additional “voice”, especially in the case of multilanguage audiences, can use its inevitable difference from the spoken text in more original and powerful ways, for the production of additional meanings (Carlson 2006, 199).

Of course, as an established convention in theater, surtitles have been absorbed into the audience's horizon of expectations, with the assumption they propose a text equivalent to the one being spoken on stage. But the idea of transparency or invisibility has been widely discussed and criticized in Translation Studies and a number of scholars from Venuti onward (Venuti 1995) have demonstrated that the idea of a transparent aid to communication is nothing but a chimera—and an undesirable one at that. In the light of the idea of surtitling as one of the codes of a performance, it is clear that the communication of content is not the sole purpose of surtitles. As an “additional voice”, surtitling produces meaning at both the aesthetic and the conceptual level: “Translation is not simply the changing of the container; it literally creates the content” (Cutchins 2014, 37). These considerations partially conflict with the practical guidelines of surtitling manuals, which promote condensation and clearness for the purpose of creating a domesticated, unambiguous, and transparent message.

3 Theater Surtitling Inside and Outside the PRC

The actual situation of theater surtitling for both international theater festivals in China and Chinese plays touring abroad is rather discouraging. The Chinese Ministry of Culture is generously supporting Chinese companies to tour abroad: the funding generally covers international flights plus the transportation of stage sets, which are the two main expenses for international tours. The basic idea is that, once the problem of intercontinental transportation has been solved, Chinese theater can compete on the international market. The hosting partner covers local hospitality (accommodation plus the daily expenses for the troupe), along with local transportation and theater fees. Often there are no performance fees, as the aim of international tours is to produce something not of economic value but of “cultural value”, as Simone Murray (2011) writes in her interesting book about the adaptation industry: a play that has

display on the central upper part of the right and left side-walls of the theater: spectators had to search for the surtitles and turn their heads away from the performance if they wished to read them.

¹²See Carlson (2006).

toured abroad can then be sold very well on the internal market, as can all the artists (the actors and the director) involved. The cost of surtitling is covered by the budget for technical equipment, and translation fees normally have to be paid by the receiving partner. Often the question of translation is not included in the cooperation project, as an obvious, secondary tool required for the performance. In general, the translation budget is very low, the deadline is very tight, and the translator has to work on the text without the video of the performance. This happens because often adjustments are made to the cast or even to the performance for the international tour, and because rehearsals only start a short time before the departure and the company itself does not have a video of the play.¹³ Of course, there are plenty of examples of good practice: in particular, internationally renowned directors like Meng Jinghui usually rely on high-level professionals who have both the linguistic skills and the cultural expertise required to ensure a high standard; often they are scholars doing research on Chinese theater who support him also in his contacts and relations with local theaters for the tour.¹⁴ However, as his plays are always a sort of work in progress, the director adjusts them until the very last rehearsal/moment, and it is a challenge for the person in charge of surtitling to grasp all the changes and have the time to fix them.

As far as festivals are concerned, I will take the example of the Wuzhen Theater Festival, which was launched in 2013 by a group of contemporary Chinese theater stars.¹⁵ It has become an increasingly prominent event in China, which is actually witnessing a visible boom in festivals without any specific concept attached to them or recognizably distinctive features: most of these festivals serve what Dragan Klaić calls “a ‘compensatory function’, that is to offer a diverse international program that could not be seen during the regular season” (Klaid 2012,137). Moreover, they are important showcases for operators in the sector and international theater agents. The policy of the Wuzhen Festival, which attracts the most famous troupes from all over the world, is to have Chinese/English surtitles for all performances¹⁶, irrespective of which language the play is performed in. Chinese companies have to provide the

¹³Sometimes certain roles are taken up by different actors abroad: in the case study we are about to analyze, for example, one of the characters, the love trainer (male), was assigned to a female actress at the very last moment. The setting itself can be simplified in order to reduce transportation costs: in our case study, the effect of water submerging the entire stage (and requiring a sort of pool and the pouring of a considerable amount of water onto the stage) was replaced by dropping a cascade of seeds. Therefore, the scene underwent important changes.

¹⁴For example, when he was invited to the Festival d'Avignon (France) in 2019 with his *Teahouse* (written by Lao She 老舍, Meng Jinghui Theater Studio production, directed by Meng Jinghui), he invited Claire Conceison to revise/retranslate the surtitling prepared for the première of this play at the Wuzhen Festival in 2018.

¹⁵Stan Lai, Meng Jinghui, Huang Lei, and Chen Xianghong are the cofounders of this festival. Both Stan Lai (Lai Shengchuan 赖声川, 1954) and Meng Jinghui are internationally acclaimed theater directors, Huang Lei (黄磊, 1971) is a well-known actor and singer (cinema, TV and theater), while Chen Xianghong 陈向宏 plays a more political role as the General Planner, Designer and President of the Wuzhen Scenic District, Chairman of Culture Wuzhen Co. Ltd., and President of Wuzhen Tourism Co. Ltd.

¹⁶There are exceptions of course, depending on the features of the performance. Take the example of Eugenio Barba's famous Odin Theater: for their performance in Wuzhen in 2019 they chose to distribute a short English/Chinese summary of the plot in order to avoid surtitles and preserve the

English translation, while foreign companies need to provide the English version, with the festival itself covering the cost of the Chinese translation. I have participated four times (2015, 2017, 2018, 2019), and while it is true that the situation is improving every year, the quality varies a good deal: in particular, the English surtitles are sometime frustrating.

Among the most common problems we can first of all mention the uneven standard of English translations: often small Chinese theater productions participating in the festival work on a very low budget, and the festival does not offer any funding for translation or in-house specialized personnel. It frequently happens that companies resort to already available printed translations of the script, without any adjustment for surtitling: the result is extreme wordiness and hence a very high speed in the display of the surtitles, with lines and lines of surtitles scrolling before the spectator's eyes before they find the main verb, poor line segmentation, and so on.¹⁷ Another very common issue is the separation between surtitling and the performance: this is often due to the fact that the translator worked on the script without the support of any video, leading to an evident gap, a lack of synchronicity, between the surtitles and what happens on stage. Finally, the software in use is basic, and often limited to an ordinary PPT presentation, with no possibility for the broadcaster to cope with possible changes during the live performance. Together with a low budget and tight deadlines, the fragmentation of the process among different individuals is a major cause of low quality surtitling. Frequently the person who cuts the surtitles and adjusts them to suit the new position/size of the display is not the translator but a troupe technician who has no foreign language skills. The overall line segmentation can be messed up by simply increasing the font size by a few points in order to improve readability: new lines consisting only of a single word/character often appear on the display, probably because the font size was changed at the very last minute without double-checking the segmentation. To mention only one example of good practice, I remember that during the rehearsal for *The Miser* (by Molière, produced by Teatro Stabile di Torino, directed by Jurij Ferrini) in Wuzhen, Meng Jinghui himself—the artistic director of that edition of the festival—asked to substantially increase the font size of the Chinese surtitling: the translator of the surtitles was also the interpreter of the troupe in Wuzhen, and spent many night-time hours adjusting both the English and Chinese segmentation (and some lines of the translation too) in order to fit the new font size, but the result was definitely up to the standard: the audience enjoyed the play and was ready to react to the stage action. But the case of a translator in charge of the full process—translation, segmentation, and broadcasting—is not all that common, at least in Wuzhen. To adjust the font size to the new space is a common practice, and this is an issue even for companies used to performing with surtitles.¹⁸

polyphonic effect of actors coming from different countries and cultures each performing in his/her own language.

¹⁷This phenomenon is not limited to Chinese productions: for example, it was also the case with the English surtitling of the opening play at the 2017 Wuzhen Theater Festival, *Eugene Onegin* by the famous Vakhtangov Theater.

¹⁸In 2018 I have collaborated in the project of inviting to Wuzhen Festival an interesting production of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* entitled *Macbettu* (Sardegna Teatro production, Alessandro Serra

Actually, the general standard of Chinese surtitling, after the numerous problems experienced in the first editions of the festival, is definitely more up to standard nowadays: it is an understandable policy to first enhance the surtitling in the local language, as 90% of the audience is local. Therefore, the festival takes charge of the translation into Chinese, in order to control its quality.

By this brief excursus I wish to underline the fact that huge investments in exporting Chinese cultural products and building international platforms for exchange are not balanced by equivalent efforts in terms of language accessibility. For example, one review of the performance of the classic Chinese theater masterpiece *Teahouse* by Lao She (Beijing People's Art Theater, Běijīng rénmin yìshù jùyuàn 北京人民艺术剧院 production) at the Kennedy Center in 2006 notes that "Despite the stunning aesthetics and moving performances, language proved to be a barrier" (Anderson 2006). Although in this particular case Anderson's remarks mostly concerned technical issues (the position of the surtitles high above the stage, the timing, the consistency from slide to slide), there is an evident lack of resources, control over the full process, and specialized personnel, which can combine foreign language expertise and competences in the specialized translation of "fabricated orality" within limited time/space constraints. Even more visible and urgent is the fragmentation of the surtitling process, which can turn a successful translation into unsuccessful surtitling. Although in today's theater the text has lost its dominant position in favor of the performance (avant-garde, post-dramatic, poor theater, etc.), it is nevertheless one of the codes that must be made accessible.

4 The Case Study: The Italian Tour of *Rhinoceros in Love*

As a case study, I will discuss the surtitling for the Italian tour in October 2014 of the play *Rhinoceros in Love* produced by the National Theater of China (Turin, Genoa, and Naples). The play returned to Italy for a one-night show in the small town of Ivrea, not far from Turin, in February 2017. The troupe was made up of young actors from the Beijing Young Dramatists Association, always working under the direction of Meng Jinghui, within the framework of a wider European tour (Paris, Ivrea, Vienna) for the Chinese New Year. The surtitling was thus reworked in order to fit the new setting and edition.

The main feature of this multimedia performance is that the text is only one of its multiple codes: the director Meng Jinghui is well-known for having developed

director), entirely performed in the local dialect of Sardinia island (Italy). This play is always performed with subtitles, as the Sardinian dialect is not understandable by a general Italian audience. The play had already toured Japan and South America, and was well-equipped with good surtitling software providing multi-language surtitles: a technician of the troupe was in charge of the surtitling and could choose the language (or languages) to be broadcast, while following the text in Italian. The Chinese translation was based on the segmented lines of the Italian surtitles: once again, the segmentation of the Chinese translation into one/two lines had to be readjusted during rehearsal to fit the display in use, but the translator was not there to help in the process.

“a penchant for physicality, plasticity and stylization. [...] Meng’s style has been defined by a synaesthesia of sensorial effects and a primacy of the performative and the physical over the merely verbal” (Ferrari 2012, 120). A complex web of signifiers contributes to igniting the emotions of the audience, resulting in an experience that is more emotional than rational. This is a crucial point: although the text is not the center of the play but the performance itself, the surtitling plays an effective role in eliciting emotional reactions from the audience. Therefore, the surtitles need to convey not only the communicative content, but also the other functions of the text, particularly its poetic and emotional functions. The actors wait for a reaction from the audience, which is fundamental for the enhancement of the performance.

Rhinoceros in Love premiered in 1999, and quickly became a hit, especially among young, middle-class urbanites. Conceived as a play for “small theaters” and produced on a low budget, has been repeatedly staged thanks to its unexpected success: in 2017 it was in its 8th edition, and more than 2500 shows have been staged all around China, in addition to the international tours held in the USA, Australia, and Europe. The fame of this play is so widespread that posters advertising it claim it is the everlasting Bible of love (yǒngyuǎn de àiqíng Shénjīng 永远的爱情神经) of the young generation. Meng himself happily plays on his most successful production by quoting it in other works.¹⁹

The plot is very simple and revolves around a love triangle: the protagonist Malu, a rhinoceros keeper, is desperately in love with his neighbor Mingming, who in turn is in love with another man, Chen Fei, a writer who is nothing but a chimera, as he never appears on stage. The dialogues between the hopelessly besotted Malu and the inconstant, hysterical Mingming, who from time to time uses Malu to replace her absent lover, are the center focus of the play. They are surrounded by a series of scattered scenes in which Malu’s friends try to cheer him up and to help him find a girlfriend, by interacting with a so-called “love trainer”, who teaches a class of young people how to seduce and then dump boys/girls. Finally, the main scenes are also interspersed with some “adverts” and TV show sketches, which serve the parodic function of satirizing the media and consumer society. The success of the play stems from the fact that it can be appreciated at different levels: it can be simply enjoyed as a highly romantic love story, rich in multimedia effects, sprinkled with love songs and numerous humorous sketches that make fun of so-called garbage theater (*lājī jù* 垃圾剧: very commercial and low quality plays) and/or of the most popular TV programs. But there are also many intertextual references to classic plays and literary themes that deserve attention and analysis, from the explicit reference to Ionesco’s *Rhinoceros* (1959) to the cross-cutting theme of the loner.²⁰ The parodic sketches—like the “fall in love masterclass” and the “prize game show”, where two girls compete to seduce Malu—reflect or, better, discuss the young generation’s difficulties in contemporary society and the crucial problem of finding a true, long-lasting love. Isolation, juvenile distress, and the inability to communicate are combined with

¹⁹For example, part of Malu’s well-known opening monologue is quoted in his version of Lao She’s *Teahouse*, which opened the 2018 Wuzhen Theater Festival.

²⁰For an in-depth analysis of the play, see Ferrari (2012, 275–289).

a fierce satire on consumer society. These are issues faced by the young generation throughout the world: this text, strongly localized through numerous references to the Chinese contemporary social context (puns on TV programs, slang, commercials, etc.), acquires global scope relevance, and is able to communicate with that generation all around the world. The stage design, costumes, and music support this reading, as they are not marked by time/space localization: the play is going on now, anywhere.

When I was assigned the translation²¹, I received a “probable” text and no video, because the new edition was still being rehearsed. Despite the 15-year running success of the play, the various editions have changed/cut the published text in many different ways, and some sketches are continuously changed/updated in order to keep up with the new advertisements, new media shows, and the new troupe. I had a video recording of the 2008 edition²², which was very useful for reference. Finally, I got the video of the new edition two weeks before the performance; the Turin Theater hired a very competent surtitling service provider (as mentioned before, many theaters do not have an in-house one), who offered me good self-licensed subtitling software: the software was tailored on movie subtitles, and automatically cut the length of the lines by measuring the duration of the sound in the video, which was very convenient. This was definitely key to ensure the success of the surtitling process.

Entering the translated text into the software was really meant producing a new translation: first of all, because the translated text needed to be integrated into the multicode text of the performance, and the content adjusted to the visual elements/action.

The actual script is only one part of the total process that is theater. The difficulty for the translator is that he or she has to deal with the written play, that is, with just one element of the whole (Bassnett 2006/2011, 100).

Secondly, it was necessary to take time/space constraints into account. As we all know, the running time is a critical issue for theatrical translations,²³ and as Chinese is much shorter than Italian, I was very worried about this. Actually, the rhythm of the acting in this play is generally slow, and the utterances are short: only a few scenes, in particular the “commercial advertisements”, had an acting speed that forced me to cut part of the text. In general, a simple readjustment with shorter words, analects, and the elimination of adverbs, vocatives, and repetitions (when they did not play a structural role) was enough to ensure the appropriate length.

I rooted my translation project in the idea that translation is not simply a linguistic process, but a complex cultural act, and that translation is a form of metatext, a

²¹ Actually I worked in cooperation with the Teatro Stabile di Torino and the National Theater of China throughout the entire Italian tour project; the translation was only part of my contribution to the cultural cooperation project.

²² 2008. *Mèng Jīnghuī de xìjù* (孟京辉的戏剧, Meng Jinghui's play), 5 DVD + 1CD, Jiuzhou yinxiang.

²³ The literature about theatrical translation focuses on duration as a meaningful component in translation for the stage: “We need to take account of the form of the translated message, in particular of its rhythm and duration, since the duration per se of a stage utterance is part of its meaning” (Pavis 1989, 30).

critical reading of the text. All texts can produce countless metatexts in the form of translations, interpretations, and critical readings (Berman 1986 and 1995). This hypothesis about the relation between texts and translations mirrors the approach to the concept of performance as a supplement to the text illustrated by Derrida (1967): as a supplement, the performance is at the same time added to the text, which has its own independent completeness, and replaces it. On this basis, both the relation between text and translation and that between text and performance are infinitely productive: applying the semiotic model to translation, Osimo advocates the idea of “as many ‘fidelities’ as there are metatext (i.e. target text) model readers” (Osimo 2013, 20). Surtitling stands at the crossroad between the text, the translation, and the performance. My main target was “to create the same effect in the mind of the reader (obviously according the translator’s interpretation) as the original text wanted to create” (Eco 2003, 56) and as the performance wanted to create.

I identified three dominant features of the text: first of all, the world of youth culture. The characters are young people of today’s China, who speak their own language, which includes slang and curse words.²⁴ Theater is the so-called “spoken language genre”, and this spoken language register is a challenge for the translation of plays, because it is strictly linked to a particular culture, group, space, and epoch. This is also the reason why translations for the theater age more quickly, following the dynamism of spoken language. In particular, I was very careful to recreate the conflation of registers in the love monologues/dialogues, where a lofty poetic register clashes with juvenile slang. This clash is a significant feature of the text, as the poetic tone is repeatedly interrupted by slipping into everyday spoken language/slang, for the purpose of creating a disorienting effect, a pause, a respite in the tragic spiral of heart-breaking love. This is the case with Malu’s opening monologue (Prologue, 1), which is repeated at the end of the play: Malu here expresses all his passion and desire for Mingming, his willingness to sacrifice everything for her, who “has the face of an angel and the heart of a bitch” (有一张天使的脸和婊子的心肠). I modeled my translation after the language of young Italian people of today in terms of the use of curse words, slang, and terms of endearment used by the lovers: at the beginning of scene 13 (scene 13,16), Malu lovingly wakes Mingming up by calling her *xiǎo lǎnchóng* 小懒虫 (little sleepy head), *shùdài xióng* 树袋熊 (koala, or what in English would sound like “honey bear”), and *xiǎo húlí* 小狐狸 (little fox).²⁵

²⁴For example: *bié cāodàn le* 别操蛋了 (no bullshit! scene 2, 2); *wǒ kào* 我靠 (fuck! it first appears in scene 2,3 and is frequently used on the stage, but not always included in the script); *niúbī* 牛逼 (fucking coolness) and *shǎbī* 傻逼 (stupid cunt, scene 17, 20, improvised part); *qù nǐ de* 去你的 (fuck you! scene 20, 24). On the terms *niúbī* and *shǎbī* in Meng, see Conceison (2014, 66–67). All these examples quoted here do not appear in the published version of the text.

Please note: for all of my examples I will refer to the final script of the play I received for the 2014 performance in Turin. Many lines are different from the published version of the play (Liao 2000). The English translation is mine; it is a rough translation of the content produced solely for the purpose of this article. The Italian translation corresponds to the final version of the surtitles for the 2014 performance.

²⁵My Italian translation: “Dormigliona, orsacchiotta, volpacchiotta mia, svegliati!”.

A second very important dominant feature of this script is the cross-cutting hilarious, parodic, and humorous tone, which counterbalances the tragedy of unrequited love, loneliness, and alienation. These hilarious pauses are created mainly through unexpected changes in the direction of the language and action: all of a sudden, adverts, jingles, rhymes, and wordplays pop up. Despite the tragic ending (Malu wins the lottery and offers all his money to Mingming, who rejects the offer; he then goes crazy, kidnaps Mingming, and kills the rhinoceros he keeps in order to offer its heart to her), the playful, comical, and satirical level is definitely a key aspect of the play: the physicality of the actors, together with all the codes of the performance, help build this level, and the text must play its part, in spite of the spatial constraints of the surtitles.

A first example comes from the opening scene²⁶: the actors are scattered on stage, they stand in front of the audience and deliver a series of lines that are only loosely connected from a logical point of view but linked by the same structure, which plays on the formula *fǎnduì* 反对... *yǒnghù* . 拥护.... (down with...hurrah for). Then, starting from the utterance *fǎnduì bōcài* 反对菠菜 (down with spinach), all the actors on stage jointly deliver an aspirin jingle that is linked to the previous text simply by the word “spinach”. This jingle²⁷ is not found in the published version of the text; it was very popular in China at that time, and its sudden popping up, like an advert during a movie on TV, both creates a sense of displacement and serves a parodic function. In this case, I again focused on the function of these lines, and looked for rhythm and assonances in order to create an easy traceable jingle: “quando hai il raffreddORE, l’aspirina XXX è la soluziONE” (*chángbèi*.....*liúgǎn jìjìé bié gǎnmào* 常备.....流感季节别感冒).

Rhythm, rhymes, and plays on words are extensively used for comical purposes, while challenging and shattering the logical and communicative function of language. Let us consider a funny poem from scene 7 (scene 7, 10; again, not included in the published version of the play): in the table below, I have highlighted the rhymes in Chinese and in the Italian surtitling. I looked for rhymes/assonances in order to echo the Chinese rhymes uttered on stage and thereby create a redundancy effect that the audience could detect.

我是强壮的黑犀牛	<i>niú</i>	Massiccio rinoceronte nero son IO
我的皮有一寸厚	<i>hòu</i>	la mia pelle è spessa un dITO
我那玩意有一尺长	<i>cháng</i>	30 centimetri è lungo il coso mIO
最喜欢的地方是烂泥塘	<i>táng</i>	i pantani sono il mio posto preferITO
我是性感的母犀牛	<i>niú</i>	Ricerontessa supersexy son IO

(continued)

²⁶This scene has been completely changed compared to the published version, since it was conceived as a *fin de siècle* reflection about time, at the end of twentieth century: the play was first written and performed in 1999.

²⁷您勤洗手, 多通风, 人多不去凑热闹, 多喝水, 睡眠足, 瓜果菠菜牛奶好, 常备.....流感季节别感冒 (Often wash your hands, often ventilate your room, don't join in the fun when there are too many people; drink plenty of water, get enough sleep, eat good fruit, spinach, milk, and be ready with..... don't catch a cold in flu season).

(continued)

我是强壮的黑犀牛	<i>niú</i>	Massiccio rinoceronte nero son IO
我的皮有两寸厚	<i>hòu</i>	la mia pelle è spessa due dITA
远近闻名的大波妹	<i>mèi</i>	le mie curve son da capogIRO
我们的爱情是天仙配 ²⁸	<i>pèi</i>	predestinato è il nostro amor per la vITA

I will propose one last example of a commercial interlude, present in the published version of the play: the hilarious arrival of the toothbrush salesman at the beginning of the second scene, as Malu and his friends are playing cards and chatting about Mingming. In the performance, both the music and the action are constructed in such a way as to emphasize the comical function of this interaction. The rhythm, the language, and the interaction with the audience are designed to create the impression of a door-to-door salesman in action: the promotional speech listing the fabulous characteristics of the product comically blends scientific and everyday language and obsessively repeats the name of the brand.

大家好，我是汇晨公司的广告员，耽误大家几秒钟的宝贵时间。在飞速发展的信息时代，我们高兴地迎来了卫生洁具的划时代的革命——它就是我们公司生产的高科技产品钻石牌钻石型钻石牙刷。诸位有所不知，当你每天刷完牙之后，细菌很快会在口腔内滋生，它会导致蛀牙，牙菌斑，口腔异味和牙石。有口气，处处受气，怎么办？怎么办？只要您每天早晚使用我们公司生产的钻石牌钻石型钻石牙刷，您就能扼杀细菌存留的机会，口气清新，没有异味，没有蛀牙不再受气。早晨刷牙出门体面，晚上刷牙刺激性欲……因为它是第一支经中华口腔医学会检测认证，并能有效地预防龋齿的牙刷品牌。同时又是中华预防医学会惟一验证并推荐的牙刷品牌。大家请不要误会，其实我来这里的真正目的是向大家报喜，喜从何来？这位先生问得好！凡购买我们公司钻石牌钻石型钻石牙刷者，将得到汇晨公司带给首都人民的“赠，送，给”真诚回报，何为“赠送给”？这位大哥又问了。“赠送给”就是我们将免费赠送给您两支钻石牙刷。来吧，让我们大家一起在卫生化生活的天地里翱翔吧！²⁹

²⁸“I’m a rhino, black and strong/My skin’s an inch thick/ My turn’s a foot long./My favorite place to be is the muddy pond/I am a sexy rhino./My horn can turn you on/ My enourmous breasts are famously known./ Our match made in Heaven goes on and on”.

The English translation of these rhymes is taken from the translation of the play by Claire Conceison, prepared for the 2014 BBC production of the play. Claire Conceison adapted Mark Talacko’s translation published by MCLC Resource Center (available at <https://u.osu.edu/mclc/online-series/rhinoceros-in-love/>, last accessed in September 2020), using the original Chinese script by Liao Yimei (1999) and consulting two additional unpublished translations in English by Nancy Tsai and Susan Kim (2009). I’m grateful to Claire Conceison for sharing her unpublished translation.

²⁹“Greetings. I’m a sales rep from the Oral Hygiene Company. Allow me to take a few seconds of your precious time. **In this fast developing Information Era**, we are introducing our company’s new high tech product: the Diamond brand, Diamond model, Diamond Toothbrush, a revolution in health care. You may not know it, but every day after people brush their teeth, bacteria quickly builds up in their mouth causing tooth decay, bad breath and tartar. **With bad breath on you, everybody will bully you, what can be done about it? What?** Use our company’s Diamond brand, Diamond model, Diamond Toothbrush every morning and every night. You’ll exterminate any chance of bacteria forming, freshen your breath, never get tooth decay **and get bullied again**. Brush your teeth in the morning before you leave the house and feel good. Brush your teeth when you come home in the evening and feel sexy. This is the first toothbrush approved and endorsed by the Chinese Dental Association to prevent cavities. And it’s also the only toothbrush approved and

This long monologue is delivered at a very high acting speed: as said before, this is one of the parts I had to cut words in order to make it fit the space/time constraints of the surtitles. The scientific/medical terms (like *zhùyá* 蛀牙, tooth decay or *yáshí* 牙石, tartar) clash with the everyday language (*zǎochén/tǐmiàn* 早晨/体面 morning/ feel good; *wǎnshàng/cìjī xìngyù* 晚上/刺激性欲 evening/feel sexy), ensuring a comic effect. The 2014 version adds further wordplays: for example, the line *Yǒu kǒuqì, chùchù shòuqì, zěnmē bàn?* 有口气, 处处受气, 怎么办? (With bad breath on you, everybody will bully you, what to do?), with a play on *kǒuqì/shòuqì*, is quite amusing. Highlighted in bold is the repetition of the brand: it is already very long in Chinese, and is repeated by the salesman three times. This long repetition on the one hand creates a rhythm and, on the other, stresses the caricatural aspect of this funny character. Although normally repetitions are the first expressions to be cut in order to save space, in this case I have kept two out of the three repetitions of the full name of the brand (the last time I used a shortened version), as this is a typical marker of commercials, and the commercial function is the dominant feature of this monologue.

The third and last dominant feature of this play I wish to describe and analyze is represented by the numerous intertextual references to literature, media (TV shows, adverts, movies, TV series, etc.), and youth culture, inside and outside China. As already underlined, the performance does not have any time/space markers, although it is clear that the setting is contemporary, and there are numerous references to the Chinese sociocultural context. I considered the fact that the presence of actors having Asian physical features, together with the spoken Chinese language, could already create a highly foreignized context, and firmly place the action in China. I could therefore domesticate some references to build a more global/transborder atmosphere. I will take the example of scene 17, in which Lili and Honghong vie for the position of Malu's girlfriend. In both the 2014 and 2017 editions, this scene was expanded in order to imitate and strongly parody the format of TV shows: the two girls need to pass three challenges, and from start to finish all the ingredients of a reality TV show competition are there: help from home, the ringing of a bell to be the first to answer, and the final emphatic speech delivered by the winner, Honghong. Based on the idea that translation must take into account the real context of enunciation in the target language (Pavis 1989), I ultimately reshaped the lines to reflect Italian linguistic habits and practices, in order to clarify through the text format, the function of the text, and the situation.

endorsed by the Chinese Association of Preventative Medicine. The reason I'm here is to spread the good news. Why? This gentleman asks a good question. Our Company is running a customer appreciation promotion called 'Present, offer, give' to thank the good citizens of Beijing for buying our Diamond brand, Diamond model, Diamond Toothbrush. So what does 'present, offer, give' mean? This gentleman asks again. 'Present, offer, give' means that we present, offer and give you two Diamond Toothbrushes for free. Come on gentlemen, let's all fly high in the sky of our hygienic world!"

The English translation of this monologue is taken from Claire Conceison unpublished translation with the exception of a few adjustments introduced in the 2014 Italian tour edition (in bold), which are mine.

The segmentation work carried out on the video received was not the end of the editing process. The work during rehearsals at the theater proved invaluable in order to finalize the surtitling. In 2014 I spent time with the company during rehearsals and performances in Turin and Genoa (but not in Naples); in 2017 too, I was present during the setting up and rehearsals in Ivrea. It became immediately clear to me that many lines needed to be added, cut, or adjusted. In particular, numerous additions were made of lines with a phatic function (e.g. “Really?”, “Oh, yes...”, “Fuck!...”, “Shit!..”). The actors added them in order to improve their natural reactions during the action on stage. Of course, these lines do not communicate any additional content, but it would have been awkward to hear a character utter some words and not find them on the display. I had a long discussion about this with the director Meng Jinghui: he was inclined to reduce the script to the minimum and leave the audience free to be emotionally absorbed in the performance. In my view, when a surtitling service is offered, the audience expects to find on the display everything that is said on stage. Improvised scenes represented an even thornier issue. Improvisation in this particular play meant that actors each had their own space to speak or move; but after a number of performances, they could rely on a fixed pattern for improvisation, or at least on a sort of “canovaccio”. In 2014, in Turin, we spent a full afternoon and night on the toothbrush salesman scene. After the long monologue, he tries to sell his toothbrushes to Malu and his friends, engaging in an absurd and comical dialogue, partially open to improvisation. My point was that simply writing “improvisation” on the screen would result in frustration on the part of an audience unable to grasp the funny and absurd lines. I therefore proposed to write down a “possible dialogue”, which the actors were free to change during the performance, but which would suggest some content (selling/promoting toothbrushes) and a certain register (a humorous one based on absurdity). I further suggested that the number of lines should correspond to the utterances spoken as much as possible. The same happened in 2017: the cast was changed, and all the scenes left for improvisation changed (for example, the love trainer class: during the class, the actors improvised their reactions to the love trainer’s directions). Once again, to simply write “improvisation” on the screen would have resulted in frustration on the part of the audience, and many puns and funny word plays within this comical interact would have been lost. But, as we have seen, comical interactions play a key role in this play.

A second issue which emerged during the rehearsals was leaving the surtitle display blank when the actors were not speaking. Meng Jinghui was highly demanding with regard to this point: his stage design includes various screens and displays that turn on and off during the performance and are a significant part of the visual code of his multimedia work. The lighting of the surtitle display when it is not in use could be interpreted as an intentional sign, creating a useless center of attention or code: a situation which had to be avoided. This problem was easily solved in Turin and Genoa, as the provider used a good software that allowed the broadcaster to leave the surtitle display blank whenever required. This was much more difficult to achieve in 2017, when the provider used PPT to broadcast the surtitles: I had to add a black slide for all the numerous scenes with no utterances; but as a live performance is live, the rhythm can change depending on the audience’s reactions, and I did not

always have a black slide at the right time, or sometimes inserted one at the wrong moment.

The surtitling process described so far served its purpose. During the 2014 performances, it indeed elicited an emotional reaction from the audience. Generally speaking, reactions came in two waves: first the audience's reaction triggered by the surtitling (usually in advance: the written text of the surtitles arrives all together), then the reaction of the audience listening to the actors. This is because we had a mixed audience (some people spoke Chinese, others didn't); and although this double response was a challenge for the actors during the performance, it was exactly the result we intended to reach. In 2017, the situation was quite different, as the performance was part of a program for the dissemination of Chinese culture among young people. The small, local theater was near a high school where Chinese is taught as a second language, and the theater was filled with teenagers who studied Chinese. In this case, it was easier to overcome the difficulty of watching a two-hour performance in a foreign language, because we could prepare the students in advance by introducing the plot, the director's work, the main topics, etc. Anyway, the performance turned out to be a big success: the Italian teenagers felt at ease in the multicode and multimedia environment created by Meng Jinghui, and clearly felt they could relate to the topic explored.

5 Conclusions

Moving on to some conclusions, the case study proposed has proved in the first place that surtitling translation is definitely part of the so-called "broader translation" that is the *mise en scène* of a dramatic text: it cannot be separated from it.

Translating for the theater is not like translating poetry or a novel; it is not and should not be solitary work. The collaborative nature of theater means that ideally a translator should be engaged in the process, like the rest of the ensemble (Bassnett 2006/2011, 100).

To reach the goal of a text able to speak to the audience both at the cognitive and emotional level, we need to control the full surtitling process, from translation to segmentation and broadcasting: the approach I propose for surtitling is to integrate the surtitling work into the company tour, by having dedicated staff adjust and segment the translation to suit different spaces. This is the ideal situation, of course, but ideals often clash with practice, starting with budget limits. Actually, apart from the question of costs, the transition from a kind of theater centered on the text to a kind of theater centered on performance and hence on the director's artistic work, has reduced the amount of attention paid to the text and therefore to its translation/surtitling.

Secondly, the case study has shown that, despite rigid time/space constraints, surtling translation does not simply have to fulfill the role of communicative translation, or interlingual translation; rather, it constitutes a cultural act. We need to turn away from the idea of surtitling as a translanguaging practice aiming at a clear and condensed translation, and rethink it in terms of a cultural relocation (Upton

2000). Before Venuti (1995) brought the two opposite concepts of domestication and foreignization on the cusp of the debate on translation, the question of relocation or adaptation to the target culture had already been extensively discussed in relation to theater translations. Owing to the particular form of reception of the dramatic text, i.e. a performance (no footnotes, performability, speakability, and readability of the text, a direct connection between the situation of the enunciation on the stage and the situation—place/time—of the supposed target audience, etc.), many commentators have leaned more toward a kind of domestication designed to restore the dominant features of the source—for example, its comic aspects or humor. “The question then becomes a thorny one of how much domestication is too much—how can a play be made to work in the target culture while still retaining some of those qualities that make it a part of the source culture?” (Maher 2007, 368). Humor, for example, is strictly connected with culture. If we acknowledge that translation is a cultural act, then we need to accept the responsibility of choosing a strategy that relies on the identification of the dominant features of the text and of the target audience. I agree with Carole-Anne Upton’s statement that the theater translator “has a socio-political responsibility to define and address the target audience, which demands careful mediation of the source text” (Upton 2000, 2). Surtitling certainly bears less responsibility than theater translation, as it is linked to an already defined performance and encoded in it; nevertheless, sensitivity to the source and the target culture underlying sociopolitical agenda is still fundamental. Far from having to embrace the cult of transparency/invisibility, surtitling requires a well-structured translation project, embedded in the general translation of the dramatic text that is the performance.

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An Investigation of Norms in Legal Translation: A Corpus-Based Study of Conditional Connectives in Company Law



Kanglong Liu and Linqing Zhu

Abstract Based on a comparable corpus comprised of texts collected from different versions of company law from the United Kingdom, Chinese mainland, and Hong Kong at different periods, we conducted both quantitative and qualitative analyses to examine the similarities and differences between these versions using the conditional connectives commonly found in legal texts as indicators. Through a detailed comparative analysis of these conditional connectives, the extent to which writing and translation norms affect the production of legal texts were discussed and explored. In light of the translation norm theory by Toury and the Three Circles model of World Englishes by Kachru, we found that Britain as a native English country of the inner circle is the initiator and reformer of legal writing norms and as such also exerts an influence on the norms of the outer and expanding circles. As far as company law is concerned, the newly created norms of the inner circle have not made an impact on the expanding circle and the translation of legal texts from the Chinese mainland is still governed by the old norms, which explains the conservative and archaic style identified in the two Chinese versions of company law.

Keywords Company law · Conditional connectives · Translation norms · Legal translation · Corpus

1 Introduction

Law and language are inextricably linked and inherently connected. The important role of language is reflected in almost every aspect of law, ranging from the formulation of legislation and legal documents to the interpretation of legal concepts and rules. “The law is a profession of words,” as aptly summarized by Mellinkoff (1963/1990, vii). A linguistic approach to legal studies is certainly not

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a new phenomenon in view of the intrinsic connection between the two fields. As an interdisciplinary field of study, legal linguistics, or forensic linguistics, has established itself as an important branch of applied linguistics because of the uniqueness of legal language that distinguishes itself from daily language. Naturally, conventional linguistic analytical frameworks that are applicable to general language studies might not be applicable for examining the special issues inherent in legal language.

As an interdisciplinary area of research, legal translation and interpreting is a strongly expanding field both as an area of practice and as an area of research (Biel et al. 2019, 1). Corpus-based and corpus-driven legal translation studies have also expanded in recent years. With the relative ease of access to corpus data in machine-readable form and maturity of corpus tools, this area of research has gained increasing momentum in recent years. In this chapter, we made use of corpus methods and studied company law of different regions (UK, Mainland China, and Hong Kong) from both a synchronic and diachronic perspective. One of the reasons for undertaking this research is the belief that legal language is not static but dynamic, which is subject to a number of language-internal and external factors and will evolve over time. Legal translation shares some common tenets with other translation activities, which to a large extent is “a norm-governed human and social behavior, a text-producing act of legal communication” (Cao 2013, 422). A diachronic approach can shed light on legal translation research to uncover translation norms, which have been identified as one of the most important research areas within the field (Chesterman 1993; Toury 1995).

The following will briefly outline the application of corpus-based methods to legal translation research and identify a research gap in Chinese–English legal translation research. Then the Parallel-comparable Company Law Corpus will be introduced and a study of legal conditionals based on the corpus will be presented. Lastly will be a discussion of the implications of these findings by addressing how translation norms have made an impact on the translated texts.

2 Corpus Approaches to Legal Translation

With the rise of corpus linguistics and descriptive translation studies, corpus-based translation studies have become a new research paradigm and an independent discipline in the field of translation studies (Hu 2015, 29). The impact of corpus-based translation studies has also been felt in legal translation research. Traditionally, researchers have made use of qualitative research methods to study legal translation, “[u]ntil recently, relatively little corpus-based and corpus-driven research has been done in the area of legal translation” (Biel 2018, 34). Despite a relatively new area of research, corpus approaches have been fruitfully applied to legal translation research, most notably those based on EU legal texts and European language pairs (e.g., Biel 2015, 2018; Pontrandolfo 2011; Trklja 2018). Most studies in this line of enquiry employed comparable corpora to compare EU legal translated texts

with comparable texts written in the target language in order to identify the unique language features of translated language. The linguistic features investigated with the aid of corpora include phraseology (Biel 2014), complex prepositions (Biel 2015), and lexical bundles (Breeze 2013; Giczela-Pastwa 2019). To a large extent, these studies followed the path of corpus-based investigations of translation universals spearheaded by Baker (1993, 1996). It is not the aim of this paper to provide a full account of a literature review on corpus approaches to legal translation studies (LTS). Readers who are interested in this topic are referred to a recent in-depth review (Pontrandolfo 2019). Clearly, corpus has its inherent merits for aiding legal translation studies. Corpus-driven approaches are methodologically more advantageous than the traditional intuition-based approaches because they are based on a large amount of empirical data and thus not vulnerable to the idiosyncrasies of researchers' subjectivity. Compared to conventional text analysis methods, corpus can process large amount of authentic data at a much faster speed. Similarly, the merits of quantity, authenticity, and speed from corpus linguistics also contribute to the research in legal translation studies. Apart from the instrumental advantages, corpus-based descriptive translation studies (Toury 1995; Chesterman 2000) which investigate naturally occurring instances of language use can also lessen the apparent prescriptiveness of legal translation studies.

Notwithstanding its potential advantages, corpus-based legal translation studies is still at its infancy in an English-Chinese translation context. Although some small-scale corpus-based studies in Chinese-English legal translation have been undertaken (e.g., Li and Wang 2013), such studies are not to be compared with those involving European language pairs in either scale or scope. Research in legal translation studies, similar to the study of translation universals, has largely been confined to closely related European languages and the findings might not be generalizable to languages which are distant from each other. Naturally, "evidence from a genetically distant language pair such as English and Chinese is arguably more convincing" (Xiao and Dai 2014, 11). The Chinese perspective into corpus-driven legal translation research will surely yield more insights into the nature of legal translations to inform research and practice in this area.

Pontrandolfo (2019) summarized a number of dichotomies to capture how corpora are used in legal translation studies, including qualitative versus quantitative, corpus-based versus corpus-driven, comparable versus parallel, translated versus non-translated. However, one dichotomy was left out, i.e., synchronic versus diachronic, which is the use of both synchronic and diachronic corpora to study how written and translated legal language has evolved over time. It is believed such types of studies are worth exploring, as they will help uncover translation norms which operate both in the social event and the cognitive act of translation (cf. Toury 1995). The research of translation norms can help to identify various social and cultural factors that a translator is subject to and how translational behavior in a certain historical period can be influenced by a variety of norms (Hu 2015, 27–28).

As is the case with many Chinese–English translation studies, qualitative methods still dominate legal translation research despite some recent research using corpus-based quantitative approaches. The existing literature on Chinese–English legal translation research still falls short in a number of areas. First, in view of the uniqueness of legal translation, a composite methodology consisting of both qualitative and quantitative approaches may be adopted to the investigation of legal translation to enhance research rigor and ensure accurate interpretation of results. Second, as far as the research on legal conditionals in Chinese–English translation is concerned, no diachronic research has been undertaken to probe into how such types of sentence construction have evolved over time and their underlying causes. Third, the research is confined to the use of small-scale target language corpora without taking into consideration the influence of the writing norms of English-speaking countries, thus the interpretation of results is overly prescriptive and limited in generalizability.

The current study adopted a diachronic corpus-driven approach consisting of both qualitative and quantitative analysis to investigate the company law of Britain, Hong Kong, and Mainland China. Specifically, we chose legal conditionals as an indicator to demonstrate how writing and translation norms have made an impact on the production of legal texts in UK, Mainland China, and Hong Kong. In so doing, we followed the comparable-parallel corpus approach (Biel 2016) to set up the corpus for studying such a linguistic feature. This study consists of two major phases. The first phase involves the design and construction of the corpus, including the collection and annotation of different periods of company law from the three regions. Second, based on the corpus, we explored the corpus data to seek answers to our research questions. One clear advantage of corpus-driven approaches to legal translation studies is its capacity of processing large amount of textual data (semi)-automatically. The data extracted were further used in the qualitative analysis to evaluate how writing and translation norms of different regions have evolved and interacted with each other.

3 Legal Conditionals

As early as the mid-nineteenth century, George Coode (1845, 8) observed that the expression of every law essentially consists of three elements, i.e., (1) the description of the legal subject; (2) the enunciation of the legal action; (3) the description of the case to which the legal action is confined; and (4) the conditions on performance of which the legal action operates. As time goes by, elements 3 and 4 have been integrated and combined to become one element.

Conditional reasoning plays a central part in human thinking (Johnson-Laird and Byrne 2002, 646) and has been widely studied in the field of linguistics, psychology, and philosophy. Conditional sentences are sentences discussing implications or hypothetical situations and their consequences. A prototypical conditional “if p, (then) q” is made up of two parts, the dependent clause discussing the condition, also called protasis or simply p, and the main clause specifying the consequence, also called

apodosis or *q*. The conditional construction defines a special cause and effect relationship where inference is made based on the likelihood of the condition expressed in the dependent clause. Generally speaking, legal conditionals are deontic (Navarro and Rodríguez 2014, 92), containing obligatory and permissive statements. They fall into only one type of conditional sentence, the “predicative” conditional sentences. Normally, the condition is expressed with the present tense and the consequence with the future modals such as *shall* or *may*. In legal texts, some of the most common conditional connective include *if*, *where*, *in case*, *in the event that*, *provided (that)*, *providing (that)*. Conditional constructions are essential to our understanding of how legal discourse is construed, used, and interpreted (Frade 2016, 34).

The investigation of legal conditionals was mainly pursued by scholars working in the field of legal science (Thiercelin 2010; Castañeda and Knauff 2016). From a legal perspective, many law theorists contend that legal rules should be understood as conditionals (MacCormick 1998). In recent years, scholars working in forensic linguistics and legal translation have also taken an interest in examining legal conditionals (Frade 2016; Lastres-López 2019). For instance, Frade (2016) investigated how conditionality plays a role in international contracts in English using an integrated approach comprising functional, discoursal, and legal aspects. Lastres-López (2019) adopted a corpus-based approach to compare the use of legal conditionals in English, French, and Spanish courtroom interaction and in English and French parliamentary interaction. The results showed that conditionals are mainly used to express canonical conditions rather than carry the interpersonal and textual function. Her study also pointed to the scarcity of legal conditionals in cross-linguistic studies. Translation of legal conditionals between Chinese and English, two languages that are inherently different from each other, has also attracted the attention of translation scholars (Li 2008; Li and Wang 2013; Wang and Li 2017). These studies covered structural analysis of typical English legal conditionals and provided suggestions for improving Chinese–English translation of such constructions. It is worth noting that corpus-based approaches have also been employed in this line of enquiry. For instance, Li and Wang (2013), based on a corpus of bilingual Hong Kong Company Law (Cap. 32), specifically compared the usage of conditional connectives including *if*, *where*, *in (the) case of*, *when*, *in the event of*. In all these studies, the old version of Hong Kong Company Law (Cap. 32) was used as the major source of data to account for the findings and claims. As Cap. 32 has already been replaced by the new one (Cap. 622) in 2014, there is a need to conduct research based on the new data to obtain a more objective evaluation of such a linguistic phenomenon. To a large extent, these studies heavily rely on researchers’ personal evaluations rather than descriptive analysis grounded on corpus data.

Coode (1845, 20) pointed out that “the more a legislature is civilized, the more it measures and considers the differences in each class of cases and adjusts the law to their varieties.” As society becomes more complex and developed, it is inevitable that more laws will be made to regulate different kinds of social relationships. In direct contrast to the increased variety and unpredictability of dependent clauses expressing the conditions, the conditional connectives are relatively stable over time and follow certain patterns and rules. Therefore, a systematic comparative analysis

of the use of conditional connectives in legal texts from a diachronic perspective can shed some light on the change and development of the relevant norms in legal writing and translation.

4 Methodology

4.1 *Corpus Design and Compilation*

Braj Kachru (1985) proposed that the spread of English can be represented by three concentric circles: the inner circle, the outer circle, and the expanding circle. These circles represent “the type of spread, the patterns of acquisition and the functional domains in which English is used across cultures and languages” (Kachru 1985, 12). The inner circle is reserved for countries where English is used as mother tongue or first language (L1); the outer circle covers countries and regions where English plays the role of a second language (L2), which might have the official status alongside the local language(s); the expanding circle refers to territories where English is learned as a foreign language. In this model, the three circles of English varieties interact with each other and are related to three types of status: “norm providing” (inner circle), “norm developing” (outer circle), and “norm dependent” (expanding circle) (Kachru 1992). As one of the central aims of our study is to investigate how writing and translation norms interact in the writing/translation of company law, we followed Kachru’s model to set up the corpus in our study. Three versions of the UK Company Law (inner circle), two versions of the Hong Kong Company Law (outer circle), and two versions of the Mainland China Company law (expanding circle) were selected to set up the Parallel-Comparable Company Law Corpus. The UK component is monolingual while the other two subcorpora were set up as a bilingual corpus aligned at the sentence level. The Hong Kong component contains two versions: Companies Ordinance (Cap. 32) which came into operation in 1932 followed by extensive modification in 1984 (The modified version is chosen for the current corpus) and Companies Ordinance (Cap. 622) which was drafted in 2012 and came into effect in 2014. The component of Mainland China consists of Company law which took effect in 1993 and later modified in 1999 and 2004 (the 2004 version is used) and Companies Law which took effect in 2006. The UK company law went through multiple modifications and changes, we selected the key three versions from major periods, which are Companies Act 1948, Companies Act 1985 and Companies Act 2006. The design of the corpus is illustrated in Fig. 1.

Textual noise such as unwanted Chinese characters in the translated texts, pictures, charts, formulas, and other non-literal elements were removed from the original texts before inclusion in the corpus. In a typical legal conditional sentence, the main clause (apodosis) is usually modified by several dependent clauses (protasis) specifying the conditions, which often results in a long-winded sentence. In modern legal drafting, however, letters or Roman numerals are used to number the conditions for enhancing



Fig. 1 Design of the Parallel-Comparable Company Law Corpus

clarity and readability. We manually crossed out the numbering in the texts to restore the sentence structures for facilitating data analysis.

4.2 Research Questions

Based on the foregoing review, some research gaps can be identified regarding the investigation of legal conditionals in translation studies. First, research of legal conditionals is largely confined to legal science (Castañeda and Knauff 2016) and comparatively little is done in the fields of linguistics and translation studies regarding its use and functions in different legal genre varieties. Second, most cross-linguistic research in this area was done in European language pairs (e.g., Frade 2016; Lastres-López 2019) and research involving Chinese–English legal translation tends to be more qualitative and prescriptive in research methods and design. Third, no research, to our best knowledge, has examined legal conditionals in Chinese–English translation context from a diachronic perspective.

Therefore, the present study aims to analyze the diachronic change of legal conditionals across three regions (UK, Mainland China, and Hong Kong) and examine how writing and translation norms have interacted and changed by relating to the Three Circles Model of World Englishes (Kachru 1985). The following two research questions are to be addressed:

- (1) How are the conditional connectives used and distributed in the UK, Mainland China, and Hong Kong Company law from a synchronic and diachronic perspective?
- (2) If the changes are identified, can they be explained using the norm orientation of Three Circles Model of World Englishes (Kachru 1985) to characterize the interaction and changes of different norms?

4.3 Data Extraction and Analysis

Wordsmith Tools 7.0 (Scott 2016) was used to extract and analyze the corpus data. We first utilized the Wordlist function to generate the statistical information of the three sets of company law corpus. The basic statistical information includes average sentence length, type-token ratio (TTR) and standardized TTR. Next, we used the Concord function to search the conditional connectives, removed noisy occurrences and calculated the frequencies. The final step was to analyze how the conditional connectives were used in legal context and explain such a distribution and development in relation to the Model of World Englishes (Kachru 1985). When selecting the conditional connectives for the current study, we referred to Li (2008) who proposed a total of eight common conditional connectives used in legal texts, i.e., if; where; when; should; in case that, in the event that; providing, provided that. With the assistance of Wordlist function to analyze the word frequency distribution, we found that certain conditional connectives were not used at all in the corpus. Thus, we deleted the ones with zero occurrences and added some whose occurrences are above one. In the end, our analysis focused on fourteen conditional connectives as listed in Table 1. It is believed that the selection of these words can comprehensively reflect the diachronic and synchronic variations pertaining to the use of conditional connectives.

5 Results

The statistical facts of the seven company law components of the corpus are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1 shows the statistical facts of the seven company law datasets. As can be seen, the size of the UK and Hong Kong company law has increased considerably over time. The latest version of UK company law (UK 2006) has 270,597 words and the Hong Kong latest version has 210,902 words. It is believed the bigger size of the two corpora are related to the common law system of the two places, which is different from the continental law system practiced in Mainland China. As for

Table 1 Statistical facts of the Parallel-Comparable Company Law Corpus

Dataset	Type	Token	TTR	STTR	Sentence number	ASL
UK1948	3,298	143,480	2.30	25.37	2,305	62
UK1985	3,878	222,108	1.75	24.19	4,550	49
UK2006	3,622	270,597	1.34	22.97	7,503	36
HK1984	2,691	93,178	2.89	22.98	2,176	43
HK2014	3,024	210,802	1.43	19.66	5,097	41
CN1993	1,367	19,243	7.10	25.47	531	36
CN2006	1,323	20,817	6.36	24.07	511	41

Mainland China, the size of the company law is relatively smaller compared to its UK and Hong Kong counterparts. The standardized type-token ratio (STTR) shows that a downward trend exists diachronically, meaning that the lexical complexity has decreased over time. This feature is also attested in the average sentence length (ASL) of UK and Hong Kong versions, which has decreased consistently. However, the ASL of Chinese company law has increased from 36 to 41 words, which is a feature worth noting. We will examine this point later in relation to the distribution of conditional connectives in all three regions.

5.1 *UK*

The overall trend of UK company law can be divided into two phases from a diachronic perspective. In the first phase (1948–1985), the most distinctive feature is the use of “if,” which rose from 49 to 59%. The conditional connectives “where” grew from 19 to 21% and the same rising trend is also with “when” (2.7–3.1%). At the same time, “provided that” witnessed a sharp decline from 9.8 to 0.52%. The use of “in the case of” remained relatively stable (15–14%). In the second phase (1985–2006), the use of “if” drops slightly by 1.2% (58.5–57.3%). The use of “provided that” continued to drop to 0.19%, the other connectives that recorded a downward trend include “when,” “in the event of,” and “in a case.” The frequency of “where” remained almost the same. Overall, the second stage is relatively stable and does not record a vast change in the distribution of connectives.

5.2 *Hong Kong*

Through comparing the old and new versions of Hong Kong company law, the two most prominent features are the distribution of “if” and “where,” the former increased from 58 to 79% while the latter dropped from 21.1 to 4.0%. Another major connective “in the case of” increased from 9.6 to 15.5%. The connectives that record a downward trend include “provided that,” “when,” and “in the event of.” Basically, the use of “if” is the dominant connective and accounts for almost 80% of all the connectives used.

5.3 *Mainland China*

Based on Table 2, it can be seen that the two prominent features of the diachronic change of the use of connectives in Mainland China’s company law are the decline of “if” (28.6 to 5.3%) and the increase of “where” (47.9 to 78%). Similar to UK and Hong Kong, these two connectives are the most commonly used ones of all the

Table 2 Distribution of conditional connectives in the corpus

Conditional connectives	UK1948	UK1985	UK2006	HK1984	HK2014	CN1993	CN2006
	Freq.	Freq.	Freq.	Freq.	Freq.	Freq.	Freq.
if	867 (41.1)	1456 (49.8)	1508 (50.3)	597 (50.5)	2035 (72.1)	68 (27.4)	13 (5.0)
where	336 (15.9)	525 (18.0)	559 (18.7)	216 (18.3)	105 (0.4)	114 (46.0)	190 (73.6)
in the case of	266 (12.6)	356 (12.2)	391 (13.1)	99 (8.4)	401 (14.2)	7 (2.8)	9 (3.5)
provided that	172 (8.2)	13 (0.4)	5 (0.2)	42 (3.6)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
when	48 (2.3)	78 (2.7)	76 (2.5)	33 (2.8)	33 (1.2)	18 (7.3)	31 (12)
in the event of	34 (1.6)	27 (0.9)	18 (0.6)	28 (2.4)	7 (0.2)	3 (1.2)	0 (0)
in a case where	7 (0.3)	22 (0.7)	19 (0.6)	6 (0.5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
in case of	26 (1.2)	11 (0.4)	35 (1.2)	11 (0.9)	4 (0.1)	1 (0.4)	1 (0.4)
unless	156 (7.3)	199 (6.8)	225 (7.5)	83 (7.0)	153 (5.4)	0 (0)	0 (0)
except	112 (5.3)	138 (4.7)	90 (3.0)	45 (3.8)	72 (2.6)	8 (3.2)	12 (4.7)
save	10 (0.5)	9 (0.3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
so (as) long as	15 (0.7)	16 (0.5)	17 (0.6)	3 (0.3)	9 (0.3)	0 (0)	0 (0)
once	0 (0)	1 (0.03)	8 (0.3)	1 (0.08)	2 (0.07)	2 (0.8)	1 (0.4)
notwithstanding	61 (2.9)	70 (2.4)	24 (0.8)	18 (1.5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Total	2112 (100)	2921 (100)	2995 (100)	1182 (100)	2821 (100)	248 (100)	258 (100)

* The number in the parentheses gives the percentage of the connective in all 14 connectives

conditional connectives in legal conditionals. The other connectives such as “in the case of” and “when” also recorded a surge in use. However, the change in these connectives cannot be said to be significant due to their low representation in the corpus.

In order to find out if the connectives have changed over time in each region, we further calculated the log-likelihood of the connectives. Table 3 shows the log-likelihood value¹ of the connectives to examine whether the distribution of the connectives differs from a diachronic perspective.

The differences between two frequency scores of a particular connective can be reflected in the log-likelihood value, a popular statistical test used to study lexical variation between different corpora. From Table 3, we can see that in the phase of

¹According to Paul Rayson, the higher the G2 (log-likelihood) value, the more significant is the difference between two frequency scores. For these tables, a G2 of 3.8 or higher is significant at the level of $p < 0.05$ and a G2 of 6.6 or higher is significant at $p < 0.01$.

95th percentile; 5% level; $p < 0.05$; critical value = 3.84

99th percentile; 1% level; $p < 0.01$; critical value = 6.63

99.9th percentile; 0.1% level; $p < 0.001$; critical value = 10.83

99.99th percentile; 0.01% level; $p < 0.0001$; critical value = 15.13

From <http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/llwizard.html>.

Table 3 Pairwise log-likelihood values of the conditional connectives

Connectives	UK1948–UK1985	UK1985–UK2006	HK1984–HK2014	CN1993–CN2006
If	3.63 (+)*	19.49 (–)	83.24 (+)	43.61 (–)
Where	0.02 (+)	4.90 (–)	181.87 (–)	15.74 (+)
in the case of	3.20 (+)	2.00 (–)	30.07 (–)	0.16 (+)
provided that	240.60 (–)	5.44 (–)	99.33 (–)	0.00
When	0.07 (+)	1.92 (–)	10.71 (–)	2.90 (+)
in the event of	6.75 (–)	4.03 (–)	36.31 (–)	4.30 (–)
in a case where	2.97 (+)	1.21 (–)	14.19 (–)	0.00
in case of	14.57 (–)	8.87 (+)	11.54 (–)	0.00
Unless	3.24 (–)	0.59 (–)	2.21 (–)	0.00
Except	3.19 (–)	21.88 (–)	3.22 (–)	0.63 (+)
Save	1.39 (–)	14.34 (–)	0.00	0.00
so (as) long as	1.06 (–)	0.15 (–)	0.19 (+)	0.00
Once	1.00 (–)	4.90 (+)	0.01 (+)	0.39 (–)
notwithstanding	2.89 (–)	33.51 (–)	42.57 (–)	0.00

* The “+” within the parentheses specifies an increasing trend from the previous period and the “–” a decreasing trend

UK1948–UK1985, the major difference is in the connective of “provided that” which has decreased considerably. In the following phase of UK1985–UK2006, some interesting differences are observed. The use of “if,” “except,” “save,” “notwithstanding” all record a drop in the overall distribution diachronically. A slight increasing trend is found with the connectives “in case of” and “once.” As for the Hong Kong versions, there are two notable trends worthy of our attention: the use of “if” has increased considerably while “where” and a number of other connectives including “in the case of,” “provided that” and “in the event of” have all recorded a drop in distribution. When we compare the two Chinese versions, we can see a completely opposing trend. The use of “if” has dropped while the percentage of “where” and “when” has increased. However, due to the relatively small size of the Chinese corpora, a number of connectives are lowly or not represented in the subcorpora.

6 Positioning of Conditional Clauses

Based on the statistics summarized in Tables 2 and 3, we will focus on the two major types of connectives in the following analysis, namely, if-conditionals and where-conditionals. Linguists have long been interested in studying the positioning of conditionals which can be used as an indicator to show the different legal writing and translation norms across different regions. Traditionally, initial position of p-clause and post-positioning of the q-clause is usually considered the norm (Comrie

Table 4 Positioning of if- and where-conditionals in the corpus

Conditional connective	UK1948	UK1985	UK2006	HK1984	HK2014	CN1993	CN2006
if (initial)	48	52	41	39	57	46	7
if (medial)	21	14	10	10	9	3	2
if (final)	31	34	49	51	34	19	4
Total	100	100	100	100	100	68	13
where (initial)	77	69	59	72	53	89	87
where (medial)	8	6	8	10	21	0	0
where (final)	15	25	33	18	26	11	13
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

1986). On the other hand, non-initial position of p-clauses including medial and final-positioning has been regarded as violating the default ordering. In order to study how positioning is represented in the corpus, we randomly extracted 100 conditionals headed by “if” and another 100 headed by “where” out of each sub-corpus and examined their positioning. Note that there are less than 100 if-conditionals in the Chinese component and all the if-conditionals are thus used for analysis. Table 4 summarized the distribution of p-clause positioning of 100 if-conditionals and 100 where-conditionals in each company law sub-corpus.

6.1 *If-Conditionals*

In UK company law, we can see that the initial and final-positioning of p-clauses of if-conditionals account for a large percentage of the corpus. For example, the initial-positioning of if-conditionals represents about half of all the conditional clauses. On the other hand, medial-positioning is declining and final-positioning is increasing. Some examples of initial-, medial- and final-positioning are given below.

- (1) If a company fails to comply with this section, the company and every officer of the company who is in default shall be liable to a default fine (initial-positioning) (UK1948).
- (2) Any variation of the contract which has the effect that the contract would have contravened the subsection, if the terms of the contract as varied had been its original terms, is void (medial-positioning) (UK1984).
- (3) The directors of an unlimited company are not required to deliver accounts and reports to the registrar in respect of a financial year if the following conditions are met (final-positioning) (UK2006).

Even though some differences are observed across the three periods regarding the positioning distribution of p-clause in if-conditionals in the UK component, we wanted to confirm whether these differences were not due to chance. A chi-square test of independence was performed and results showed that the differences were

statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 10.3472$, d.f. = 2, $p < .05$). This shows that development represented by the decline in medial-positioning and increase in final-positioning of p-clause of if-conditionals is significant.

As for the Hong Kong company law, we found there is an increase of initial-positioning and a decline in other positioning of the p-clauses in if-conditionals across the two periods. Some examples are given below.

- (4) If any person without reasonable excuse makes default in complying with the requirements of this section, he shall be liable to a fine and, for continued default, to a daily default fine (initial-positioning) (HK1984).
- (5) A copy of the proposed release agreement (if it is in writing) or a memorandum giving details of the proposed release agreement (if it is not) must be made available to members (medial-positioning) (HK2014).
- (6) This section applies if the creditors or the class of creditors, or the members or the class of members, or both, with whom the arrangement or compromise is proposed to be entered into, agree or agrees to the arrangement or compromise (final-positioning) (HK2014).

A chi-square test of independence was performed and results showed that the differences in the distribution of positioning concerning if-conditionals in the two Hong Kong subcorpora were statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 6.8276$, d.f. = 1, $p < .05$). This shows that the changes represented by the decline in medial-positioning and the increase in final-positioning in this type of conditional is significant. This shows that the trend toward initial-positioning of p-clause in the new version of Hong Kong company law is statistically significant.

On the other hand, Mainland Chinese company law is under-represented by if-conditionals. There are altogether 68 if-conditionals in the old version (CN1993) and 13 in the new version (CN2006). As has been discussed previously, the new version shows a strong preference for where-conditionals instead of the if-conditionals. Some examples taken from the two versions of Chinese company law are shown below.

- (7) If State-owned enterprises established prior to the implementation of this Law comply with the conditions stipulated in this Law for the incorporation of limited liability companies, they may, in the case of enterprises with a single investing entity, be restructured as wholly State-owned limited liability companies in accordance with this Law, or in the case of enterprises with multiple investing entities, be restructured as limited liability companies as specified in the first paragraph of the preceding Article (initial-positioning) (CN1993).
- (8) A supervisor may, if re-elected upon expiration of the term of office, serve consecutive terms (medial-positioning) (CN2006).
- (9) The resolution on such matters shall be adopted if it is voted for by other shareholders present at the meeting who hold more than half of the voting rights (final-positioning) (CN2006).

6.2 *Where-Conditionals*

From the three versions of UK company law, we can see a decrease in the initial-positioning and an increase of final-positioning of the p-clause of where-conditionals. Although some differences were observed across the three versions, statistical analysis shows that the differences are not statistically significant and largely due to chance ($\chi^2 = 9.4291$, d.f. = 2, $p > .05$). Some examples are presented below.

- (10) Where an order is made under this section, every company in relation to which the order is made shall cause an office copy thereof to be delivered to the registrar of companies for registration within seven days after the making of the order, and if default is made in complying with this subsection, the company and every officer of the company who is in default shall be liable to a default fine (initial-positioning) (UK1948).
- (11) The obligation to make the notification must (except where Section 201(3) applies) be performed within the period of 5 days next following the day on which that obligation arises... (medial-positioning) (UK1985).
- (12) This section applies where provision is made by a company's articles enabling a member to nominate another person or persons as entitled to enjoy or exercise all or any specified rights of the member in relation to the company (final-positioning) (UK2006).

For the two Hong Kong versions, we conducted a chi-square test of independence to examine if the changes are statistically significant across the two versions of company law. Results showed that the differences were statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 8.2458$, d.f. = 1, $p < .05$). In other words, the drop in initial-positioning of p-clause in where-conditionals and the increase of medial- and final-positioning are quite significant. We suspect that a large number of this type of where-conditionals have been replaced by if-conditionals, as evidenced by the sharp increase of if-conditionals in the new version (HK2014). Below are some examples taken from the two Hong Kong company law versions.

- (13) Where a person making an offer to which this section relates is a company or a firm, it shall be sufficient if the document aforesaid is signed on behalf of the company or firm by 2 directors of the company or not less than half of the partners, as the case may be, and any such director or partner may sign by his agent authorized in writing (initial-positioning) (HK1984).
- (14) If that other person is not a company, the time set out for the purposes of subsection (2)(b) is—where that other person is a member of the company, the time specified for the purpose in the company's articles (medial-positioning) (HK2014).
- (15) This section applies where (a) a company is a plaintiff in an action or other legal proceedings (final-positioning) (HK2014).

For the Mainland Chinese versions, the initial-positioning of p-clause in where-conditionals takes a dominant proportion in both versions. In contrast, the medial-positioning is not found in both versions. Some examples are provided below.

- (16) Where a company is dissolved, it shall apply for cancellation of its registration in accordance with law (initial-positioning) (CN1993).
- (17) Where no election is conducted in time before the expiration of the term of office of a director, or the number of the directors is less than the statutory number due to the resignation of a director within his term of office, the existing director shall, before the director-elect takes office, continue to perform his duty as a director in accordance with the provisions of laws, administrative regulations, or the company's articles of association (final-positioning) (CN2006).

From the above analysis on p-clause positioning across the seven subcorpora of three regions, we can see that the UK and Hong Kong share some similarities in that the three types of positioning were found. Hong Kong's common law system was developed under British colonial rule and to a large extent modeled after the English common law. It is natural that legal drafting of these two regions shares similar linguistic features. This explains why all three positioning of p-clauses were found in both. On the other hand, China practices civil law system that can be traced back to the influence of the German civil law system in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Apart from the differences in legal systems, it should be noted that company law in Mainland China was translated from Chinese into English, while it was written in English in UK and Hong Kong. As translated language, the company law in Mainland China inevitably carries the unique linguistic features of translation language (Baker 1993, 1996) that distinguishes it from that of the other two places. As far as p-clause positioning is concerned, we can clearly see a trend toward syntactic simplification in the translated company law of China. Interestingly, this syntactic simplification seems to occur together with lexical normalization and conservatism represented by the overuse of where-conditionals.

7 Discussion

Based on our statistical and qualitative analysis, it can be seen there are some major differences, both quantitatively and qualitatively, concerning the use of the conditional connectives across the three regions. Conditional sentences represent a major type of legislative sentence structure and the use of conditional connectives, i.e., over-representation and under-representation of certain connectives, different positioning of the p-clauses of conditionals, can reveal how legal writing and translation norms developed in different jurisdictions (i.e., UK, Mainland China, and Hong Kong) in different time periods.

7.1 *Writing and Translation Norms*

Toury defines norms as “the general values or ideas shared by a certain community as to what is right and wrong, adequate and inadequate—into specific performance instructions appropriate for and applicable to specific situations providing they are not (yet) formulated as laws” (1995, 51). Unlike translation norms, writing norms are less addressed in the fields of translation studies and linguistics. This might be due to the stereotypical perception that writing is relatively stable over time and circumstances. However, from a diachronic perspective, language change does take place, as evidenced by the preference for certain expressions over others in a certain period. Language change takes place when after a period of time one variant is adopted over all others. Clearly, language change is also a phenomenon governed by norms. As far as legal drafting is concerned, the trend toward simplification in legal English can be observed in recent decades, motivated mostly by the Plain English Movement. Take UK company law as an example, the use of conditional connectives has become less varied over time, most evidently represented by the decrease of some connectives having an “archaic” flavor, such as “provided that,” “save,” “notwithstanding.” Similarly, we can also observe such a trend in Hong Kong where such connectives also record a drop over time. What is worth noting in the new Hong Kong company law is the increased use of “if” which accounts for more than 70% of all the connectives used. Such a percentage is also much higher than its UK counterpart of the same period. In other words, the new Hong Kong company law seems to have evolved its own writing norms which are more inclined toward simplification. In the case of Mainland China, the trend has shown an increase in the use of “where” instead of “if” over time. Such a trend seems to go toward lexical “conservatism” instead of “simplification.” The differences in writing and translation norms are also reflected in the different positioning of p-clauses of if-conditionals and where-conditionals across the three regions. In comparison to the UK and Hong Kong, the Mainland Chinese version is also less varied in the positioning of p-clauses. When discussing translation activities, Toury (2012, 77) proposed three types of competing norms operating at the same time, i.e., norms that dominate the center, remnants of previous mainstream norms and rudiments of what may eventually become part of a new set of norms. Such a framework can also be used to explain how the legal writing norms of UK have affected those of Hong Kong and Mainland China. Obviously, we could see that the UK has undergone major changes during the first phase (1948–1985) in which the use of legal language has become simplified, and such a trend continued in the second phase (1985–2006), though not as obviously. This new norm has exerted an impact on legal drafting in Hong Kong which has also recorded a change toward simplification over time. On the other hand, Mainland China seems not to be affected by such a trend and still adheres to a relatively conservative norm. From a translation perspective, such a linguistic feature can be related to normalization or conservatism, defined by Baker (1996) as the “tendency to conform to patterns and practices which are typical of the target language, even to the point of exaggerating them.” What Baker has not

addressed is that the patterns and practices of the target language are also evolving. To put it simply, target language norms are also changing and developing constantly. The Mainland Chinese version has apparently failed to embrace the newly emerged norms and instead still adhered to the old norms “even to the point of exaggerating them.”

7.2 *World Englishes and Translation Norms*

World Englishes refers to the wide-ranging approach to the study of the English language worldwide particularly associated with Braj B. Kachru and other scholars working in a “world Englishes paradigm” (Bolton 2009, 240). The concept of World Englishes and the Three Circles framework by Kachru (1985) can be used to shed light on the current research findings. Kachru’s Three Circles model offers a classificatory framework which categorizes countries by different roles English plays in these countries. In the three circles, the Inner Circle which comprises countries where English is used as the first language (e.g., UK, US) is norm-providing, meaning that they are the initiators and spreaders of English language norms. The Outer Circle which are mostly former UK colonies is norm-developing, which tends to adopt and even develop their own language norms. Lastly, the Expanding Circle in which English is used as a foreign language is norm-dependent and relies on the language norms set by the Inner Circle. Such a framework has proved its explanatory power in second language learning and teaching. As far as the current research is concerned, we can see that the UK as a country of the Inner Circle has been the initiator and provider of language norms. The new norms characterized by simplified language use and plain English in legal drafting have made an impact on the outer circle. On the other hand, Hong Kong, as a former UK colony in the Outer Circle, though still under the influence of the Inner Circle, has evolved its own norms. This is evidenced not only by the decline in the use of “archaic” conditional connectives such as “provided that” and “notwithstanding,” but also the increased use of “if” whose occurrences are even higher than its UK counterpart. As a country of the Expanding Circle, Mainland China relies on UK or even Hong Kong regarding language norms. As language norms are constantly evolving in the Inner and Outer Circles, there is a possibility that the newly emerged norms might not make a strong impact on the Expanding Circle, in this case Mainland China. Thus, we can see from the current research findings that Mainland China still retains the relatively conservative legal drafting norms which could be the “remnants of previous mainstream norms” (Touy 2012, 77) of the Inner Circle. As English is learned and taught as a foreign language in Mainland China, the spread of the new norms might take a longer time than that from Inner Circle to Outer Circle where English is used as a second language. This point is worth exploring in future studies.

7.3 Plain English Movement

It is generally acknowledged that the modern Plain English Movement advocating that legal documents ought to be plainer and more comprehensible to the average person began in the 1970s. The publication of *The Language of the Law* by David Mellinkoff (1963) is one of the major driving forces giving rise to the simplification trend in legal English. Such a movement, started from the Inner Circle, has also made an impact on countries and regions of the Outer Circle. In June 2012, the Law Drafting Division of the Department of Justice in Hong Kong published “Drafting Legislation in Hong Kong—A Guide to Styles and Practices,” which is a collection of guidelines for drafting Hong Kong laws. One chapter of this comprehensive guide (Chapter Nine) is especially devoted to the description and explanation of using plain language in legal drafting. “The goal of plain language drafting is to make the law as simple and clear as possible without taking away from precision or substance” (Law Drafting Division 2012, 88). Specifically, it also lists some guidelines for writing legislative text that is easily understandable. Among these, “using short words” is listed as one of the 11 recommendations. Obviously, the impact of the Plain English Movement has also affected the legal drafting norms in Hong Kong. The Plain English Movement is so immensely felt in Hong Kong that it has even gone to the extent of over-simplification compared with the UK. This trend is corroborated with our findings of the use of conditional connectives. This shows that Hong Kong, as a region of the Outer Circle, has evolved its own unique legal drafting norms. Mainland China, on the other hand, seems immune from such outside influences. Interestingly, a large number of textbooks on legal translation in China still devote a large proportion to explaining the use of archaisms in legal drafting. Comparatively, little is said about the new trend initiated by the Plain English Movement. This shows that the old norms, or remnants of the previous mainstream norms, of the Inner Circle might still be dominant in the Expanding Circle. The prescriptiveness of textbooks and language/translation teaching might be one of the factors contributing to the relatively conservative tendency in Mainland China’s legal translation. This explains why the new version of Mainland Chinese company law shows an apparent preference for “where” instead of “if.”

8 Summary and Conclusion

We adopted a corpus-based approach to study how conditional connectives are used in the company law of UK, Mainland China, and Hong Kong from both a synchronic and diachronic perspective. Based on the data analysis, we found that the conditional connectives are not consistently distributed across the three regions. The preference for using certain connectives shows that norms are not consistent in different regions. The study, using conditional connectives as an indicator, has addressed the interaction of writing and translation norms from both a synchronic and diachronic perspective.

To a large extent, the norm orientation of Three Circles model of World Englishes by Kachru (1985) can function as a valid framework to characterize the interaction and changes of different language norms of the Inner, Outer, and Expanding Circles. The findings from the current study also touched on issues such as normalization and conservatism in translated texts. Although some issues can be further explored in a more in-depth manner, the findings are clearly relevant in uncovering translation as a special type of communicative activity.

Undoubtedly, translation studies has become an increasingly interdisciplinary field of study. The use of corpus techniques has enabled us to identify language features which might otherwise remain hidden using manual analysis. We have shown in this study that the bottom-up data-driven corpus-based analysis is clearly more advantageous than the traditional approaches in uncovering how legal drafting and translating is a norm-governed activity. Future endeavors can look into other language features such as the use of modal verbs or archaisms in legal texts to examine the change and development of different writing and translation norms.

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Translation Quality in the Current Loosely Standardized Chinese Translation Market



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Abstract As the Chinese translation market develops rapidly in volume and categories of business, there is an increasing requirement for regulation in the market. Currently, the *status quo* of the Chinese translation market is that there are several standards issued by the national standardization committee and the Translators Association of China. However, the implementation of the standards still faces many challenges and the overall quality of translation is not consistent in the Chinese translation market. In this Chapter, the purpose is to discover solutions to the professional development of the Chinese translation market with a focus on the improvement and maintenance of the overall translation quality. In order to fulfill this purpose, the chapter is divided into four sections: the first two sections set the scene by introducing the current state of the translation market and standards in China. The third section illustrates the implementation of the standards and the challenges it is facing. In the last section, suggestions for the improvement and maintenance of translation quality in the Chinese translation market are proposed.

Keywords Chinese translation market · Translation quality assessment · Translation standards · Translation quality · Translation associations

1 The *Status Quo* of the Chinese Translation Market

1.1 Productivity

As the output value of global language services (including translation services) has maintained a good momentum of continuous growth in recent years, the Chinese share in the global market is increasing. According to the statistics provided by

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the Common Sense Advisory (DePalma 2018), with the total output value of 46.52 billion US dollar in 2018, it was estimated that the total output value of the global language reached about 50 billion US dollars for the first time in 2019. Against it, the output value of China's translation services is more than half of the world's total output value. According to Translators Association of China (2019), as of the end of June 2019, the total output value of language services was 37.22 billion CNY (around 5.70 billion USD), and the average operating income of a single enterprise was 3.823 million CNY (around 0.585 million USD).

As of the end of 2018, there were 9734 language service enterprises in operation, an increase of 82 compared with the end of June 2018. Afterward, the number leaped and by the end of 2019, there were 369935 enterprises operating in China with language services, an increase of nearly 50 thousand compared with the end of June 2018. The total market volume and the average income of an enterprise by the end of June 2019, was 1.29 billion CNY (193.5 million USD) and 100 thousand CNY (15 thousand USD) higher, respectively than those in 2017. According to the survey (Translators' Association of China 2019), before the impact of the COVID-19 epidemic in 2020, most (94.7%) of the surveyed enterprises were optimistic that their translation service income would increase in 2019.

1.2 Participants and Services

The distribution of translation enterprises is strongly associated with the prosperity of regions. More relatively developed regions have higher demands for translation services. As of the end of December 2018, there are translation service enterprises in all provinces and cities, and the geographical distribution is mainly concentrated in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangdong, Jiangsu, and Shandong, which are relatively prosperous areas in China. Among them, Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangdong are the most popular regions, in which 2231, 2072, and 1111 enterprises are, respectively, located, accounting for 55.62% of the national translation service enterprises. Note that the data released by the Translators' Association of China (TAC) regarding translation service enterprises, counted any enterprises that offer the services of translation in China regardless of whether their main business is translation or not (for example, language-related technology enterprises which offer translation software solutions but may not have translation as their major business, were also included). Therefore, the number of translation enterprises shown in the data was certainly larger than that of the actual number of translation-service-centered enterprises in China.

The services provided by the Chinese translation market are diverse and involved in many different areas. Among all the requests, Information Technology, Education and Training, and Official International Publicity were the three major areas, in which 63, 52, and 45.3% of translation services were engaged in China. Most of the enterprises surveyed (Translators' Association of China 2019) in the demand side of language services have chosen to outsource their language services. Among them, 49.3% of the respondents outsourced the large scale of translation tasks to

professional translation enterprises. With regard to internal documents and daily materials, they preferred employing their full-time in-house translators.

The translation directions of languages in the current Chinese translation market are mainly two: from Chinese into foreign languages and from foreign languages into Chinese translation. Translations between foreign languages occupied a relatively smaller proportion of services. According to the survey (Translators' Association of China 2019), the former two translation directions accounted for 41% and 43% of the market, respectively. By contrast, the proportion taken by translation between foreign languages was 16%. In recent years, the languages used in the countries which engage in The Belt and Road Initiative have grown with a great demand. Besides these, the other languages largely demanded in the current Chinese translation market are English, French, Japanese, German, and Russian. Regarding the demand for uncommonly used languages, Thai, Japanese, Vietnamese, Belarusian, Polish, and others ranked highly by the Chinese survey participants. The translation services in the Chinese translation market were generally well-received. According to the feedback from the surveyed clients, 84.7% of the respondents have expressed their satisfaction with the language services provided.

Reviewing the *status quo*, all the statistics and survey results reiterate a fact that the Chinese translation market, driven by the increasing demand for various services of translation, is developing tremendously and rapidly. Undoubtedly, the demand for translation services is fueling the expansion of the Chinese translation market and it is very likely to keep its momentum going in the following years. However, a market with large demand does not necessarily mean it is healthy and sustainable. If a market continuously offers products of ill quality, it will shrink eventually due to the loss of clients' trust, professional talents, and favorable business investment. The significance of assuring the quality of translation cannot be overstressed to the uprising Chinese translation market. Only by offering translation with assured quality can the increasing demand be fulfilled to a standard whereby the market is sustained and develops toward professionalism.

2 Translation Quality Assurance in the Chinese Translation Market

At present, the major approach to assure the national quality of translation is through the promotion of the standardization of Chinese translation industry. There are in total 19 standards and specifications that were issued by TAC and the National Standardization Committee, and by 2020, the number was estimated to increase into 21. Although these standards and specifications are not mandatorily applied to every practice of translation in China, their enactment demonstrates the intention of the design and the blueprint for the standardization of the industry.

2.1 *The Formation and Release of the Standards*

The drafting of the standards and specifications on translation services mainly involves the concerted efforts from the National Standardization Committee, certification authority, and translation enterprises. For instance, in December 2016 and November 2018, the TAC issued two standards, namely, *T/TAC 1-2016 Translation Services—Requirements for Translation Services* and *T/TAC 3-2018 Interpreting Services—General Requirements and Recommendation*. The drafting units of these standards include: The China National Institute of Standardization (CNIS), Certification and Accreditation Administration of the People's Republic of China (CNCA), Certification and Accreditation Association of the People's Republic of China (CCAA), and some member units of TAC. There are several reasons for the formation of the drafting team. Firstly, the CNIS and CNCA are the authoritative standards formulation and release agencies in China. With the involvement of the two agencies in the drafting, the content of the standards can be comprehensively understood by the certification issuers and the practice of the applicants will be carefully scrutinized in the certification process. As a result, the standards can exert their optimal effect in regulating the practice of the certified enterprises. Secondly, the participation of translation service enterprises in the formulation of standards, increases the practicality of the standards through absorbing and considering the opinions and demands of the users of the standards.

When the standards were finalized by the Standardization Administration of the People's Republic of China, China Quality Mark Certification Group (CQM), TAC, and involved translation service enterprises, the Standardization Administration of the People's Republic of China officially enacted the standards establishing the legitimacy of the two standards.

2.2 *The Content of the Standards*

The standards, taking the *T/TAC 1-2016 Translation Services—Requirements for Translation Services* and *T/TAC 3-2018 Translation services—Requirements for Interpreting services* for example (since they are the latest two Chinese standards regarding the general translation and interpreting services excluding the machine translation, localization, and translation project management), share a similar structure of content: the unification of terminologies and specifications on the procedures of services. Both standards are significant in exerting the binding effect on the quality assurance of translation services (including interpreting services). In the unification of terminologies, the terminologies are selected due to their relevance to the quality of the services. The major concepts about translation services are specified and the terminologies associated with the procedures of services are explained concisely and with focus. The intention of the unification is to clarify the scope and content of services so that the enterprises that aim to be certified, understand what service they should apply for certification and the preparation they should make to fulfill the certification requirement. Following the unification, it is the specifications of the services which develop on the terminologies and elaborate on the details of the procedures of services.

According to *T/TAC 1-2016*, translators' professional competence is classified into six dimensions, namely, the ability to translate the source language, the language processing ability by using the source language and the target language, the ability to research, obtain, and process information, and the competence in understanding and transferring cultures, employing technology, and translating in specific domains. All of the competences are significant for translation professionals to assure and improve the quality of their services. As for the last competence, domain competence, it enjoys an increasing importance for translation professionals. By definition, domain competence refers to the ability to understand the content generated in the source language and reproduce it with appropriate style and terms in the target language. In China, it is often said that some foreign language learners will lose their advantages in language when they work abroad (for instance, a Chinese English learner working in the UK would find his or her previous pride in English diminishing). Therefore, having professional knowledge in a specific domain (or domains) certainly improves the translators' competitiveness. Above all, it ensures the translators understand the domain-specific knowledge relatively more accurately and find the counterpart in another language relatively more quickly compared to those who do not have the competence.

In the other standard *T/TAC 3-2018*, there are also specifications on the interpreters' basic competence such as having high proficiency in at least two languages and the ability to interpret between two or multiple languages. In addition, interpreters should also have the cross-cultural communication ability, interpersonal communication ability, technical ability, information acquisition and analysis ability, domain competence and an ability for continuously learning and improving professional competence. Reading from the names, it seems that there are many shared requirements for interpreters and translators (in the *T/TAC 1-2016*) such as technical ability and ability to obtain and process languages. However, reading into details, there are different specifications in each of the requirements between interpreters and translators. For instance, *T/TAC 3-2018* places more emphasis on the communication skills of interpreters. For instance, it specifies that interpreters should be able to switch languages in interpreting freely and to interpret the speakers' ideas into the words that can easily be understood by the audience. It is rational because interpreting by its nature, is for bridging the communication gaps between two speakers. The content of culture-specific idioms, slangs, and customs in interpreting requires interpreters to have sophisticated skills and experience to maintain and support the communication. Comparatively, translators are usually offered more time and space to consider and polish the diction, style, and other aspects of translation.

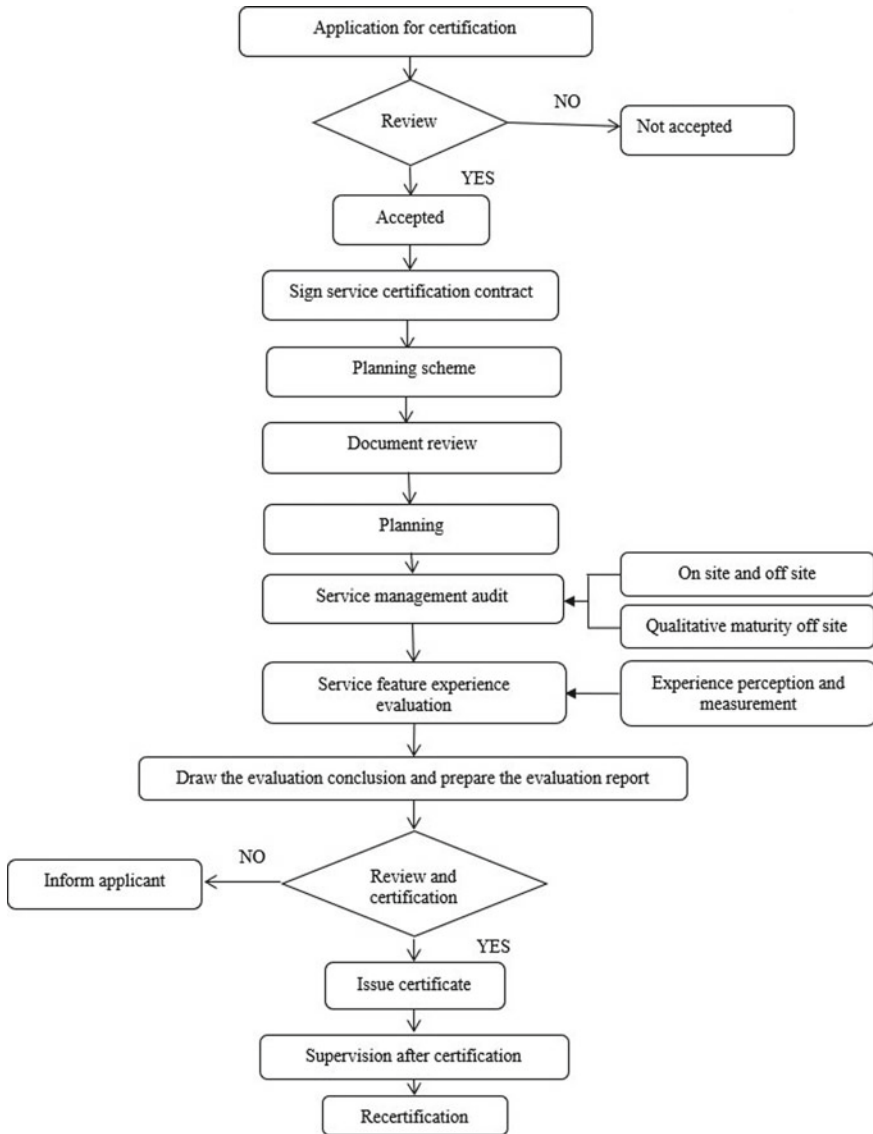
In addition, there are also other differences in content such as *T/TAC 3-2018* division of interpreting services into 11 communication categories including community, conference, law, health care, and medical interpreting. The requirements for qualifications are more specific to translators such as possessing an academic degree in translation, linguistics, or language-related discipline issued by a publicly recognized higher education institution or a translation-centered degree, a degree in other subjects with two years of full-time translation experience, or the equivalent of five-year full-time translation experience. In comparison, the qualification requirements for interpreters are relatively flexible in the *T/TAC 3-2018* that it believes according to different interpreting scenarios, interpreters only need to present the relevant qualifications to clients.

Moreover, the perspectives of maintaining the quality of services are divided. The standard for translation services intends to articulate the procedures of translation service as comprehensibly and concretely as possible. For instance, the main part of the translation service standard elaborates on the requirements of translation process, with a special emphasis on the process of self-inspection and proofreading such as its description of the process of computer-aided and machine-aided posttranslation editing, and monolingual review and bilingual review. In the standard for interpreting, it spares more effort in specifying how to provide quality-guaranteed services in different interpreting occasions such as the time duration for interpreting and breaks, the calculation of remuneration and the preparation activities before interpreting.

The merits of both of the standards are that they are considerable, comprehensive, and enjoy a relatively high degree of clarity. These are important features of a workable standard that they strengthen the practicality of standards so that certified enterprises can actually follow and apply the standards into their daily business to ensure their services are in line with the standard's quality. However, it is noted that the clarity of the specifications of the requirements for certification is not consistent throughout the whole standards. For instance, regarding the definition of the quality of translation, the *T/TAC 1-2016* does not provide a clear description. This can result from the preservation of a certain degree of subjectivity in translation and/or the intention to assure translation quality via translation procedures instead of a static concept of translation quality.

3 The Certification of Standards in the Chinese Translation Market

The procedures of the standard certification are that service provider enterprises will initially file an application to the CQM. After the application is accepted, the enterprise will sign a contract with the CQM agreeing terms regarding the conduction of the certification by CQM. Before the certification actually starts, the CQM will draw up a plan for certification and scrutinize all submitted materials by the applicant enterprises. When all the materials are accepted, the certification plan will be finalized and implemented marking the start of the service review. An assessment of the service management will be initially conducted, which includes assessing the services on-site and off-site provided by the applicants, and the quality and maturity of the services. Once the applicants pass the assessment, a testing of the service experience will be applied. During this step, the CQM will launch and assign a translation mock task to the applicants and require it to be completed within a designated time-frame and to certain specifications. The assessors at the CQM will make a verdict based on their experience of the service and the measurement of the quality of the translation product. After the review, a decision on the result of the certification will be reached and generated in a form of statement report. If the applicants succeed in the assessment and review, they will be awarded the certificate of the standards. Otherwise, they will be informed of the failure and have to reinitiate the application in the future. Once certified, the enterprises will be overseen by the CQM and a recertification will need to be placed when the certification expires. The whole procedure can be shown in the flowchart.



Source: the original chart is in Chinese and can be retrieved from <http://www.tac-online.org.cn/index.php?m=content&c=index&a=show&catid=396&id=3619>

There are several highlights in the process of procedures that need to be mentioned: the certification is strictly and carefully conducted for assessing the competence of the applicants. Apart from the significant amount of application fees (70 thousand to 80 thousand Chinese CNY, equivalent to 10 thousand to 12 thousand USD), the requirements for the qualifications of the applicant and the required materials for

submission are targeted to select the applicants who authentically have the awareness and competence to offer service in standard quality. For instance, it requires applicants to obtain the latest and valid GB/T 19001 standard Quality Management System Certification and an assessment report of its performance during a certain period (it can be exempted if the applicant holds a certificate issued by the CQM). Besides this, a flow chart on the existing service procedures, blueprints of the service offered, pricing and details on the blueprint should also be submitted for assessment by the CQM. Another highlight is the intent to help the certificate-holders continuously maintain the standard quality of the service. The certified enterprises will be supervised after being awarded the certificate, and their recertification will be conducted annually by the certificate issuer, requiring lower fees relative to the initial certification and simpler recertification procedures.

In 2018, the TAC and CQM officially launched the certification of *T/TAC 1-2016*. During the TAC annual meeting in 2018, there was a ceremony hosted for awarding the certificate plate to the first batch of certified enterprises, namely, Global Tone Communication Technology Co., Ltd. (GTCOM), Transn Technology Co., Ltd. (Transn) and Sichuan Language Bridge Group (Lan-Bridge). These companies are internationally and nationally renowned established language service enterprises based in China. For instance, the GTCOM is a global leading technology-based enterprise, affiliated to China International Translation and Publishing Group, and has offered language solutions since the early period of the establishment of the People's Republic of China. Transn is a listed language service enterprise which has over 800 employees and 30000 freelance translators globally. Lan-Bridge is also a large-scale enterprise in the industry, which was founded in Chengdu (China) in 2000, based in London and China and has translation and interpreting as their major services. It is also the first enterprise certified with the ISO9001:2000 Quality Management Certificate in China. With an addition of three more, there are six Chinese enterprises in total that have applied for and been awarded certification according to *T/TAC 1-2016*. Apart from the GTCOM and Transn, the other four enterprises are enterprises with limited liability. All of them have over 8 million CNY (1.17 million USD) of registered capital and the highest is Transn with 150 million CNY (22 million USD). The employee headcount ranges from 50 to over 745 (Transn has the largest number of employees).

The current status of the implementation of the Chinese translation service standard is that the prevalence of the standard is limited to a specific small group of enterprises which usually enjoy abundant financial and human resources in the translation market. This results from the fact that the development and launch of the standard for translation services (currently, the certification for interpreting service is not available) is recent and the publicity of the standard is inadequate. Therefore, many enterprises are in the process of understanding and becoming familiar with the standard. More likely, they are observing the impact of the certification and calculating the cost and benefit of application. In addition, as mentioned above, the qualifications and requirements for the certification are relatively demanding. The study preserves an opinion on how many Chinese enterprises can actually fulfill the requirements and

bear the costs of being certified and recertified given the fact that the quality of translation in China is relatively consistent and the majority of the service providers are small-sized enterprises. Moreover, translation clients' recognition and receptance of the standard certification exert a significant influence on the service providers' decision on certification. A relatively popular set of standards for quality management in the Chinese translation market have been the series of ISO 9100 standards. It will take some time for the market to understand and accept the locally enacted Chinese translation service standard compared to the globally recognized ISO 9100 standards. Moreover, the number of the Chinese standards related translation services is relatively limited and so is that of the certified enterprises. Whether a service provider with certification can certainly guarantee a better service compared to those without is a question to service requesters. The reliability and credibility of the certification waits for more samples and cases to be verified and established. Besides this and the high demands, costs and strict procedures mentioned before preventing some potentially qualified enterprises from application, the certification procedures involve much subjective judgment by the assessor in the certification agency especially in assessing the experience of translation services, which sets a demand for assessors to have a sophisticated understanding of translation professionalism. If the assessors know everything about the certification requirements and little about professional translation service, the verdict cannot be impartial and reliable.

4 Suggestions on Improving the Quality of Translation Services in the Chinese Market

4.1 Increasing Publicity of Standards and Establishing a Communication Channel for Clients of Translation Services

During the annual meeting in 2019, TAC seized the opportunity for publicizing its standards by issuing the *T/TAC 1-2016* and *T/TAC 3-2018* for translation and interpreting services, and announcing the first batch of three certified enterprises. Since then, increasingly more enterprises have applied for the certification, and the number of enterprises that were rewarded with the certification has increased from three to six. However, during the period after the increase, there was a noticeable drop in the growth of the number of applications. Thus, the publicity of the standards has to be continuous and the promotion approaches have to be multiple to combat this decrease.

More education on the standards need to be given to the translation enterprises and translation service customers. It is very important for enterprises to realize the advantages of standardizing their services and being certified with standards. Meanwhile, it is very important to strengthen the integration with international translation service standards, so as to obtain the recognition of increasing certification and standards issuing units.

At the same time, the credibility and binding effect of the standards should be strengthened. It is expected that clients can rely on the certification to purchase the service they demand, and for standard certifications to become a significant parameter for differentiating and assessing service providers' qualifications during service comparisons and competitions. More standards are expected to be issued and should complement those which already exist for testing whether services are qualified. Above all, establishing a communication channel between the standard creators and clients is urgent and in need. Currently, there is a lack of clients' voices in the drafting of the standards. By adding their voice or having feedback from clients during the drafting process, the applicability of standards will be enhanced to a higher level. Continuously taking them into account, the standard will be improved and gain increasing feasibility and recognition in professional practice.

4.2 Strengthening Inspection and Recertification with a Focus on the Projects with the Smallest Cost and Profit

After obtaining the standard certification, the translation service enterprises will have gained recognition of the quality of their service by authoritative entities. However, this cannot guarantee the quality of their services to be issue-free. Increasingly overseeing and inspecting the certified enterprises in their service practice is an essential responsibility for the certificate issuers after certification. This can resemble the periodic vehicle safety inspection in that if the service provider cannot maintain the quality of their service, their certificate plate will be withdrawn and they will be ruled out from the list of certified enterprises.

The content of the inspections and recertification should primarily cover the aspects of the initial certification of the standard, and in addition, a close review of the service projects with the smallest cost and profit. At present, the Chinese translation market is emerging and in its early stages of development. Price competitions are the scenarios that commonly occur when clients are seeking and inquiring about translation services. The certification units should pay special attention to the situation where price competitions intrude in the bidding of services and the certified enterprise reduces its pricing by lowering the cost (such as can be done by reducing human and technology resources). The services projects with the lowered cost and profit need to be examined as to whether the quality of the services was maintained at the standard's quality. With regard to projects with relatively higher and reasonable cost and profit, they can be checked by samples. The result of the inspection and recertification should be released publicly and the certification list should be updated regularly. To sum up, the certification unit needs to closely follow the development of the market and understand the headachy issues that hinder the quality of services. By strengthening inspection and recertification, the goal is to standardize the practice of enterprises in the long term.

4.3 *Improving the Performance of Machine Translation and Translation Technology*

At present, in the Chinese translation market, the opinions concerning the application of technology and/or machine translation are relatively positive. According to the *2019 China Translation Industry Report (Translators' Association of China 2019)*, 26.93% of the full-time employees in the language service industry were engaged in the Research and Development of translation technology. Among the surveyed enterprises, the average proportion of personnel responsible for the R&D of translation technology in medium-sized enterprises is the highest (30.96%). The majority of the surveyed translators (67%) agreed that the use of translation technology could improve the translation quality, and 80% of freelance translators agree that the use of translation technology can reduce the cost of translation.

However, with regard to whether and how much the technology can help translators, professionals are relatively skeptical. 58% of the translators in the survey (*Translators Association of China 2019*) believed that the use of translation technology could improve translation skills, while 42% of the freelance translators held the opposite opinions, which was in contrast with their positive attitude toward the benefit of technology to translation quality and cost control. Among the responses to other questions, it is found that the lower the working years, the higher the recognition of “positive future of machine translation”.

As can be seen from survey result, the Chinese language service enterprises have paid significant attention to develop translation technologies and/or machine translation for their service business. It is certain that machine translation and/or technology and computer-aided translation (CAT) has its unique advantages such as the efficiency of processing a large amount of translation tasks within a limited time, and its useful functions such as grammar checking and the extraction from translation memory which is time-saving and can avoid many objective mistakes (such as inconsistency in figures, grammars, and terminology). However, the contradiction is that the technology users, i.e. translators, find many problems in adopting the technology and/or machine translation in their practical work. With the accumulation of professional experience, they increasingly do not agree with the feasibility of machine translation and technology.

It is suggested that the translation produced by machine translation or with the assistance of technology should go through careful manual proofreading before delivery so as to ensure the quality of translation. At the same time, as the advantages of translation machine and technology are prominent, the issues with the usage and experience have to be solved and their performance has to be enhanced to enlarge its functions and benefits. In order to achieve these, more translation enterprises should be encouraged and supported to undertake in-depth R&D on improving translation technology. Machine translation error correction requires large-scale cooperation of the industry to share their working corpus and to work collectively on the improvement of error correction technology. It should be clarified that the promotion of translation technology is not to neglect the fact that translation requires high-intensity

and innovative mental capacity, part of which cannot be replaced by machines and technology. The increasingly favorable assistance of translation technologies and machine translation can only bring extra time and energy for translators to work in areas of expertise.

4.4 Learning and Cooperating with the International Translation Community

Compared to the translation market in China, the translation markets in Western countries such as the United Kingdom, United States, Canada, and Australia have a longer history of development as well as a wealth of experience and practice in assuring translation quality in their respective market regions. Many of the practices adopted by the international markets in the quality assurance of translation can shed some light on how the Chinese translation market can move forward. For instance, in the international translation market, there are several well-received standards which aim to help assure the translation quality in the realistic context of the professional translation market. They include, but are not limited to:

1. *ISO 17100-2015 Translation services—Requirements for translation services* (published by the International Organization for Standardization; adopted as a European standard and previously, it was EN 15038 published in 2006; the latest one is ISO 17100:2015/Amd.1:2017);
2. *ASTM F2575-2014 Standard Guide for Quality Assurance in Translation* (by American Society for Testing and Materials International);
3. *CAN CGSB131.10-2017 National Standard of Canada Translation Services* (previously it was CAN CGSB131.10-2008; published by Canadian General Standards Board).

The three standards mentioned above have their respective unique features and different emphasis on application. For instance, the *ISO 17100-2015* and *CAN CGSB131.10-2017* tend to have more binding influence on the certified enterprise by having more content on mandatory practices. By contrast, the *ASTM F2575-2014* elaborates on each of the possible procedures trying to be as comprehensive as possible and leaves the choice to the user of the standard. The commonality between them is their approach to assure the quality of translation services through assuring the quality of procedures, which resembles the practice of the Chinese standard in translation services. In drafting standards, standards like these can become the reference for the development of the Chinese translation standard.

As for accreditation of standards, international associations such as NAATI (National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters), ATA (American Translators Association), and AILIA (Language Industry Association) have specified their accreditation service on their official website. NAATI for example, founded as a non-profit Australian national accreditation authority in 1977, organizes and provides certification tests including different levels of tests on translation and

interpreting competence. On its official website, each certification's requirements, procedures, and content are explained with clarity as well as being easy to access. Similar to the certification conducted by the CQM, NAATI has rigid qualification requirements for the certification applicants which signifies, and increases, the value and credibility of the certification in the market. Further, the most notable aspect of NAATI is the issue of translator stamps and the permission to use the trademark. By so doing, NAATI provides evidence to its certification holders to demonstrate their competence and credibility during the process of translator selection. Similar to NAATI's purpose of work, two other associations have also been strict and specific on its certification requirements: the ATA has a low pass rate (only 20%) of the certification tests in order to maintain the high standard of quality of professional translation. AILIA reassess the certified service providers through the Orion Assessment Services every two years for checking their maintenance of certified standard. These can all become examples for China to study and draw from on its path to standardize translation services in the market.

In addition, translation quality is not an issue faced by China alone. Instead, it is faced by the global translation market. The international translation community should strengthen collective cooperation to tackle this challenge and any others they may face. International organizations such as the International Federation of Translators (FIT) should play a greater role in uniting multinational forces. For example, if there is a committee on Standardization in FIT, the committee can collect and study the translation quality assessments and assurance procedures conducted in different countries and keep the public informed about the advantages and disadvantages of the practices. Seminars and discussions on the relevant issues shared in the international translation community can be organized regularly to help the exchange of information and promote the overall improvement of the quality of services internationally. It is also necessary to strengthen the technical cooperation between markets such as the sharing of national language databases. For example, when COVID-19 broke out in China and all countries were in need of the latest multilingual medical information on the epidemic, FIT could have been in a position to set up a multilingual corpus for sharing with the international translation community. When examining the translation quality of projects relevant to COVID-19, the corpus could have been used as an authoritative reference to avoid inconsistency in terminology.

China is and will still be on the path of standardizing its translation services and assuring the translation quality. TAC and the National Standards Committee are making concerted efforts to improve the current state of Chinese translation services. It is challenging work and cannot be completed by any single entity or nation's efforts alone. Hopefully, this chapter can shed some light on the process and serve as a reference for readers who are able to make further contributions to the industry.

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Post-editing Neural Machine Translation Versus Human Translation for Chinese Essays: A Pilot Study



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Abstract With the rise of neural machine translation (NMT) and encouragement of previous research, a pilot study has been conducted to compare post-editing (PE) Google neural machine translation (GNMT) to human translation (HT) with *Selected Modern Chinese Essays: Annotated Bilingual Edition, Volume 1*. To this end, six student translators were invited to take part in a voluntary experiment. They were in M.A. Chinese-English translation postgraduate program with three of them having up to two years' professional translation experience. They were asked to translate two Chinese essays in two workflows: post-editing Google neural machine translation and translating from scratch, respectively. The elapsed translating time was recorded by a stopwatch application and they were asked to finish the pre- and post-experiment questionnaires online via Survey Monkey. Following that, they were invited to have a one-to-one personal interview on detailed translation problems they encountered during the experiment and some specific questions prepared in advance to take a step further in the perceptions toward post-editing GNMT and SDL Trados Studio 2019. After the experiment, the translation time taken was analyzed; the qualities of the translations were compared by me; the translation performance was calculated by Pythagorean theorem; the student translators' perceptions in questionnaires and debriefing sessions were gathered and illustrated in tables. Results indicate that PE was faster than translation from scratch for all participants but one. The post-edited translations were found to be of inferior quality compared to human translations produced from scratch, but this should modulate the productivity benefits of PE quite considerably. In addition, most participants showed positive attitudes toward post-editing GNMT of literature, while some of them complained with examples

Disclaimer: I declare that the work is my own work except where indicated by specific reference in the text. Work done in collaboration with, or with the assistance of others, is indicated as such. I have identified all material in this paper which is not my own work through appropriate referencing and acknowledgement. Where I have quoted or otherwise incorporated material which is the work of others, I have included the source in the references. Any views expressed in the paper, other than referenced material, are those of the author. The material has never been published before.

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that segments of SDL Trados Studio may not assist with literary machine translation post-editing (MTPE) and mistranslations in GNMT are irritating.

Keywords Neural machine translation · Post-editing · Literary machine translation · Translation productivity · Translation quality · Translation performance · Human factors in machine translation

1 Introduction

Post-editing (PE) is “the task of editing, modifying and/or correcting pre-translated text that has been processed by a machine translation (MT) system from a source language into a target language” (Allen 2003, 297). Toral et al. (2018) defined PE as “a sequential pipeline in which the source document is first translated with MT, and subsequently, a translator edits the MT translation (e.g., fixing errors) to produce the final translation.” For decades, MT has been increasingly widely used in general and domain-specific areas for research, commercial, and teaching purposes (Vieira et al. 2019; Moratto 2010, 2011, 2020). Besacier and Schwartz (2015) conducted the research on statistical machine translation (SMT) with a short story from English to French by a non-professional translator and found that MT was deemed a useful low-cost alternative for literary works at the expense of lower translation quality. Literary texts are considered to be the greatest challenge for MT and over the past two decades, there has been no prospect of machines being useful in (assisting with) the translation of this type of content (Toral and Way 2018, 1–2). However, recently, neural machine translation (NMT) has emerged as a new paradigm in MT, and the translations produced by NMT are more fluent, but possibly also less accurate (Castilho et al. 2017, 116).

The experiment was conducted due to the rise of Google neural machine translation (GNMT) and research on MT targeting literature, to investigate the translating productivity, translation quality, translation performance, and participants’ perceptions in post-editing GNMT and human translation conditions. Six M.A. students in Chinese-English translation postgraduate program were invited to participate in the experiment and they were asked to translate two Chinese essays in two different workflows: post-editing GNMT and human translation (HT) to compare the translating speed. Then, their perceptions of GNMT, the computer-aided translation (CAT) tools they used, SDL Trados Studio 2019 and MT targeting the Chinese literature were assessed from questionnaires and debriefing sessions. Lastly, the overall translation performance was illustrated.

1.1 Overall Research Purposes

The experiment contains four research questions (RQs):

- RQ 1 Can post-editing an MT output (using GNMT) improve the translation productivity compared to translation from scratch?
- RQ 2 What is the quality of the translations produced by post-editing GNMT and HT?
- RQ 3 What are the connections between translation performance and translation conditions?
- RQ 4 What are the student translators' perceptions of GNMT and SDL Trados Studio 2019?

1.2 Structure of the Chapter

The remainder is structured as follows:

Section 2 provides a review of literature in PEMT (post-editing machine translation), NMT (neural machine translation), literary MT, and the contributions of the experiment.

Section 3 contains a brief introduction of the experiment materials, including the source texts (STs), GNMT, and SDL Trados Studio 2019. Further, it introduces the participants' profiles, the experiment set-up, and an evaluation of the quality of the methods of the translation.

Section 4 discusses the results of the experiment. The aim is to answer the RQs presented in the Introduction. It comprises an illustration on translation productivity, the quality evaluation of the translations, the translation performance, and an analysis of the pre and post questionnaires and debriefing sessions.

Section 5 concludes the paper by providing final remarks on the comparison between PEMT and HT in productivity, a discussion of the translation quality and translation performance, and a summary of student translators' perceptions of the experiment. Finally, the experiment's limitation and future focus are presented.

2 Literature Review

This section mainly summarizes the status quo of PEMT, especially focusing on NMT and literary MT.

2.1 Introduction to the State of the Art in PE

Vieira et al. (2019) introduced PE which covers technologies, institutional, commercial, and educational contexts, different text genres and languages that are still relatively under-researched in relation to PE, including Welsh, Chinese, and Japanese. They looked at the state of art in MT, the translation industry at present, and a new translation tool, Lilt¹, which gives translators more freedom in translating. They believe the use of MT in HT is increasingly pervasive. Finally, they explicitly identified the important contributions to this issue, which includes four themes: the post-editing process, reception of post-edited products, attitudes, perceptions and competence, training and education.

2.2 NMT

2.2.1 The Development of NMT

In 2018, NMT replaces RBMT (rule-based machine translation) and SMT (statistical machine translation) and is rapidly becoming the most dominant MT paradigm (Melby 2019, 487). Based on Weaver (1949b)'s memorandum, Melby (2019) concluded that NMT was emerged by two seeds: co-text and neural nets and four developments: machine-processable text, affordable computing power, machine learning, and demand for translation (Melby 2019, 499). Compared with the previous MT paradigm, NMT has its advantage for more fluent translation output (Castilho et al. 2017). Moorkens et al. (2018, 244) found there are two most prevalent error types that NMT has: mistranslation and omissions.

2.2.2 Examples of Post-editing NMT

Two representative experiments are mentioned here for their similar language systems and the employment of the NMT post-editing.

The first one is Jia et al. (2019). They explored the PE process when working within the newly introduced NMT paradigm. They chose English domain-specific and general language texts to compare translation productivity, quality, and perceptions between GNMT and from scratch translations through keystroke logging, screen recording, questionnaires, retrospective protocols, and target-text quality evaluations. They found, first of all, post-editing GNMT was faster than from-scratch translation only in domain-specific texts while it would significantly reduce the participants' cognitive effort for both text types. Secondly, post-editing GNMT generated the equivalent fluency and accuracy as those generated by from-scratch translations. Thirdly, the student translators generally showed a positive attitude toward PE, but

¹<https://lilt.com/kb/memory/mt>

they also showed the awareness of various challenges in PE due to their previous translation training experience, lack of PE experience, and the ambiguous wording of the PE guidelines.

The other one is in the English to Japanese language pair. Yamada (2019) used the iterations to investigate the improvement of GNMT compared to Google SMT using the same source text (ST). The study yielded the following observations: students' GNMT + PE was better than SMT + PE in terms of the final product, but NMT + PE did not empower college students to reduce cognitive effort or error correction rate; poorer error correction in the NMT + PE condition was related to similarity in error distribution between GNMT and humans, which means GNMT produces human-like errors; thirdly, students needed specialized training for PE in order to recognize the errors that MT made. The author also proposed the use of multiple ST to improve the generalizability of the results.

2.3 *Literary MT*

2.3.1 **The Consistent Research of Toral, Way, and Wieling with MT of Literature**

On MT of literary texts, Toral, Way, and Wieling conducted a series of experiments on MT targeting literature.

They firstly explored MT of literary texts with a less related language pair (French-English) and another closely related language pair (Italian-English). The results show that the MT output for Italian seems like it can be more straightforwardly post-edited. They also surveyed the prospect for the future work: one direction was to improve the performance of MT for literary texts, the other was to determine the suitable literary MT-assisted translation workflows (Toral and Way 2015).

In 2018, Toral and Way conducted an experiment to assess the quality of NMT and phrase-based statistical machine translation (PBMT) for the less-related language pair English-Catalan. They trained NMT and PBMT on a large amount of literary text (over 100 million words) and evaluated them on a set of twelve widely known novels spanning from the 1920s to the present day.

Following that, Toral et al. (2018) conducted an experiment to measure the temporal, technical, and cognitive effort in translating a novel from English to Catalan. They chose one chapter of *Warbreaker*, which is a popular fantasy novel in English and divided it into 33 translation jobs (10 consecutive sentences each job) and assigned them to six professional translators (every translator had the same workflow). They compared the translating speed in three working conditions—HT, post-editing PBMT, and NMT, respectively—by recording the keystrokes, the time taken to translate each sentence, and the number of pauses and their duration. Through comparing the measurements with mixed-effects models, they found post-editing PBMT increased 18% compared to HT, and NMT rose by 36% compared to HT in productivity. Regarding cognitive effort, PE resulted in 29% and 42% less effort with

PBMT and NMT, respectively. These findings demonstrated convincingly that post-editing MT output sped up translations compared to HT. Moreover, it indicated that translation output by NMT engines was better than those from PBMT. Further, they found the gain from PBMT remains consistent irrespective of the length of the input sentence, while it decreased with long sentences with NMT. Finally, they looked forward to the next phase of this work. They focus on the translator's perceptions of the output from MT systems by means of pre- and post-experiment questionnaires and debriefing sessions and compare these perceptions to the results and conclusions of the current study. Furthermore, they assess the quality of the resulting post-edited translations in terms of adequacy, fluency, and preserving the reading experience of the ST.

2.3.2 MT of Literature in Chinese-English Language Pair

MT of literature has also been researched in a Chinese-English pairing for aspects of “referential cohesion,” “MT of Chinese couplets,” “MT of Chinese poems.”

Voigt and Jurafsky (2012) examined how referential cohesion was expressed in Chinese literary and news texts. They first showed in a corpus study on English that literary texts use more dense reference chains to express greater referential cohesion than news. Then, they compared the referential cohesion of MT versus HT in Chinese literature. They chose Lu Xun's essays for his prominence as the “father of modern Chinese literature” and vernacular style. They emphasized three aspects in MT and HT: zero anaphora, inconsistent reference, and *de* (的) drops. They found that Google translations perform less well at capturing literary cohesion than human translators.

Jiang and Zhou (2008) conducted an experiment to investigate the unique cultural heritage of China—Chinese couplets (*duìlián* 对联). One person challenges the other person with a sentence (first sentence). The other person then replies with a sentence (second sentence) equal in length and word segmentation. The two sentences need to match each other by obeying certain constraints on semantic, syntactic, and lexical relatedness. They used a comprehensive evaluation method with both human judgments and Bilingual Evaluation Understudy (BLEU) scores to demonstrate this approach was highly successful.

He et al. (2012) used a statistical approach to generate Chinese classical poetry and used an original way to automatically evaluate poems. They focused on Chinese classical poetry, which is an important part of cultural heritage with over 2,000 years of history. Chinese poetry contains many genres and the representatives are quatrain (绝句) and *lǜshī* (律诗). A quatrain is a poem consisting of four lines and a *lǜshī* is a poem of eight lines. The system accepts a set of keywords representing the writing intent from a writer and generates sentences one by one to form a completed poem. They applied SMT to generate new sentences, given the sentences generated previously. For each line of sentences a specific model specially devised for that line is used, as opposed to using a single model for all sentences. In addition, they demonstrate the effectiveness of the BLUE metric for evaluating the generated poetry.

They also looked at the most widely known poem generation program—the Daoxiang poem generator, one of several popular web sites providing a poem generation service, which is a system only needing the input of a title that selects a rhyming template and can finally form the poem.

2.4 *The Contributions of the Experiment*

There are relatively rare studies concerning translation productivity in post-editing NMT relative to translation from scratch of literature. Toral et al. (2018), the forerunner in this area, investigated the productivity of a novel under HT, post-editing SMT, and post-editing NMT conditions from English to Catalan. They found post-editing SMT and NMT led to 18% and 36% increase respectively compared to from scratch translation. This finding encourages more research to investigate the productivity gain in the literary PEMT.

There are generally two methods employed to evaluate MT—human-based linguistic evaluation and machine-based linguistic evaluation (Doherty 2019, 397). Human evaluation can be extensive but expensive, time-consuming and the evaluators cannot be reused (Papineni et al. 2002, 311). Therefore, automatic evaluation metrics (AEMs) prevails in evaluating MT for its quick, inexpensive, language-independent, frequent merits, and correlates highly with human evaluation (Papineni et al. 2002, 311; Doherty 2019, 399).

However, in literary PEMT, Bilingual Evaluation Understudy (BLEU), the automatic evaluating method, may give way to reader-centered evaluation approaches if the products' dissemination is taken on board (Vieira 2019, 383). This is because for the different translation versions, the overlapping area relative to the reference translations may differ significantly but still can be acceptable for the target readers (ibid.).

Thus, a standardized guideline seems to be of crucial importance for evaluating literary PE tasks. TAUS adequacy and fluency guideline (2013b) and TAUS MTPE guidelines for “Human Translation Quality” (Massardo et al. 2016) have detailed regulations to define a fidelity of PEMT. However, when it comes to evaluating creative and stylistically various novels or narrations, the guidelines above seem to be insufficient due to the evaluation of the elegance and aesthetics of literature are not included in that respect. Therefore, traditional translation theories and strategies and linguistics may be taken into consideration as well. For example, Nida (1964) used the term “dynamic equivalence” to replicate the source texts' effect on its readers (Voigt and Jurafsky 2012, 18). De Beaugrande and Dressler (1981) put forward the “seven standards of textuality” and Hatim and Mason (1997) brought them into translation context to evaluate the “expectation-fulfilling” or “expectation-defying” of a target text (ibid.). Moreover, on the basis of the referential cohesion theory of Halliday and Hasan (2014), Voigt and Jurafsky investigated the narrations and the corresponding translations of Lu Xun, one of the most famous writers in modern Chinese society. They created a corpus of 12 short stories for comparison with 12 recent long-form

news stories. Through comparing density (mentions per clusters), they found literary texts use more dense reference chains as a way of creating a higher level of cohesion. For the particular Chinese source texts—Lu Xun’s narrations, the MT delivered not so well than HT on zero anaphora, inconsistent reference and *de* (的) drops.

Based on the above literature review, it can be found that there are rare studies as regards PEMT from Chinese to English. In addition, although there have been experiments on the MT of referential coherence of Chinese literature, Chinese couplets, and Chinese poetry, research on the quality and translation perceptions of Chinese modern essays has not been sufficiently addressed. Therefore, the present experiment sets out to explore post-editing GNMT of Chinese modern essays.

3 Experiment

3.1 Participant Profiles

The data collection was carried out from 15/07/2019 to 24/07/2019. Six postgraduate students in Chinese-English Translation (M.A.) at the University of Bristol participated in this study. They all specialized in translation and were all enrolled on a one-year taught master’s course. All participants were females, aged 22–26 years. They all had the same language background with Chinese as their first language and English as their second language and a very similar level of English Language proficiency. Four of them had passed TEM 8², and two had passed CET 6³. In addition, five students had 7.0 overall effective IELTS score and one had a 7.5 overall effective IELTS score. One student had a two-year professional translation experience, one had a one-year professional translation experience, and one had a two-month professional translation experience. They had all enrolled in a CAT postgraduate course. In addition, all of them had participated in a similar MT targeting literature experiment one month before this experiment was conducted. The only difference was the previous experiment involved translating from English to Chinese, and this experiment was from Chinese to English.

²TEM 8 is a national English test for English majors in China, and it is the highest band for English major students in the phase of undergraduate, which require a candidate to master approximately 13,000 words.

³CET 6 is a national English test for non-English majors in China, and it is the highest band for non-English major students in the phase of undergraduate, which require a candidate to master approximately 6,000 words.

3.2 *Materials*

In order to address the RQs, two pieces of Chinese literature were selected. The titles of Text A and Text B are “Peanuts” and “Transient Days.” They were chosen from the *Selected Modern Chinese Essays: Annotated Bilingual Edition, Volume 1* because it is relatively authoritative in terms of references for English majors in Chinese postgraduate exams and the publisher is Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, which is also a high-profile press. Participants could use online dictionaries to obtain direct Chinese translations during the experiment. Choosing this book has its merits and drawbacks. Besides the advantages above, each essay has its corresponding sample translation, which can provide references when evaluating the quality. Conversely, because the essay already has sample translations, the participants had to acknowledge that they were allowed to search everything online during the experiment except the sample translations because the sample translations can be accessed directly from Google or Baidu search engines. Further, if they had consulted the sample translations or seen them before, the experiment would have been invalid.

3.3 *CAT Tool and GNMT*

The experiment was conducted in SDL Trados Studio 2019 using its default settings. This is a CAT tool that supports both translating from scratch and PE. A screenshot of the tool, as used in the experiment, is shown in Fig. 1.

The MT for post-editing was provided by GNMT. It was accessed by “Google Cloud Translation API,” which can be obtained from the Cloud Translation API Service.

3.4 *Experimental Procedures*

3.4.1 *Pre-experimental Period*

Before conducting the experiment, Participant Information Sheet (PIS) was distributed to the participants on A4 paper. They could ask any questions relating to the experiment while reading. After that, each participant signed the “Consent Form.” Both PIS and the Consent Form were approved by the Research Governance and Ethics Officer of the University of Bristol. Then, they were asked to fill in the “pre-task” investigation via “Survey Monkey” regarding personal information.

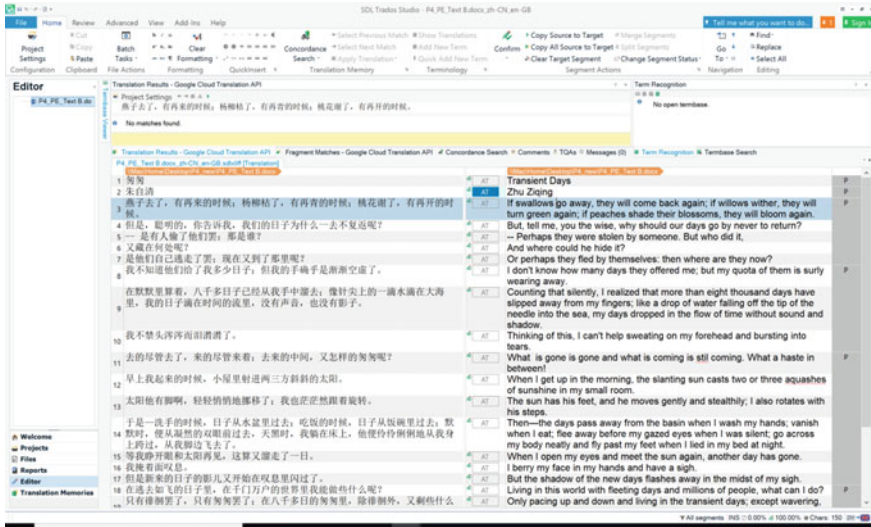


Fig. 1 Screenshot from the translation environment showing the second task of Participant 4, in which the translator is to post-edit the translation produced by the GNMT system in Text B

3.4.2 Experimental Period

During the experiment, a stopwatch application on my phone was used to record elapsed time during post-editing GNMT and HT. The experiment order was randomized with the following sequences:

- Participant 1: Text A-PE → Text B-HT
- Participant 2: Text A-HT → Text B-PE
- Participant 3: Text B-PE → Text A-HT
- Participant 4: Text A-HT → Text B-PE
- Participant 5: Text A-PE → Text B-HT
- Participant 6: Text B-HT → Text A-PE

3.4.3 Post-experimental Period

There were twelve translations carried out: six from scratch translations, and six post-editing GNMT, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 The translations were carried out

Translation methods	Text A	Text B
HT	P2 P3 P4	P1 P5 P6
PE	P1 P5 P6	P2 P3 P4

(“P” stands for “Participant”)

The elapsed time has been written down for each translator. Meanwhile, participants were asked to fill in the post-task survey regarding the experiences and perceptions of the experiment.

3.4.4 Debriefing Sessions

After participants had finished the post-experiment questionnaire, they were invited to have a one-to-one communication in Chinese. They were welcome to say anything they wanted; and important aspects from my perspective were written down in a notebook. After the experiment, I translated the notes and sorted them based on different subjects.

3.5 *Evaluation Methods of Translation Quality*

In order to mitigate the downsides of the evaluation process, anonymizing the texts for assessment is necessary.

Firstly, all the titles of Text A and Text B were deleted to reduce the possibility of recognizing the texts. After each participant finished their translation tasks in SDL Trados Studio 2019, I would export their translations and save them in my OneDrive account of the University of Bristol. After that, I would open the translations in Word to check translations were saved and all the participants had finished translating from the title to the last sentence. Therefore, I may recognize some of the translations. To avoid the risk that I may recognize participants from their translations' titles, I decided to delete the titles of all the translations.

Secondly, the format of the translations conducted by P1 to P6 in Word was standardized and then all the translations were printed out. Next, the translations in Text A were shuffled, which means after the translations were printed out, the sequence of the printed translations would be mixed up like shuffling cards. The same was applied to Text B.

Next, the evaluation process is as follows: first of all, I read through two sample translations. Then, the participants' translations were analyzed to see if there were inaccurate expressions, and missing translations. The better and less good translations would be selected in the midst of reading the whole translation. The good and bad points were highlighted in green and red circles. After reading each translation, if green circles were more numerous than red, it would belong to good quality translation and vice versa.

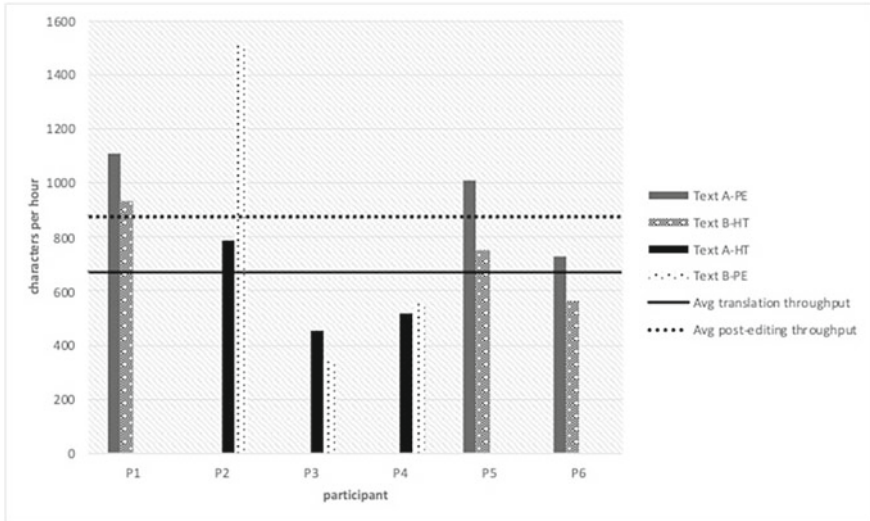


Fig. 2 Individual productivity in characters per hour

4 Results and Discussion

As previously mentioned, the experiment has four RQs, concerning translation productivity, translation quality, translation performance, and student translators’ perceptions.

4.1 Translation Productivity

First, translation productivity is reported in two translation conditions: post-editing GNMT and HT. We used “characters per hour⁴” to show the translating speed.

As illustrated in Fig. 2, on average, student translators produced 669 characters per hour on the basis of ST (similarly hereinafter) when translating from scratch (condition HT). Compared to this, the translating speed of post-editing GNMT was 876 characters per hour, which demonstrates convincingly that post-editing GNMT leads to a significant increase in average translating speed.

With regard to each participant’s translating speed, a large variability is observed, from the lowest speed of 342 characters per hour (participant P3, condition PE) to the highest of 1508 characters per hour (P2, PE).

Next, the translating speed was compared taking texts A and B as a whole. Figure 3 shows that only one participant (P3) was faster when translating from scratch. Aside

⁴<http://davidsmithtranslation.com/articles/how-to-count-chinese-characters/>.

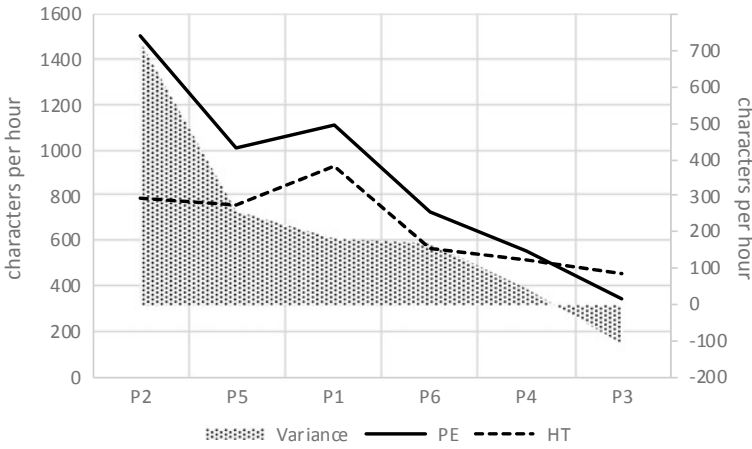


Fig. 3 Translation productivity for two translation conditions (sorted by descending productivity gain)

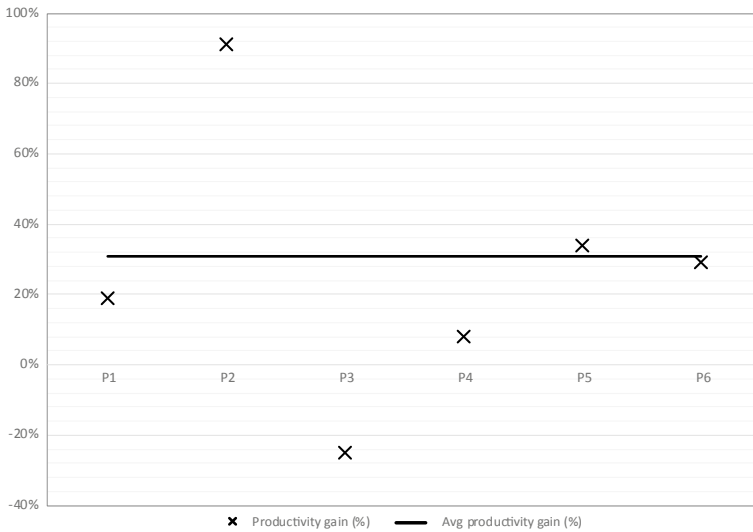


Fig. 4 Standard deviation of productivity gain for each participant

from that, it is shown that more characters per hour (i.e., higher speed) for PE. The variance is from 39 (P4) to 718 characters per hour (P2).

Figure 4 shows the deviation of productivity gain for each participant. We found a 31% increase in productivity. In other words, post-editing GNMT saved 24% of the translating time.⁵

⁵ $1 - \frac{1}{1+31\%} = 0.24$

Table 2 Cohesion in a selected paragraph**Original Chinese:**

我们都说：“是的。”母亲也点点头。爹爹接下去说：“所以你们要像花生，因为它是有用的，不是伟大、好看的东西。”我说：“那么，人要做有用的人，不要做伟大、体面的人了。”爹爹说：“这是我对于你们的希望。”

Sample translation:

“That’s true,” we said in unison. Mother also nodded. “So you must take after peanuts,” father continued, “because they’re useful though not great and nice-looking.” “Then you mean one should be useful rather than great and nice-looking,” I said. “That’s what I expect of you,” father concluded.

Human translation:

“Yes.” We all answered. Mother nodded as well. “So, you should be like peanuts, because they are useful, but not great nor beautiful.” Father continued. “Well then, a person should be useful, instead of being great and decent,” I said. “This is what I hope you all can be,” father said. (P2, HT)

Post-editing machine translation:

We all said: “It’s true.” My mother also nodded her head. He continued to say, “All of you have to be like peanuts, because it is useful not because it is great and good looking.” I said, “That is to say, people have to be useful people, but no great and decent people.” He said: “This is my hope for you.” (P1, PE)

4.2 *The Evaluation of the Translation Quality*

The experiment conducted used two complete Chinese essays in different conditions: HT and PE, which provides the possibility to evaluate the quality of the translations. In the following section, the evaluations of translation qualities are listed as text A (4.2.1) and text B (4.2.2), respectively.

4.2.1 **Assessment of Text A**

Referential Cohesion

There are more dense reference chains in literature relative to news (Voigt and Jurafsky 2012, 20). Thus, keeping the coherence of reference in the translation output can be seen as a matrix in evaluating the quality of a literary translation. Referential cohesion refers to “the relation between co-referring entities in a narrative (Halliday and Hasan 1976).” As is seen in Table 2, there are four entities highlighted in different colors: We (我们), mother (母亲), father (爹爹) and I (我). “Father (爹爹)” has been mentioned twice. If it were replaced by “he,” it would confuse readers for the inexplicit coreference. Accordingly, in Voigt and Jurafsky (2012, 22), they found the problem of “inconsistent reference” in MT output of Lu Xun’s narration. Human translations use “hen” to refer to *jī* (鸡, lit. “chicken”) while MT output uses “hen” as well as “chicken” to refer to the same entity, which caused the loss of cohesiveness.

Table 3 MT traces**Original Chinese:**

你们偶然看见一棵花生瑟缩地长在地上,不能立刻辨出它有没有果实,非得等到你接触它才能知道。

Sample translation:

When you come upon a peanut plant lying curled up on the ground, you can never immediately tell whether or not it bears any nuts until you touch them (Zhang, 12).

Human translations:

You can't tell if a peanut plant has fruits or not when you see it curled up on the ground until touching it. (P2, HT)

When you come across a shy plant curling up on the ground, you are not likely to tell at once whether it bears any nuts or not until you crack it up. (P3, HT)

When you see a peanut growing on the ground, you cannot judge whether it bears fruits unless you dig it out. (P4, HT)

Post-editing machine translations:

You accidentally saw a peanut growing on the ground, and you can't immediately tell if it has fruit. You have to wait until you touch it. (P1, PE)

If you accidentally saw a peanut grow on the ground, you can't immediately tell if it has fruit or not. You have to wait until you touch it. (P5, PE)

You accidentally saw a peanut grow on the ground, and you can't immediately tell if it is ripped. You know until you touch it. (P6, PE)

Priming with Suggestions

Since translators see the MT output first, they may be inclined to revise based on it rather than creating something new or translating from scratch. As is seen in Table 3, in this case, if post-editors translated from scratch, they may not choose to split the whole sentence. However, with the assistance of MT, the post-editors had the mindset to follow the MT first. The MT may not play the assistant role at this point. This is another typical example of the post-editors being more likely to be constrained by the misleading MT. In addition, the word “accidentally” was preserved in the PE condition, in which case, it is a very conspicuous word that could have been omitted without influencing the meaning of the whole sentence.

This is in line with Moorkens and O'Brien (2015, 79) and Moorkens et al. (2018, 252). Participants complained that MT lacks creativity and conditions them. They felt they were primed by MT suggestions and translators may be “inclined to respect it more than they should.” Similarly, Bowker (2006, 182) found that after seeing a suggestion provided by MT, it would be hard for the translator to paraphrase it in another way.

Table 4 The inaccuracy of “see you”**Original Chinese:**

天黑时,我躺在床上,他便伶伶俐俐地从我身上跨过,从我脚边飞去了。等我睁开眼和太阳再见,这算又溜走了一日。

Sample translation:

In the evening, when I lie on my bed, it nimbly strides over my body and flits past my feet. By the time I open my eyes to meet the sun again, another day is already gone (Zhang, 57).

Correct translations:

When the day goes dark, I lay in bed, and they quickly step over me and fly away from my feet.

When I open my eyes and see the sun, it is another day. (P2, PE)

The days go across my body nearly and fly past my feet when I lied in my bed at night. When I open my eyes and meet the sun again, another day has gone. (P4, PE)

At night, I lie in my bed and the time stride over me and passes from my feet. And when I open my eyes and see the sun again, one day escapes from me. (P6, HT)

Mistranslations:

Time crosses from my body and flies from my foot when I am lying on the bed. A day has gone when I open my eyes and say goodbye to the sun. (P1, HT)

When it was dark, I lay in bed and she crossed over me fleetly and flew from my feet. When I opened my eyes and said goodbye to the sun, another day slipped away. (P3, PE)

Time dexterously run above my body and escape from my feet when I lie on the bed. When I say goodbye to the sun with opened eyes, one day slide away. (P5, HT)

4.2.2 Assessment of Text B

“Good Enough” Quality

The definition in Massardo et al. (2016) of “Good Enough” Quality means comprehensible and accurate translations. As seen in Table 4, in Chinese, “再见 (*zàijiàn*)” means “goodbye” in most cases, but it contains “see you again” in the original meaning as well. Here, the author possibly intends the second meaning. Even though all the participants are Chinese native speakers, they still have different interpretations of the same sentence, which caused the inaccuracy of the generated translations.

Dynamic Equivalence

With respect to some cultural-specific items, as Nida said, the “dynamic equivalence” principle needs to be applied, which aims to pursue the “naturalness of expression” (Nida 1964). Here is an example:

In Chinese, “Empty hands” means the tighter you want to seize something, the faster you lose it. In this context, it expresses one cannot seize time, and time slipped away quickly. However, if translated word-for-word as in the example translations, the reader cannot understand the meaning, and the sample translator translated it into “my quota of them,” using a statistical perspective to allow the reader to understand the feeling visually (Table 5).

Table 5 The cultural-specific item of “empty hands”

Original Chinese: 但我的手确乎是渐渐空虚了
Sample translation: But my quota of them is undoubtedly wearing away (Zhang, 57)
Example translations: It becomes emptier in my hands. (P6, HT) But my hands are holding less and less. (P2, PE) But my hands indeed turn to be empty gradually. (P5, HT)

4.3 Translation Performance

Translation performance can be evaluated from end-users (i.e., readers) or from translators and post-editors themselves (Doherty 2019, 398). Therefore, I invited a native speaker who is the former Head of Education in the National Portrait Gallery for his opinions on the reading experience. The translations had been replaced the title “P1, P2...” as “1, 2...” (i.e., randomized each text), and when I sent him these translations via email, for the authenticity of the experiment, I did not inform which were post-edited and which were human translations at that time. I enquired the sequence numbers from the best to the worst and the concise reasons for his evaluation. He emailed me the results as follows:

“**Text A**, the one about peanuts:

2 is the best; it reads well and has a polished, literary style, a little archaic, but mostly accurate in its translation.

4 is also good, but more colloquial in style.

3 is acceptable.

1 has some clumsy English and inaccuracies, but the section comparing apples and peaches to peanuts is good and clear.

6 good 1st para but less clear in apples and peaches bit.

5 least good, too many inaccuracies: ‘desolated’, ‘did harvested’.”

“**Text B**, the transience one.

4 is the most accurate and literary.

1 is acceptable, but less pleasant to read.

3 has a literary style but too many inaccuracies.

5 has clumsy and inaccurate English.

6 has too many mistakes at the beginning.

2 has many inaccuracies and does not read well.”

(Number 1–6 refer to participant 1–participant 6.)

In order to show the translation performance, I tried to combine the two approaches of performance evaluation together—from the end-user’s and student translators’ perspectives.

The translation speed plus translation quality can reflect the overall performance of a translation task. With that idea in mind, I decided to use scatter chart to visualize the performance of each participant.

First of all, I used A-F to replace “participant 1”—“participant 6,” as shown in Table 6.

Secondly, I used tables to show the sequence of speed from the fastest to the slowest and quality from the best to the worst in Text A, separately. This is shown in Table 7.

In order that the performances of the participants can be shown in a chart, I coordinated them, as is shown in Table 8. Combining Table 7 with Table 6, coordinate 1 means the fastest speed and highest quality and coordinate 6 means slowest and lowest.

Next, I used horizontal and vertical coordinates to illustrate speed and quality, respectively. This is shown in Table 9.

Then, I located them in a scatter chart, as is shown in Fig. 5,

As stated before, the vertical coordinates from 1 to 6 imply the highest to the lowest translation quality and the horizontal coordinates from 1 to 6 mean the fastest to the slowest translating speed. In a word, the closer the coordinates to M (1,1), the better the overall performance. In this case, I calculated the distances from A to M and from B to M and so on. I used Pythagorean theorem (Fig. 6): $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$ to calculate the distance. This is shown in Table 10.

Table 6 Replacement of participant

Participants	Replaced by
P1	A
P2	B
P3	C
P4	D
P5	E
P6	F

Table 7 The sequence of speed and quality in Text A


fast  slow	Speed	Quality	high  low
	A	B	
	E	D	
	B	C	
	F	A	
	D	F	
	C	E	

Table 8 Participants with coordinates in Text A

Speed	Quality	Coordinate
A	B	1
E	D	2
B	C	3
F	A	4
D	F	5
C	E	6

Table 9 Participants in horizontal and vertical coordinates in Text A

Participants	(Speed, Quality)
A	(1, 4)
B	(3, 1)
C	(6, 3)
D	(5, 2)
E	(2, 6)
F	(4, 5)

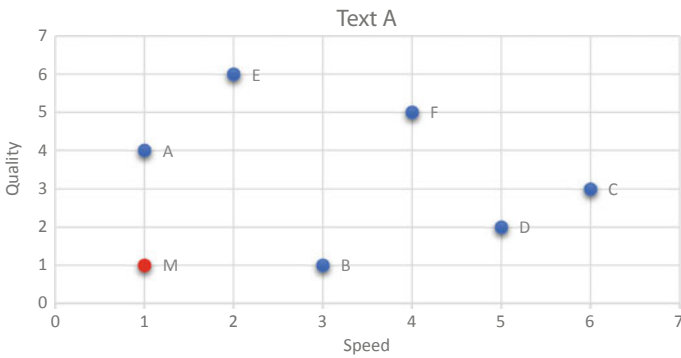


Fig. 5 Performance scatter chart of Text A

Fig. 6 Pythagorean theorem

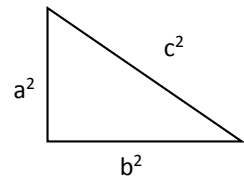


Table 10 The performance in Text A

Participants	The square of distance to M (c^2)
A	9
B	4
C	29
D	17
E	26
F	25

Finally, I used a column chart to display the differences more explicitly. Participants A–F represent Participant 1–6. Therefore, I found the overall performances in Text A from the highest to the lowest are: P2, P1, P4, P6, P5, and P3.

Following the same methods as Text A, I calculated the overall performance of Text B (Figs. 7 and 8).

From the line chart, the overall performances in Text B from the highest to the lowest are: P1, P5, P4, P2 (P6), and P3.

P2 and P6 have the same performance in Text B. In this case, I chose to prioritize “quality” than “translating speed.” Therefore, the new overall performances in Text B from the highest to the lowest are: P1, P5, P4, P6, P2, and P3.

Finally, I located the overall performance with different translation conditions to see if there are any connections between translation conditions with translators’ overall performance. This is shown in Table 11.

As shown in Table 11, the overall performance may not necessarily connect with different translation conditions. This is a preliminary study of evaluating translation performance, nevertheless. There was relatively rare study concerning performance evaluating. The reason may be because performance factors a range of indices, such as translators’ professional years, their perceptions as well as the end-user’s profiles,

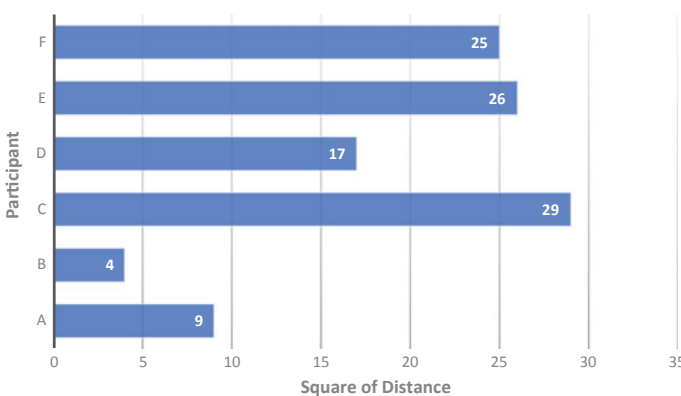


Fig. 7 Overall performance in Text A

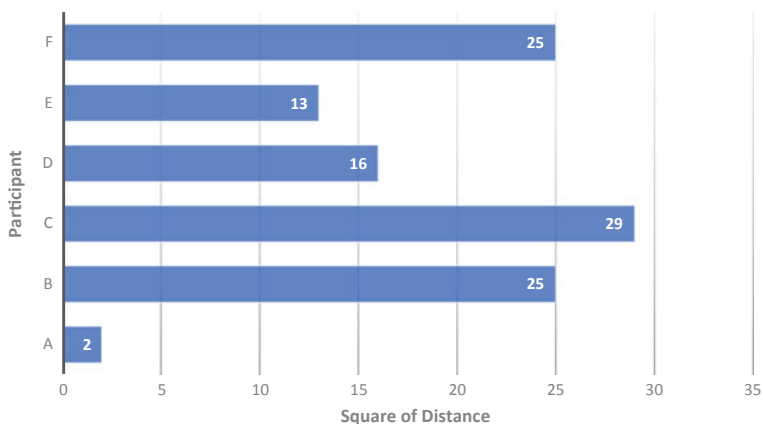


Fig. 8 Overall performance in Text B

Table 11 Overall performance associated with different translation conditions

Overall performance	Text A		Text B		Overall performance
	Participants	Conditions	Participants	Conditions	
High ↑↓ Low	P2	HT	P1	HT	High ↑↓ Low
	P1	PE	P5	HT	
	P4	HT	P4	PE	
	P6	PE	P6	HT	
	P5	PE	P2	PE	
	P3	HT	P3	PE	

etc. In de Almeida (2013), she evaluated the overall PE performance from post-editors’ perspectives by comparing the essential corrections made after PE and the uncorrected errors, with the consideration of daily PE productivity. Although end-user’s perspective is not included in the performance rating, she provided a good paradigm for other researchers.

4.4 The Student Translators’ Perceptions

4.4.1 Questionnaires

The students’ perceptions were analyzed based on the post-experiment questionnaire. As mentioned above, SurveyMonkey was used to gather information after the

Table 12 Perceptions of the GNMT and HT

Do you think that it was easier to use machine translation than you would have been to translate these two essays from scratch directly into English?

P1: I think it depends on the use of language of texts. I think for the part that uses easy and direct language, the machine translation helped me to save my time. However, for the part that uses complex language, the machine translation did not help me because it did not translate the texts correctly and GNMT also created some confusion. In this case, it is easier to translate by myself.

P2: Yes. Modifying (MT) is easier because some sentence structures and translation can be used directly without reconstruction. This lessens the translators' burden.

P3: No. I think it will be more efficient just translating from scratch. Because as a good translator, you will have to decide among subtle meanings of one word and you'll need to use dictionary anyway. MT is not enough at all. The machine translation will narrow the flexibility of your translation unconsciously.

P4: No, I don't think so. Machine translation offers poor translation and even distorts the meaning. It does not suit literature translation.

P5: Yes. (MT) gives me translation tips and clues. And it doesn't bother me to look at a dictionary for some vocabularies.

P6: Yes, because the MT can give me some tips and for the words I need to check up in the dictionary, the software already has the answer.

experiment. There are six questions in total and the answers were transcribed exactly as the participants typed them online.

The first two questions concerned the familiarity of source texts and target texts. Except P4, who had translated the source texts before with limited memory of the translations, others had no experience in translating the source texts. In addition, all of them had learned the source texts before. Thus, the familiarities of the two texts were perceived to be the same.

The following question is about the perceptions of the MT and PE. As can be seen in Table 12, the reasons for participants believing it was helpful for them to use MT can be subsumed into:

- (1) MT provides translation tips, including sentence structures and vocabularies.
- (2) MT is useful for simple sentences. The most typical example is that no one changed the automated translation (AT) sentence in Text A in PE condition:

Original Chinese: 我们都同意了。

Back translation: (We) (all) (agree) (-ed) (.)

AT: We all agreed.

The reasons for those who believe MT is useless are underlined:

- (1) MT cannot provide reliable translation all the time.
- (2) MT translates not very well in compound and complex sentences.
- (3) The segment by segment translation format in SDL Trados Studio 2019 narrows the translation flexibility.

This finding is in accordance with Jia et al. (2019, 77). They found half student translators believe that MT was helpful because it saved their time and effort by not

Table 13 The overall attitude towards GNMT targeting literature

What's your comment on the quality of Google neural machine translation?
P1: It did not work very well in the literature texts because the use of language is complex, especially in the Chinese texts that use some language from the past.
P2: It saves time to some extent and is not fully useless. Still there are many glitches.
P3: Only recommended when the text is very technical.
P4: Maybe it suits formal non-literary texts, but the translation of literature works is in poor quality.
P5: Unsatisfactory. Not fluent and cannot recognize some local expressions.
P6: Generally speaking, it is intelligent but not so intelligent to translate certain words like “爹爹,” “姊姊,” “夜阑.”

having to type the whole translation or consult external resources. Similarly, many translators would choose the MT output as a “kick-start” because the draft translation just needs to fix and polish (Moorkens et al. 2018, 252). Those who opposed this view think fully formed target segment primes them, which impedes their creativity (ibid.).

In addition, different PE requirements may also need to be taken on board. According to Translation services—PE of MT output—requirement (The British Standards Institution 2017, 8–10). Light PE requires to use “as much of the raw MT output as possible,” which means the output of that PE merely needs to be understandable while full PE is aware of the “style and client,” aiming for the perfect translation version to be delivered. As Jia et al. (2019, 77) stated, many of the student translators were compelled to perfect all while some of them relied too much on MT output. Different requirements of PE may lead to student translators’ different attitudes toward this task so that their perceptions may vary at last.

The next question is about the overall attitude toward GNMT targeting literary. As is shown in Table 13, the overall attitude is not positive. The main reason is because there are many mistranslations, which appear to be one of the most prevalent error types that NMT produced (Moorkens et al. 2018, 244). For example, P6 mentioned three phrases in Chinese which were used a century ago. “爹爹 (*diēdie*)” is replaced by “爸爸 (*bàba*)” now, which means “father,” but mistranslated into “I” in the MT. “姊姊 (*zǐzǐ*)” is replaced by “姐姐 (*jiějie*)/妹妹 (*mèimei*),” which means “older sister/younger sister” and was mistranslated into “he” in the MT. “夜阑 (*yèlán*)” is an archaic expression in Chinese, which can be traced back to Chinese poetry in the Song dynasty. It means “late at night or deep night” and can be translated into “midnight” but is mistranslated into “nightingale” in the MT.

The last question is an open question. The aim is to welcome the participants to add supplements that are not mentioned in the previous questions when the experiment is fresh in their mind. As is shown in Table 14, participants showed an optimistic view of the whole procedure of the experiment which has highlighted in green. This is in line with Moorkens and O’Brien (2015, 79) that novices, they are more positive and

Table 14 Comments on the experiment

Do you have any comments on this experiment?
P1: No.
P2: It is a good experiment overall. But the uncommonly used words, such as “底” for which we now use “的” instead, will cause problems to machine translations, which again is an additional variable to measure the quality (or speed) of machine translation, but not the human translation. Maybe it will affect the conclusion.
P3: The variables are not fully controlled.
P4: Nice formats and scientific procedures.
P5: Good.
P6: Everything is perfect!

enthusiastic and will engage considerably into the PE experiment than professional translators.

In addition, the two characters in P2’s comment “底” and “的” need to be explained. One of the meanings of “底 (*dǐ*)” is the same as “的 (*de*)” in the past, which was followed by the attribute and did not have any actual meaning. However, in contemporary Chinese, the same meaning of “底” and “的” has been lost, and only now means “the bottom.” The Google translation cannot respond to the differences thus causing the mistranslation. Here is the example:

Original Chinese: 这小小的豆不像那好看的苹果、桃子、石榴,把它们底果实悬在枝上,鲜红嫩绿的颜色,令人一望而发生羡慕的心。

Sample translation: Unlike nice-looking apples, peaches, and pomegranates, which hang their fruit on branches and win people’s admiration with their brilliant colors (Zhang, 12).

(No need to translate the meaningless character “底.”)

Raw GNMT: This little bean is not like the beautiful apples, peaches, and pomegranates. The fruits of the bottoms are hung on the branches. The bright red and green colors are enviable and envious.

(Wrong translation of the meaningless character “底.”)

4.4.2 Debriefing Sessions

The debriefing sessions are a complement of the post-experiment questionnaire. Participants were welcome to express their thoughts and ideas and I wrote down the important parts from my perspective and sorted them into different subjects afterwards. Here are the results.

First, we focused on specific examples that GNMT did not translate well. In the post-experiment questionnaire, the specific examples online were limited. Thus, they were invited to speak in Chinese about certain mistranslations that impressed them greatly and I translated them afterwards.

P2 thought the general quality of GNMT was acceptable but MT always chose the words which were most frequently used. For example, “匆匆(*cōngcōng*)” was

Table 15 General translating process

Q4: What was the general process of your translation?
P1: I went through the whole passage first, and then I translated sentence by sentence. After translating the whole passage, I revised from the first sentence to the last again.
P2: I translated by meaning groups.
P3: I translated two to three sentences as a meaning group. After I finished the whole translation, I checked it from the beginning.
P4: I translated them sentence by sentence.
P5: I translated them sentence by sentence. But if I was not familiar with the ST, I may have read through the whole text first and searched for background information.
P6: I translated them according to meaning groups, thus perhaps I translated two or three sentences.

Table 16 Understanding barriers between segments

Q5: Is there any understanding barrier of the separate segment in Trados?
P1: Because I have learned the ST before, there isn't. But if I hadn't, there would be some reading difficulties.
P2: Not really. Every time I read the ST first.
P3: There will be some difficulties when I read it.
P4: Some of the translations made me feel a problem when translating. For example, there were some places where it was necessary to split one sentence into two segments, and I had to merge the two segments when translating from scratch.
P5: I think I prefer separate segments as I found it made it easier to read.
P6: There was no barrier in understanding but I felt difficult in translating.

translated into “hurry,” but in her translation, she translated it as “haste” and in the sample translation, it was translated into “transient days.”

P3 gave several examples that MT did not translate well (Table 15 and 16).

The first one is “less accurate translation.” Here is the example:

Original Chinese: 我不禁头涔涔而泪潸潸了。(Text B)

Sample translation: At the thought of this, sweat oozes from my forehead and tears trickle down my cheeks (Zhang, 57).

MT: I cannot help but shed tears.

“头涔涔 (*tóucéncén*)” is used to describe a person in a state of contradiction and sweat oozes from his/her head like a broken string of pearls. “泪潸潸 (*lèishānshān*)” means a state of sadness where one cannot stop the tears running down one’s cheeks. Apparently, MT merely grasped its gist and translated it as concisely as possible, as Castilho et al. (2017, 116) mentioned: NMT is now more fluent but less accurate compared to SMT.

Next is an example of “counter-productive translation.” The original Chinese sentence is the punchline of the whole passage which shows the author’s helplessness

and how they sighed at fleeting moments. What the author wanted to stress is the “loss of the past,” not “finding something new.” However, MT seems to stress “finding” and could even make us feel a sense of happiness when reading it.

Original Chinese: 去了尽管去了,来的尽管来着。(Text B)

Sample translation: What is gone is gone, what is to come keeps coming (Zhang, 57).

MT: Despite going, the coming is coming.

The last example that P3 gave concerns the misunderstanding of the word “decent.” In the Oxford Dictionary, the meanings of “decent” are positive. If using “decent” to describe a person, it means the “internal beauty,” such as being honest, fair and respectful. However, in Chinese, the definition of “体面 (*tǐmiàn*) (back translation: decent)” is “physical and facial beauty,” which specifically means “external beauty.” Therefore, unsuitable MT can be fully blamed for making readers “lost in translation.”

Original Chinese: 那么,人要做有用的人,不要做伟大、体面的人了。(Text A)

Sample translation: Then you mean one should be useful rather than great and nice-looking (Zhang, 57).

MT: So, people have to be useful people, don't be great, decent people.

P4 assumed MT mainly provides literal translation and the real meaning of ST was not conveyed. She gave an example of distortion. In the example below, “徘徊 (*páihuái*)” is a status of hesitation, and it was translated into “wavering and wandering” in the sample translation. However, in MT, it was translated into “cockroaches.” Some participants associated it with “child interest” like “playing with crickets.” However, it would certainly confuse readers.

Original Chinese: 在八千多日的匆匆里,除徘徊外,又剩些什么呢?(Text B)

Sample translation: What have I been doing during the 8,000 fleeting days except wavering and wandering (Zhang, 57)?

MT: In the rush of more than 8,000 days, what is left in addition to cockroaches?

This finding echoes that mistranslations are the most prevalent error types in NMT (Moorkens et al. 2018, 244) and it can affect translators' attitudes toward MT (Läubli and Orrego-Carmona 2017, 59), which means more unreliable MT output may result in the nonconfidence in PEMT than HT.

When asked about the general process of the translation in SDL Trados Studio 2019, P1, P4, and P5 translated sentence by sentence because they had learned the ST before and did not need to know the context while P2, P3, and P6 translated based on meaning groups (i.e., two to three segments) because they thought it was good to maintain coherence. This is in accordance with Arenas (2013, 77). The common revision procedure for translators is mainly going through segment by segment and reviewing the whole assigned work after finishing.

Because the experiment was conducted in SDL Trados Studio 2019, the next question concerned whether segments caused any understanding barrier during translation. P1, P2, P5, and P6 believed that there was no understanding barrier because they

were very familiar with the ST while P3 and P4 thought there would be difficulties when translating because they needed to merge and split the segments. It is the same as Heyn (2016) criticized, PE is like “peephole translation” due to loss of context and internal coherence (cited in Moorkens et al. 2018, 252).

Moreover, in participants’ self-report process, P3’s opinions toward the unfriendly operation system of SDL Trados Studio 2019 were worth considering:

“When I want to merge the segments, the new translation would cover the human translation in the last segment you revised and turned it into automated translation, which requires you to do a second revision.”

From her view, this would increase the workload and influence the mood of post-editors. Moreover, segmenting at paragraph level would also lose the leverage (Moorkens et al. 2018, 253).

5 Conclusion and Future Work

The experiment was conducted regarding literary PEMT in which two Chinese essays are translated by GNMT and then post-edited or translated by student translators in SDL Trados Studio 2019. All the necessary data and information are provided to reproduce the experiments (see the Appendices).

The experiment was conducted by six student translators, who need to translate two Chinese essays into English under two working conditions (HT and PE). The time taken for each participant was noted, all the resulting translations were evaluated and the translation performance was illustrated, the answers in the questionnaires online were gathered, the debriefed information was written down in my notebook. All the measurements above provided the possibility to achieve the four aims:

- Aim 1: Translation productivity difference in PE and HT conditions—RQ 1.
- Aim 2: Evaluating the quality of the conducted translations—RQ 2.
- Aim 3: Finding the connections between translation performance and translation conditions—RQ 3.
- Aim 4: Analyzing the student translators’ perceptions—RQ 4.

Translation productivity in PE and HT conditions (Aim 1)

Regarding translating speed, compared to translation from scratch, Post-editing GNMT leads to substantial increases in translation throughput on average. Although variance for each translator was high, most student translators (five out of six) showed PE saved their time when doing the translations. This demonstrates GNMT makes translators faster than translating from scratch in this experiment.

The quality of the resulting translations (Aim 2)

The quality of the resulting translations is text dependent. For Text A, which is an easy to follow text, the quality of HT is better than PE. The reasons are:

- The translations PE by machines were more robotic.
- The frequency of the short sentences in PE was higher than from-scratch translation.
- With the assistance of MT, the post-editors had the mindset to follow the MT first.

For Text B, which is a hard text, the quality of sample translation is much better than the translations in HT and PE. The reasons are mainly because the sample translation meets the “three principles” of translation difficulty: faithfulness, expressiveness, and elegance while translations by student translators can only be accurate. For the aesthetics of literary translation, neither HT nor PEMT meets the expectations.

The finding indicates that for literary translation, the quality of HT is better than PE. In addition, different levels of proficiency in literary translation will result in different quality of translation output.

The connections between the translation performance and translation conditions (Aim 3)

We employed “Pythagorean theorem” to present the translation performance (i.e., translation quality associated with translation productivity). We found that the translation performance with the corresponding translation conditions are mixed in both two texts, which means the participant with the best translation performance may not always be the one in HT or PE conditions and vice versa. This finding is in line with de Almeida (2013, p.182), who illustrates the PE performance of French and Brazilian Portuguese by looking at introduced and missed translation errors (i.e., errors added to the TTs and uncorrected MT errors, respectively) and obtained the best two post-editors in each language pair with consideration of extrapolated daily translation productivity together. She found the best two post-editors in the two languages are not always the persons with the highest translation productivity. The translation performance may take the errors into account as well.

Student translators’ perceptions of the experiment (Aim 4)

With respect to the perceptions of student translators, half of them were optimistic about PEMT and its prospect while the other half claimed that the GNMT output and SDL Trados Studio 2019 did not assist them in this task. The findings are consistent with Moorkens et al. (2018, 252). For one thing, GNMT provides them with full suggestions, which can be a quick “kick start” of a translation task. For another, mistranslations and inaccurate translations are the main issues that made them feel irritating. In addition, for professionals, they are preferably inclined to translating from scratch because they felt they were “conditioned” and unconsciously respect the MT than they should (ibid.).

Limitations and Future Research

There are limitations which may affect the results of the experiment. First, the quality evaluations provided should be approached with caution because they were carried out by the author as a non-native speaker of English. Then, the different complexity of the source texts should be taken into account because it may influence the MT

output, translating speed as well as the participants performance in the experiment (Clifford et al. 2004; Plitt and Masselot 2010; Vieira 2019).

The experiment is still in the preliminary stage; nevertheless, it provides a possibility for the unrelated language pair—Chinese and English with the existing state of the art technology—GNMT. For further consideration, evaluating literary PEMT quality and its performance are relatively challenging but also promising, it needs to combine traditional translation theories with linguistics, incorporate computational linguistic knowledge (i.e., AEMs) into innovation and localization. If it were to demonstrate effective in most cases, it would benefit not only translation industry, but lay persons as well.

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Appendix A

Participant Information Sheet

Project title: Machine Translation and Chinese Essays

I would like to invite you to take part in my research project. Before you decide whether to participate, I would like you to understand why the research is being conducted and what it would involve for you. Talk to others about the study if you wish. Please ask questions if anything is unclear.

What is the purpose of the project?

The project will improve the understanding of machine translation as a tool that can be used in literary translation tasks.

Why have I been invited to participate?

You have been invited to participate because you have some language translation experience (as a student) and you are a native speaker of Chinese, the source language in our study.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether you wish to participate in the project. This information sheet describes what your participation would involve. Please ask me any questions that you may have before deciding if you wish to participate. If you agree to take part, I will then ask you to sign a consent form. The experiment will take place in the Arts and Social Science Library in the University of Bristol. The experiments will take place between 25/07/2019 and 26/07/2019. A specific time will be arranged with you. You can change your mind about participating at any point before or during the experiment. After the experiment has taken place, you are free to withdraw from the study without providing any reason up until 09/08/2019, which is a month before my dissertation deadline. Because I need to leave some time for data analysis and finish the whole MA dissertation in August, if you were to withdraw your data after 9th August, that would make it difficult for me to finish my dissertation on time. I apologize for it and sincerely hope you understand.

What will happen to me if I take part and what will I have to do?

You will be asked to translate two short texts from Chinese to English in the Arts and Social Science Library in the University of Bristol. The texts will need to be translated using the Trados Studio interface on the researcher's laptop. After the experiment, all the data will only be stored on my own UoB OneDrive account, and not on my "personal computer." You won't be directly recorded in any way, though I will take notes and keep track of certain details such as how long you will take to translate the texts. I will also ask you to complete a pre-task form that asks for some information about you, such as your age and details of your translation experience. After the task, I will ask you to complete another form asking for your impressions of the activity. The entire process will take approximately one hour and a half.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks involved in taking part in the project?

I foresee no significant risks or disadvantages. The experiment will not affect the outcome of your studies in any way, the researcher's own computer will be used at all times and the experiment will be based on safe commercial software.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

You will gain some more experience with literary translation and with Trados Studio.

Will my participation in this project be kept confidential?

Yes, your participation will be kept confidential. Before the study you will be assigned a pseudonym (e.g., "Participant 1") and the results will only be used in my dissertation.

Appendix B

Pre-experiment questionnaire

Pre-experiment questions

Pre-experiment information

This survey is about human translation and post-editing of Google neural machine translation. As a reminder, please rest assured that participants' identity will be kept confidential. You can ask questions or refer to the participant information sheet to review any details. Thank you.

1. What's your age group?

18-24

25-34

35-44

2. Do you have any professional translation experience?

Yes

No

If yes, how many years?

3. What English certificate have you achieved?

TEM 4

TEM 8

CET 6

Other (please specify)

4. What's your overall IELTS score?

6.0

6.5

7.0

7.5 and 7.5+

Post-experiment questionnaire

Post-experiment questions

Post-experiment information

This survey is about post-editing Google neural machine translation and human translation. Before doing this survey, just to brief remind that all the participants' identity will be kept confidential. You can ask questions or refer to the participant information sheet to review any details. Thank you.

1. Have you translated these texts before?

Yes

No

2. Have you learned the two source texts before? If yes, when did you learned them?

3. Do you think that it was easier to use machine translation than you would have been to translate these two essays from scratch directly into English? And why?

4. Do you think machine translation saves your time and energy?

Yes

No

Would you please give your reason?

5. What's your comment on the quality of Google neural machine translation?

6. Do you have any comments on this experiment?

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Blending Language Learning with Translation Teaching: A New Perspective on the Teachability of Chinese Translation



Yu-kit Cheung

Abstract Over the past fifty years or so, a gargantuan number of textbooks on English–Chinese (hereinafter “E–C”) translation has been published. There are usually two major approaches. One of them is to explain how translation can be done on a word-class and linguistic-level basis. Another is to put on display a repertoire of translation methods and techniques in the hope that users are fully equipped for translation tasks at various linguistic levels and in different text types. Some of these works include Loh (1959), Sun and Jin (1977), Chen (1996), and Liu (1997; 2006). Nonetheless, both strategies, to a large extent, rest on the assumption that readers have such a firm grasp of the Chinese language that they are able to stand against the interference of the source language in the translation process. As Poon rightly points out, there are no translation techniques independent of language competence (2000, 53). With reference to the universals of translation, this chapter argues that translation as an activity represents resistance against normalization and simplification. Thorough language proficiency training before translation training being costly, if not out of the question, it is argued that incorporating the defining characteristics of the Chinese language in an E–C translation textbook or course syllabus along with the aforementioned methods may enhance, if not maximize, the teaching effectiveness. There are three major parts in the ensuing pages. The first outlines the history of textbooks on E–C translation, highlighting their two major approaches and the desideratum in the future development of textbooks with regard to E–C translation. The next argues how translation may be seen as resistance to normalization and simplification, which lead to the so-called “translation-ese.” Part Three elucidates the major defining characteristics of the Chinese language, namely, *yìhé* 意合 (parataxis), linearity, dynamism, an emphasis on such dimensions as concreteness, humans and human relationships, holism and a sense of balance, and how Chinese culture has played its part in shaping them. This chapter is significant in pushing back the frontiers of teaching E–C translation, setting the scene for further discussion on the delicate balance between language teaching and teaching translation. It is original in highlighting the importance of developing students’ awareness of the defining characteristics of the Chinese language in order to enhance their language

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sensitivity with a view to producing unaffected written Chinese. It further contributes to the academic discourse through presenting these characteristics in a systematic manner and placing them in the context of Chinese culture.

Keywords Language learning · Translation teaching · Translation competence · Bilingual competence · Defining features · Teachability

1 Introduction

Since World War II, a gargantuan number of textbooks on English–Chinese (hereinafter “E–C”) translation has been published. Diverse as their target readers may be—both in terms of geography and competence, there are usually two major approaches. One of them is to explain how translation can be done on a word-class and linguistic-level basis. Another is to put on display a repertoire of translation methods and techniques in the hope that users are fully equipped for translation tasks at various linguistic levels and in different text types. Nonetheless, both strategies, to a large extent, rest on the assumption that readers have such a firm grasp of the Chinese language that they are able to stand against the interference of the source language in the translation process.

The intimacy between translation skills and language competence perhaps requires no further elaboration. Poon even posits that there are no translation techniques independent of language competence (2000, 53). Widely recognized as the *conditio sine qua non* for learning translation, the language proficiency of students in the whole class is, nevertheless, highly unlikely to be even. Although the standard of Chinese and English of translation students could sometimes be higher than those in other disciplines as a consequence of a more demanding language requirement for admission, the commonest scenario, perhaps, is that some students are stronger than others as far as language competence is concerned. Divergence in students’ language abilities may even manifest itself in master’s programs, for students may have a wide variety of educational backgrounds whose undergraduate training may not be relevant to language, much less translation. While a weak grasp of the source language may result in misinterpretation, hence failing to bring the message in the original text across, strange reading in the target language will be brought about if the translator cannot be safeguarded from the interference of the source text. One of the aims of this chapter is to address the latter problem.

Providing that translation as an activity has heavy reliance on the linguistic competence of the translator, a question may arise: is translation ever teachable? The answer seems to be mixed. For instance, Pan argues forcefully that “translators can be trained,” and “[i]t is pure speculation to say that a good translator is born...” (1975, 40). However, Poon claims that translation as a school subject is less teachable than learnable (2000, 53). With the burgeoning growth of academic journals, conferences and monographs in which translation pedagogy is rigorously explored, it seems that

a positive answer to the question has been agreed upon. Now, a more relevant and important question seems to be: how can translation be taught effectively?

1.1 Language Competence Versus Translation Competence

To answer the question, a case study may furnish some clues. It will be seen that while language proficiency is a prerequisite for translator's training, an excellent command of a language per se is not sufficient to ensure success in translation. Frederick Tsai (1918–2004), widely known by his pseudonym “Sī Guǒ 思果” in Chinese-speaking communities, was a renowned Chinese essayist and translator. He is most famous for his series of books on practical translation, especially the first two entitled *Studies in Translation: From English into Chinese (Fānyì yánjiū 翻譯研究)* (1971) and *More Studies in Translation (Fānyì xīn jiū 翻譯新究)* (1982)¹, in which runs through his central tenet, that is, unaffected Chinese in translation. He was a champion of pure Chinese.

Tsai had translated more than ten books, culminating in his award-winning *Dàwèi · kǎobó, fēiěr 大衛·考勃菲爾* (1996), the Chinese translation of Charles Dickens's *David Copperfield*.² He is even the Chinese translator of the bilingualized *Oxford Study Thesaurus* (1996). As a Chinese essayist, he was held in high regard for his highly articulate but approachable style of prose. Nevertheless, his reputable Chinese rendition of *David Copperfield* was found to contain instances of Europeanization, despite his conscious attempts to remain unaffected (see Cheung 2011b, 54–97 for a detailed analysis). His other works of translation were also noted for numerous examples of Europeanized Chinese constructions (Cheung 2018, 143–145).

The majority of Tsai's book-length translations were published by World Today Press, which was sponsored by the United States Information Agency during the Cold War. The publisher was famous for attracting highly esteemed Chinese writers to translate works, both literary and nonliterary, in relation to the United States such as Eileen Chang (張愛玲 1920–1995), Tsi-an Hsia (夏濟安 1916–1965), George Kao (高克毅 1912–2008), T'ang Hsin-mei (湯新楣 1923–1999), and Tung Chiao 董橋, to name but a handful (see Shan 2009, 117–157). What adds weight to the research question at issue is that the problem of “translation-ese” is, too, visible—to varying degrees—in their translations.³

Their translation-ese could be attributed in part to time pressure. It is a plausible conjecture that submission deadlines might have a role to play in this regard, although Pan seems to cast doubt on this (1975, 40). Apart from the timeline, another reason for interference from the source language, not least for novice translators, is confidence.

¹The other two are *Gōngfū zài shī wài: Fānyì ǒu tán 功夫在詩外: 翻譯偶談* (1996) and *Translation: As Good As It Gets 譯道探微* (2001).

²See Cheung (2011a) for a full biographical account of Tsai as a translator.

³Cheung (2011b) mentions an example of severe Europeanized Chinese in Tung Chiao's Chinese translation of James Gray's *John Steinbeck* (2).

Beginners are more inclined to be lexically faithful to the original for fear of the accusation of over-translation. The potential compromise of translation quality because of these factors leads us to another question: is there any measure that is conducive to protecting translators from the interference of the source text? It seems that language competence provides only the necessary condition for translation competence.

While it may be generally agreed that language competence lays the foundation for translation competence only, there seems yet a full consensus as to what constitutes the latter. Gile reports that attempts have been made to describe the components of translation competence over the years (2009, 4–6). In spite of terminological variations, these scholarly pursuits point out that in addition to bilingual competence, “transfer competence” (Roberts 1984; Hewson and Martin 1991; Nord 1988/1991, 1992; Neubert 1994; Albir 1996, quoted in Albir 2016, 19–20) or “reformulation competence” (Delisle 1980, quoted in Albir 2016, 19) or “declarative and procedural knowledge about translation” (Gile 2009, 5) is called for. Pym (1992) neatly summarizes that translation competence consists of a) “[t]he ability to generate a TT (target text) series of more than one viable term (TT1, TT2... TTn) for a ST (source text)” and b) “[t]he ability to select only one TT from this series, quickly and with justified confidence, and to propose this TT as a replacement of ST for a specified purpose and reader” (1992, 281).

The competence beyond bilingual competence is brought into play, for translation as a task is never a smooth one: it is a problem-solving process. Albir (2017, b) argues with reference to Krings (1986) that translators, as confirmed in studies, are confronted with problems in the various phases of the translation process. The translator is required to demonstrate “an ability to solve problems, which is not a separate ability but rather an integral part of the sub-competences which make up TC” (Albir 2017, 10, b). It is the attainment of this “ability to solve problems” that one is capable of selecting, as Pym argues, the *mot juste*, “quickly and with justified confidence” (1992, 281).

The PACTE translation competence research model developed in the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona provides more insights into the components of translation competence (PACTE Group 2017, 35–41). With reference to it, Presas (2000) argues from a psychological point of view that to develop translation competence, transfer competence, and strategic competence are the centerpiece among the six competences comprising translation competence.⁴ According to her, three processes are involved in its development: (a) the acquisition of new competences which are yet to be possessed; (b) the reorganization of the developed competences so as to enhance transfer competence; and (c) “the acquisition of strategic competence” (2000, 29); and the development of transfer competence necessitates another three processes: (i) “specializing in communicative competence in two languages”; (ii) “restructuring, reorienting and broadening the mechanisms of code-switching and bilingual memory”; and (iii) incorporation of a mechanism to control interference (*ibid.*).

⁴The remaining four competences subordinate to transfer competence and strategic competence are communicative competence, extralinguistic competence, instrumental-professional competence, and psycho-physiological competence (see PACTE GROUP 2017, 36).

This research model was later revamped. Firstly, the transfer competence was no longer considered as a self-standing sub-competence. Secondly, the strategic competence has come to be of the utmost importance, for it is the “procedural knowledge to guarantee the efficiency of the translation process and solve problems encountered” (PACTE Group 2017, 40). There are also changes to other competences as a result of the aforementioned amendments (ibid, 38–41). Despite recategorization and redefinition of individual competences in the revised model, Presas’s argument has not been undermined, for the issue in question remains unchanged: competence beyond bilingual competence is called into play to warrant success of the translation process.

1.2 Awareness of the Defining Characteristics of Chinese

To this end, an awareness of the defining characteristics of the Chinese language will serve a useful purpose—they may greatly contribute to enhancing the strategic competence of the translator, acting as prompts in cautioning the translator against potential interference. Language teaching—to various extents—is usually part of the translation training, for “requiring that students have a perfect command of foreign languages before learning about translation...would mean teaching translation to virtually empty classes” (Pym 1992, 280). The relationship between language teaching and translation has been constantly put under the critical lens. Nevertheless, the majority of researches focus either on translation in foreign language teaching (e.g., Cook 2010) or on the role of language teaching in learning translation into a foreign language (e.g., Almberg 2000). Poon (2000) is one of the few works of research on Chinese grammar and translation into Chinese.

From a sociolinguistic point of view, English is the high language and Chinese the low one, although the latter is gaining increasing importance and influence across the globe with China’s joining of the World Trade Organization at the turn of the century and hence the rapid economic development. As a consequence of the hierarchy, the majority of Chinese translations are done by native speakers of Chinese. The comparative paucity of academic discourse on Chinese competence and translation into Chinese tends to reveal an assumption that one would be able to translate into Chinese—his/her own mother tongue—without the interference from the source text. As a matter of fact, there is some truth in it as one is expected to have a firmer grasp of their first language. For example, Newmark states that “to translate into your language of habitual use...is the only way you can translate naturally, accurately and with maximum effectiveness” (1988, 3). Nevertheless, Chinese is such a complicated language that even native speakers would find themselves struggling with it, for the language has been significantly affected by translation since the early twentieth century, giving rise to an exponential growth in Europeanized expressions and constructions. Given that languages must be in constant evolution, translators are required to make an informed decision so as to ensure that the newly emerged

linguistic items are compatible with the defining characteristics of Chinese. The foregoing case study speaks volumes about the difficulties involved.

With reference to the universals of translation, a new area of research which emerged in Translation Studies in the 1990s, this chapter posits that translation as an activity represents resistance against normalization and simplification.⁵ Thorough language proficiency training before translation training being costly, if not out of the question, it is argued that incorporating the defining characteristics of the Chinese language in an E–C translation textbook along with the aforementioned teaching approaches may enhance, if not maximize, the teaching effectiveness.

The defining characteristics of the Chinese language are not totally unexplored. Light has been thrown on them in some textbooks—often in contrastive studies with English. For example, while Chen (1998) discusses three features of Modern Chinese in an appendix, namely, the dominance of vowels in a Chinese syllable, the dominance of bi-syllabic words in the Chinese lexicon, and the importance of word order in Chinese sentences (283–289), Ch’ien (1969) explains that the subject in a Chinese sentence is often human (1–2). Nevertheless, there does not seem to be a textbook to date on E–C translation in the light of a comprehensive elaboration of the defining features of this language.

It must be noted that the present chapter is not aimed at challenging, not to mention invalidating the descriptive development of Translation Studies, disapproving foreignizing as a translation strategy, nor putting in an argument in favor of prescriptivism. In point of fact, it is more concerned with fluency and readability of the translated text than with translation strategies. Foreignization and fluency are not necessarily mutually exclusive, for the crux of the former is less a linguistic concept than an ideological one. Venuti (2018), who put forth the widely adopted dichotomous terms between domesticating and foreignizing in 1995, casts further light on the relationship between fluency and translation strategies when the second edition of his seminal work *The Translator’s Invisibility: A History of Translation* (2008) was republished in 2018. He clarifies that a translation strategy bears no direct relationship with fluency of the translation. He argues that “fluency is not in itself domesticating” (Venuti 2018, xv). He makes it clear that

[f]oreignizing translation cannot be reduced to literalism, or close adherence to the source text. This discursive strategy can be of use with certain language pairs and source texts, but too often, especially in rigid applications, it tends to result in awkward, unidiomatic writing, so-called translationese, which cannot serve the ethical effects of foreignizing translation. To foreignize is to alter the way in which a translation is customarily read by disclosing its translated status as well as the translator’s intervention. To produce this effect compellingly, however, the translation must also be *legible* enough to be *pleasurable*, qualities pre-empted by translationese (ibid, italics added)

The author further illustrates how “a foreignizing *effect*” (ibid, italics added) can be produced in practical texts such as an instruction manual, apartment lease, and a travel guidebook (ibid, xv–xvi).

⁵See Chesterman (2004, 2010) for a full set of these patterns unique in translated texts.

1.3 Chapter Organization

There are three major parts in this chapter. The first outlines the history of textbooks on E–C translation, highlighting their two major approaches and the desideratum in the future development of textbooks with regard to E–C translation. The next argues how translation may be seen as resistance to normalization and simplification, which lead to the so-called “translation-ese.” Part Three elucidates the major defining characteristics of the Chinese language, namely, *yihé* 意合 (parataxis), linearity, dynamism, an emphasis on such dimensions as concreteness, humans and human relationships, holism and a sense of balance, and how Chinese culture has played its part in shaping them.

This chapter is significant in pushing back the frontiers of teaching English–Chinese translation, setting the scene for further discussion on the delicate balance between language teaching and teaching translation. The blending of language teaching with translation teaching is certainly not a new area of scholarship. For instance, Wong (1988) elucidates how the language training component of the translation program in the University of Hong Kong can stand their students in good stead in coping with a wide range of text types in translation. Poon (2000), Lai (2000), and Almberg (2000), to name but three, have all thrown light on the importance of language teaching in translation teaching, although the last article is mainly concerned with translation into English. This chapter is original in highlighting the importance of developing students’ awareness of the defining characteristics of the Chinese language in order to enhance their language sensitivity with a view to producing unaffected written Chinese. It further contributes to the academic discourse through presenting these characteristics in a systematic manner and placing them in the context of Chinese culture.

2 Commonality in Textbooks on E–C Translation

Over the decades, a countless number of textbooks on E–C translation has been produced. A complete history of E–C translation textbooks may require a book-length treatment, so what is intended in the upcoming paragraphs is to outline several major patterns in the course of their development over the past decades to set the scene for my argument in “Sect. 4 Defining Characteristics of the Chinese Language.”

The first traceable textbook on translation between Chinese and English is probably Chen Yu-shen’s (程豫生) *The Practical and Standard Method of English Translation* 實用標準英文繙譯法 published in 1930 (Chan 2009, 108). Between the 1950s and 1970s, there were some sporadic publications of E–C translation textbooks across Hong Kong, Mainland China, and Taiwan. Some notable ones include Loh (1959), Chang (1966), and Sun and Jin (1977)—the first published in Beijing, the second in Taipei, and the last in Hong Kong. While the majority of translation textbooks have been published in Mainland China since the 1980s (the size of population certainly has a part to play in this regard), such publication activities were

comparatively quiet on the Mainland in the 1960s and 1970s. Apparently, one may surmise its logical link with the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), which brought a great many cultural activities including publication to a halt. With the opening up of Mainland China in 1979, this part of Chinese-speaking communities has established itself to be a powerhouse of translation textbooks. In addition to the population factor just mentioned, the thriving development of translation textbooks is likely to be attributed to the role of translation in national policies set out in the five-year plans of China.

In spite of differences in approaches, target learners, and contents in these textbooks on E–C translation spanning over half a century, there is commonality in them. First of all, a common approach is to illustrate how to make Chinese translation in accordance with parts of speech and linguistic levels. This is what Chau (1984) classifies as the “Grammatical Model.” For instance, Loh (1959) prescribes the method of translation for a wide range of linguistic components in eight chapters, including nouns, personal pronouns, relatives, demonstratives, indefinites, and interrogatives, articles, verbs, numerals, and connectives (Loh 1959, 5–6). Sun and Jin (1977) takes a similar approach. It begins with common nouns, followed by proper nouns, pronouns, relative clauses, determiners, articles, etc., and concludes with the reference books for translation in the last chapter. Apart from the word level, the sentence level is also dealt with in other textbooks, for example, translation of long sentences and passive sentences (e.g., Liu 1997; Sun 2006).

Apart from the Grammatical Model, an exhibition of a repository of translation techniques is another common approach. They include “addition,” “subtraction,” “alteration” (e.g., Tan 1990), “repetition” (e.g., Chan 1996; Liu 1997, 2006), “direct expression” (*zhèng shuō* 正說/*kěndìng* 肯定) (e.g., Chen 1996; Liu 1997, 2006), and “indirect expression” (*fǎn shuō* 反說/*fǒudìng* 否定) (e.g., Chen 1996; Liu 1997, 2006). Examples are usually given to demonstrate how they can be put into practice.

Addition refers to the insertion of linguistic items—usually one word such as a connective—in order to conform to the syntactic norm of the target language and to make explicit what is taken for granted in the source language. *Subtraction* works in the opposite direction. Words are left out so as to fit into the sentence patterns natural to native speakers of the target language. A widely known example is the omission of articles when translating into Chinese. For example, “I am a Mathematics teacher” may probably become “*Wǒ shì Shùxué lǎoshī* 我是數學老師” in Chinese,⁶ for it would be absurd to imagine that one would become two or three teachers!

Compared with addition and subtraction, *alteration* looks more fluid as a technique for translation students because it may be concerned with any shifting of word classes and word order in order to match up to the natural ordering of lexical items in the target language. Hawkes’s *A Little Primer of Tu Fu* provides an illuminating example. When explaining the translation of poetry titles, the former Oxford Chinese Chair remarks that verbs in the Chinese titles have to be nominalized in order to be in

⁶This example will be revisited below in Sect. 4, for the Chinese politeness principle should also be taken into consideration.

line with the tradition of English titles (Hawkes 1967, 2). Preference for verbal constructions in Chinese will be explored in greater depth in Sect. 4.

While *repetition* is a user-friendly technique, which may refer to monosyllabic repetition (*diézi* 疊字, e.g., *tōngtōng* 通通, *wǎngwǎng* 往往, *měiměi* 每每) or bisyllabic repetition (*diécí* 疊詞, e.g., *kèqì kèqì* 客氣客氣), the application of “direct expression” and “indirect expression” is somewhat intuitive, its effectiveness highly hinging upon the language sensitivity of the translator, for it comes down to the matter of collocation—“the habitual co-occurrence of individual lexical items” (Crystal 2008, 86).

Except for some earlier teaching materials, a combination of these two approaches is noted in the majority, if not all, textbooks on E–C translation. Undoubtedly, both methods have their advantages. The former enables students to have an exposure to a wealth of examples of translation at various linguistic levels, giving them a fruitful learning experience (Chau 1982, 138). The latter serves the purpose of a toolbox, reminding translators of what is available for a given task of translation. This method is not least useful when the translator runs into difficulties in coming up with a translation, for s/he may try out these techniques one after one in the hope that the most precise wording may be arrived at. The techniques of addition and subtraction are especially of help as far as movement between the Chinese parataxis and English hypotaxis is concerned.

Nevertheless, both approaches rest, to a large extent, if not entirely, on the assumption that the student has a high level of proficiency of the target language, which is Chinese in question, and that s/he is not vulnerable to the interference of the original language. This is particularly obvious with respect to the choice between “direct expression” and “indirect expression.” Provided with abundant apparatus, students often feel baffled invariably when coming to make an educated translation decision. The short example from Zhong (2010, 100) below will throw light on the perplexity of translation students:

On the word or phrase level, the use of “repetition” is for the need of rhetorical effects or expression of meanings. For instance: (*my translation*)

在詞語或詞組層面, 重複法主要是為了修辭或意義表達的需要。例如:

- (1) calm 態度從容, 鎮定自若
- (2) evasive 躲躲閃閃
- (3) fair 公平合理
- (4) honest 坦坦蕩蕩
- (5) flat 平平淡淡

What is taught in this example is correct in its own right. Nonetheless, students are likely to ask how to locate the cues which inform him/her of the need to employ repetition. Moreover, the divergence between the suggested translations above and their own version would in all likelihood prompt them to ask the next question: “is _____ (a version of their own) also an acceptable translation” (*xíng bù* 行不)? A highly expected answer they would be offered is, say, an improvement in language

sensitivity is a prerequisite. The very question thus becomes: *how to enhance my language sensitivity?* Students often feel powerless and off-putting when the solution provided is the platitudinous “more exposure to the Chinese language.” With respect to Chinese, which is the mother tongue for the best part of the students across the Chinese-speaking communities, this chiefly refers to reading.

As argued, bilingual proficiency only sets the stage for the task of translation. The ability to overcome interference from the source language is essential to ensure that the translated text is readable, regardless of the translation strategy intended. That even those writers mentioned reputed for their impeccable Chinese are not immune from the influence of the original language has cast much light in this regard. Therefore, albeit the advantages of the two approaches, their teaching effectiveness is thrown into question. Or to put it in another way, are there any ways to keep the interference of the source language to a minimum, if not to secure him/her against it?

3 Translation as Resistance Against Under-Representation

Since Baker (1993) raised the possibility of examining translation patterns with corpora in her seminal essay in honor of John Sinclair, a series of universals of translation has been proposed, investigated, and established, although their universal validity seems yet to have achieved (see, e.g., Chesterman 2004, 2010). Translation universals refer to those “features which typically occur in translated text rather than original utterances and which are not the result of interference from specific linguistic systems” (Baker 1993, 243). Some earliest universals identified include simplification and avoidance of repetitions present in the source text, explicitation, normalization, discourse transfer and the law of interference, and distinctive distribution of target-language items (Laviosa-Braithwaite 1998, 288–291).

The concept of translation universals somewhat coincides with the idea of laws of translation put forward by Toury in the mid-1990s. In an attempt to facilitate the establishment of translation as a science, he put forward two laws of translation: law of growing standardization and the law of interference (1995, 267–8). Chesterman further places these universals into two taxonomies: S-universals and T-universals, the former arising from the source text and the latter the target text (2004, 40): (Table 1).

A cursory look at this table will reveal that these universals, be they S-universals or T-universals, can generally be boiled down to two categories, which are: (a) expansion and (b) under-representation. The only exception is “untypical lexical patterning.” It must be noted that while Baker notes that the universals of translation “are not the result of interference from specific linguistic systems, that the division between S-universals and T-universals and the inclusion of interference as one of the S-universals in later discussions apparently demonstrates that this claim has been challenged. As a matter of fact, it will be evident from the examples in the next section, the phenomenon of under-representation is, for all intents and purposes, ascribed to the

Table 1 Universals of Translation

S-universals	T-universals
1. Lengthening	1. Simplification ✓ less lexical variety ✓ lower lexical density ✓ more use of high-frequency items
2. The law of interference	2. Conventionalization
3. The law of standardization	3. Untypical lexical patterning (and less stable)
4. Dialect normalization	4. Under-representation of TL-specific items
5. Reduction of complex narrative voices	
6. The explicitation hypothesis	
7. Sanitization – more conventional collocation	
8. The later translations tend to be closer to the source text	
9. Reduction of repetition	

interference of the source text, in addition to a weak grasp of the Chinese language on the part of the translator.

Academic discourse tends to differentiate “simplification” from “normalization”: while the former is more of a quantitative concept, the latter is a qualitative one. According to Palumbo, simplification “refers to the hypothesis that translated texts tend to be simplified, linguistically, compared to non-translated texts” (2009,106). This is seen in aspects such as “a narrower range of vocabulary; a lower ratio of lexical to running words; a lower average sentence length” (ibid, 107). Normalization, also known as conventionalization or standardization (cf. Toury’s Law of Standardization), “is the hypothesis that translated texts universally tend to make use of typical features of the TL to a greater degree than comparable non-translated texts” (ibid, 78). Examples include the replacement of dialect in the original text with standard language in the target text, normalization of punctuation, and an (extraordinarily) higher frequency of certain lexical items in the target text (ibid, 78). In other words, that the existence of some lexical items is more frequent than others means that the translated text has become more standardized and more mechanical, so to speak. In that sense, the reduction in diversity of choice of words is also an instance of simplification.

It is argued that it is the features in the second category “under-representation” which contribute to the translation-ese, for the reformulation process is interfered by

the source language, in addition to some other factors such as the translator's lack of confidence to make alteration and his/her command of Chinese. With reference to the PACTE model illustrated in Sect. 1, the strategic competence of the translator leaves little to be desired as far as interference and under-representation are concerned. It is hoped to posit that by developing an awareness of the defining characteristics of the Chinese language through incorporating them in an E–C translation syllabus or textbook, the translator is more likely to be able to reduce the traces of translation-ese, if not eliminating all.

4 Defining Characteristics of the Chinese Language

There are various features which define Chinese, some of which are better known than others. It is argued that raising the translator's consciousness of them can facilitate him/her to stand up to interference from the source language during the reformulating process in translation. These defining characteristics, in the form of keywords, serve a good purpose of reminding the translator how a natural Chinese text reads. To facilitate discussion, these characteristics are listed as thus:

- (a) *yìhé* (parataxis)
- (b) linearity
- (c) dynamism
- (d) concreteness
- (e) emphasis on humans and human relationship
- (f) emphasis on holism
- (g) emphasis on a sense of balance.

Prior to further elaboration, it must be noted that a relativist approach is taken as far as these characteristics are concerned. Although the above features have been highlighted as *defining* ones in Chinese, it does not follow that they are not to be found in other languages. What matters is how prominent a certain feature is in a language. For example, much as a sense of balance is not rarely seen in English, for instance, in parallelism, it has a much wider and more significant role to play in the Chinese language. In a similar vein, it has been suggested that concrete words are preferable to abstract words in English (Fowler and Fowler 1931, 15–16; Strunk and White 2000, 21–23). Nonetheless, the Chinese language gives a more distinct impression of concreteness when compared with English. These features will be further explored in greater detail below.

4.1 *Yìhé* 意合 (*Parataxis*)

It is somewhat a platitude to point out that Chinese is a parataxic language as “parataxis” is a textbook term in a great number of, if not all, teaching materials on

E–C translation. Nevertheless, due light has not seemed to be thrown on its relation to the second characteristic: linearity.

According to Crystal, parataxis refers to the “construction of equal status which are linked solely through juxtaposition and punctuation/intonation” (2008, 350). In other words, connectives are not necessary in Chinese sentences, where ambiguities would not be given rise to. Take the following quote from an autobiography of Szeto Wah for instance:

小時候,我對海員的工作十分嚮往,覺得航海可以周遊各地增長見聞,而且船上環境清靜,正好讀書和寫作,兩者都可以為做一個作家作準備... (Szeto 2011, 12–13, emphasis added)

While the conjunction “and” is called for when the words underlined are rendered into English as “travel around *and* open up my horizons,” a connective indicating coordination can be omitted in Chinese. Considering the parataxic nature of the Chinese language, the connective “*hé* 和” (and) between “*dúshū* 讀書” and “*xiězuò* 寫作” may also be left out.

As a matter of fact, absence of connectives is only part of the Chinese concept of *yìhé*. As Li (2011) and (2012) rightly point out, *yìhé* and parataxis are not semantically identical. The latter has a much wider semantic range, contributing to the conciseness and great flexibility—both lexically and syntactically speaking—of the language.

While a subject must be made explicit in English sentences except in imperatives, this is not mandatory in Chinese sentences. It can be taken out in subsequent sentences if it remains unchanged after having been first mentioned. Moreover, it may also be left out if the referent is clear from the context. An interesting example is given by Lee and Tse (1994, 15). While it is grammatically necessary to substitute John with a male pronoun to avoid repetition in “John said that he was going to get married”—a principle which is held dear in English writing, reproducing the pronoun in the Chinese translation could mean that someone else instead of the interlocutor would get married, bringing about ambiguity. Therefore, “*Yuēhàn shuō kuài jiāng jiéhūn* 約翰說快將結婚”—without “he”—would suffice as an idiomatic Chinese translation (*ibid*).

In addition, the Chinese language is syntactically further concise in comparison with English inasmuch as the copular verb is not required if the predicate is an adjective. Whereas the finite verb “be” is essential in the English sentence “The weather was bright today,” it could be simply translated as “*Jīntiān tiānlǎng qìqīng* 今天天朗氣清” in Chinese—the linking verb can be, and should be, left out.

More importantly, any component in a Chinese sentence may, as a matter of fact, literally be omitted, providing that no ambiguities would be resulted in the message to be conveyed successfully, contributing to the high flexibility of the language. A time-honored but timely example because of the COVID-19 pandemic is “hand washing” (*Xǐshǒu* 洗手):

Huíjiā biàn xǐshǒu chī wǔfàn.
回家便洗手吃午飯。

Supposing that the subject is “I”, the English translation would probably read:

I washed my hands for lunch after going home.

While the possessive pronoun “my” is required in the English version, it is redundant in the Chinese counterpart because one normally washes his/her own hands—to question whose hands one would wash under normal circumstances would be a risible idea.

4.2 Linearity

Linearity in Chinese narratives is a consequence of Chinese parataxis. They are often, and are suggested to be in chronological order to avoid ambiguity, for the legitimacy of omitting connectives in Chinese renders the relationship between sentences which are otherwise clearly indicated by English connectives invisible. The following example is a description in the Irish writer Hellen Culler’s novel debut *The Lost Letters of William Woolf*:

(i) He picked up a parcel wrapped in brown paper and tied tightly in string and turned it over in his hands, grimacing to hear it rattle. No address anywhere. He untangled the knot and peeled back the paper to reveal a shoe box that had once held soccer boots, size five. Inside, a large egg shape was cocooned in bubble wrap; **(ii) it felt heavy in his hands as he laid it to one side and picked up the sheet of dotted paper that accompanied it.** The precision of the neat, joined-up handwriting gave the distinct impression of being a newly acquired skill (2018, 61–62; *emphasis and numbering added*)

The post-modifiers and relative clauses often pose difficulties for student translators, for beginners are often uncertain whether they can take the risk to make alteration to the word order. In this example, such phrases as “wrapped in brown paper and tied tightly in string” and “that accompanied it” are likely to stand in their way during the reformulation process. Moreover, that the main clause comes before the subordinate clause in “it felt heavy in his hands as he laid it to one side...” further exacerbates the problem. Bearing in mind the general principle of linearity in Chinese, the translator will be more efficient when recasting them into Chinese. A translation done with reference to this principle may read:

(i) 包裹用牛皮紙包着、繩子捆着。他撿起來,在手中反轉,聽到咕嗒咕嗒作響,擠眉噁嘴做個怪樣。沒有寫地址。解開繩子,撕開包裝紙,看到一個鞋盒,本來是放足球鞋的,是五號的鞋子。**(ii)** 盒內是個蛋狀的東西,用泡泡膠包裹着。盒內附有一張紙,圓點紋的。他把那件東西擱在一旁,撿起那張紙,發覺這件東西拿在手裏沉甸甸的。那張紙以草書寫,但字跡工整嚴謹,一看就覺得是剛剛學成的。(my translation)

Hypotaxis in English poses great challenges to translators, especially trainee translators because the use of connectives enables the possibility of not only long sentences, but also narration that runs against a chronological order, which defies the Chinese

narrative norm. The advantage of an awareness of linearity in Chinese can be illustrated with the second sentence highlighted above. According to the timeline, this is how the story unfolds:

- (1) Inside the box there is an egg shape cocooned in bubble wrap;
- (2) a dotted paper accompanies it;
- (3) He lays the large egg shape to one side;
- (4) He picks up the dotted paper;
- (5) He feels the heaviness of the large egg shape.

Conscious of the general pattern of linearity in Chinese narratives, the translator may conveniently untie the knot in this long sentence and render it in idiomatic Chinese.

4.3 Dynamism

Beginning this feature “dynamism,” it will be seen the close link between culture and language, in particular, how the world view of a culture is reflected in the lexicon. While Greco-Roman culture considers the world static, its Chinese counterpart sees it as a state of flux, a dynamic system where constant alternation between the *yin* energy and *yang* energy takes place. It is, therefore, discernible that where a noun or noun phrase is employed in English has become—or has to become—a verbal construction in order to be natural in Chinese. The requirement for a verbal structure is made manifest in instructions where economy of language is called for. For instance, Cheung (2020) notes that the Chinese language has a fondness for the verbal structure in book titles, film titles, official titles in imperial China, and titles of occupations. In addition to titles, product instructions and road signs are excellent examples. The following introduction illustrates where the baking soda is applicable:

FOR HOUSEHOLD DEODORIZING

Absorbs and eliminates odors on contact.

Garbage & Diaper Pails, Litter Boxes, Carpets, **Dishwasher (between uses)**...

用於家庭除臭

去處下列用具的異味,

垃圾桶和, 垃圾箱, 地毯, **洗碗機(在兩次使用之間)**.....

What deserves our attention has been bolded. In English, prepositions and hence substantival structures are in wide use as a result of the keen observation of the Greco-Roman cultural emphasis on rational thought (Cheung 2020). Provided that it is the verb, however, which contributes to the exactitude and brevity in Chinese, the translation would look awkward if the preposition-noun structure were to be replicated. Instead, a verb is called into play in order to reproduce the succinctness in the English original. Therefore, rather than “*zài liǎngcì shǐyòng zhī jiān* 在兩次使用之間,” the translation a native speaker of Chinese would expect may read “*shǐyòng qiánhòu* 使用前後.”

Another example which may throw further light in this respect is a road sign in Hong Kong. It has recently been reported that there are two versions of the road sign in Chinese which reads “All Destinations” in English (Yau 2020): one is “*Suǒyǒu mùdìdì* 所有目的地” and the other is “*Wǎng gèqū* 往各區.” In addition to interrogating the exactitude of the word “all” and ambiguity arisen, the article rightly points out that the former translation is confusing and sloppy, although it is more faithful to the English original. The reason for the author’s doubt over the seriousness of the translation is precisely the choice of a noun phrase over a verbal construction in a Chinese road sign, which is against the linguistic norm in the eyes of Chinese speakers. It must be pointed out, however, that Yau’s remark that the former translation is more faithful to the source text is not entirely correct, for both versions are semantically identical. What contributes to the seeming fidelity of the former is only a formal one.

Let us return to the foregoing baking soda example, which does not only help illustrate dynamism as a defining characteristic of the Chinese language, but also another core feature: “concreteness”—the substantival “*shǐyòng* 使用” further exacerbates the “translation-ese” in the example.

4.4 Concreteness

While English is morphologically more concrete in comparison with French⁷, Chinese outperforms the former, for this Oriental language is far more imagerial. The Chinese characters themselves are a case in point. Take *cū* 麤 (broad; thick)—which has today generally been substituted with 粗, a homophonic character much simpler in form in everyday use—for example. 麤 is comprised of three deer (*lù* 鹿)⁸. According to *Shuōwén jiězì* 說文解字—the forefather of Chinese etymology—the compound of three deer means “travelling for a huge distance” (*xíng chāo yuǎn yě* 行超遠也) (Xu 1963 rpt, 203). From this are meanings such as “imprecise,” “large,” “broadness,” and “ruthless,” etc., derived (Duan 1981 rpt, 472).

Concreteness of the Chinese language is discernible in various aspects. First of all, a sentence subject is usually—and should be—as concrete as possible. To be precise, an abstract subject would cause the reader to take more time to understand the sentence in question, if not rendering it unintelligible. Take “*jùlí chǎnshēng měi* 距離產生美” for example, which has been seen on the Mainland asking consumers not to touch the objects in display. *Jùlí* being an abstract noun, that it is placed on the subject position defies how Chinese sentences are usually formed and understood, perhaps rendering it not efficient enough to keep one off from what is in display, despite its well-intended sense of humor.

⁷The comparative morphological concreteness of English in Indo-European languages is best encapsulated in Ames’s analysis of D.C. Lau’s choice of words in translating Chinese philosophical works (1992, xiv–xviii).

⁸Much as there are indeed three deer in this example, the number “three” is often a symbol of “many” in Chinese and is sometimes not meant to be taken literally.

A similar example that would cause misleading is “*xíngshì bǐ rén qiáng* 形勢比人強.” According to *Guóyǔ cídiǎn* 國語辭典, what it means is that one is placed in a helpless state because of the circumstances (“*shíshì bǐ rén qiáng* 時勢比人強”). A variant of this phrase is “*shíshì bǐ rén qiáng* 時勢比人強.” Provided the *yìhé* nature of the Chinese language, nonetheless, the reader is easily led to think that *xíngshì* (circumstances) refers to his/her own.

What is worth of attention—and often neglected by students of translation—is that abstract ideas in Chinese are often expressed in a concrete manner. Adjectives of degree is a case in point. To express such concepts as length, height, weight, and luminosity, the traditional practice is to juxtapose the two ends of the continuum of a particular word of degree. For instance, instead of *guāngdù* 光度, a more localized expression of luminosity in Chinese should be *guāng’àn* 光暗, literally “lightness and darkness.” In this regard, “clutch”—the part of the vehicle which connects and disconnects the engine with the wheels—is aptly translated as “*lǐhéqì* 離合器,” literally “disconnect—connect—device.”

4.5 *Emphasis on Humans and Human Relationships*

The Chinese language is further concrete in the sense that a sentence is often written from the point of view of humans. Chinese culture places a premium on the role of humans in the universe. The definitions of “human beings” (*ren* 人) and “big” (*da* 大) in the *Shuōwén jiězì* throws much light on this:

Ren 人: “The creature of the greatest importance in the universe. 天地之性最貴者也.” (Xu 1963, 161)

Da 大: “The Heaven is big, so is the Earth. Humans are equally big. 天大, 地大, 人亦大.” (Xu 1963, 213)

It is not surprising to see that human beings are defined as the “creature of the greatest importance in this universe,” but one may wonder in what (possible) way can humans be as big as the heaven and earth. This is, of course, out of the question, from the vantage point of Physics. What the lexicographer emphasizes is the role of human beings in the universe. Precisely speaking, Chinese philosophies are not least concerned with the fact that human beings are part of the universe. In particular, Chinese culture has a special emphasis on how human beings should keep in tune with the laws of the universe (*Tao/Dao* 道) in every way in order to achieve *an* 安, roughly meaning safe and peaceful in English, the *summum bonum* of Confucianism (see Cheung 2019 for detail).

This view of the relationship between humans and the universe has much implication on the sentence structure in Chinese. While literally everything may serve as the subject of a sentence in English—an object, an emotion, or an abstract noun, as a result of the keen observation developed of the Greco-Roman peoples because of their long tradition of scientific enquiry and rational thought (see Cheung 2020 for

detail), the sentence subject in Chinese tends to be humans. Where the subject is an abstract noun in English, it would be the working of the five senses in Chinese. Here is an example from L.P. Hartley's *The Go Between*:

My appearance was greeted with cries of acclaim, as if the whole party had been living for this moment (1958, 48)

The abstract noun phrase “my appearance” would perhaps lead translation students to render this example as “*Wǒ de chūxiàn bào yǐ lián shēng de zànshǎng* 我的出現報以連聲的讚賞。” The abstraction in the subject position may probably render this translation unnatural to the Chinese ears. An awareness of the importance of human beings in Chinese culture and hence its implication on Chinese syntax would probably facilitate the translator to put it as “*Dàjiā kànjiàn wǒ dū fēnfēn zànshǎng* 大家看見我都紛紛讚賞。”

Chinese culture does not only have a special emphasis on human beings, but also on human relationships. This is because of the fact that a great majority of things in this world, if not all, can be placed along a continuum of degree such as size, distance, relationship, to name but three (Cheung 2019, 230), one should also demonstrate the hierarchy in human relationships in order to bring oneself in tune with the rhythm of the universe.

This hierarchical relationship is duly reflected in the choice of words. An illuminating example is the pronoun “you” in Chinese. While there is no difference in the second person pronoun in contemporary English, its Chinese translation varies with the addressee. Instead of the usual form *nǐ* 你, which is used for addressing those of a lower status, *nín* 您—beneath *nǐ* carries the character for “heart” (*xīn* 心)—should be chosen when the other end of the communication is of a higher status. This is somewhat similar to the difference between “you” and “thou” in Shakespeare’s English (Johnson 2013, 133–138).

The emphasis on human relationships is also closely relevant to the politeness principle in Chinese, which generally tends to see self-deprecation when referring to the speaker whereas the addressee would regard the addresser highly when s/he is a stranger, who would be usually be accorded with a higher status. A simple example is that one would call his/her house *hánshè* 寒舍 while that of the addressee *fǔ shàng* 府上. In the example illustrating how subtraction as a translation technique works in the introductory section, my translation of “I am a Mathematics teacher” was “*Wǒ shì Shùxué lǎoshī*.” In fact, the translator has lost sight of the importance of the politeness principle in Chinese. “Laoshi” is a term of address which shows respect for the addresser. To be humble and in line with the Chinese politeness principle, this sentence should be rendered as “*Wǒ jiào Shùxué de* 我教數學的。” Moreover, as mentioned, there is a preference for the verbal construction in Chinese. Therefore, occupations are often expressed in verbs in Chinese.

The Chinese politeness principle is inspired by the symbolization in the 15th hexagram of the *Book of Change (I Ching)*—“*Qiān* 謙” (Humbleness). The lower three lines of the hexagram represent the mountain and the upper three the Earth, including the seabed. In theory, the mountain is on the Earth, but that the Earth

stands above the towering mountain clues one to the principle of humbleness: self-deprecation.

4.6 *Emphasis on Holism*

The aforementioned examples in 4.5 do not only shed light on the concreteness of the Chinese language, but also the importance attached to the idea of wholeness (*quánmiàn* 全面). In contrast to the individualism of Greco-Roman culture, Chinese culture sets much store by holism because of the influence of the *Book of Change* (*I Ching*), which is considered to have inspired Chinese—in particular Confucian—philosophical concepts. One of the impacts is that a “zooming-in” approach has become a norm in Chinese narratives. Take the following excerpt from Stefan Merrill Block’s *The Story of Forgetting* as an example:

From the empty streets of its ancient, golden capital spreads the land of Isidora, a land without memory, where every need is met and every sadness is forgotten (Block 2008, 13).

Inversion is commonly seen in fiction, which poses difficulties for students when translating into Chinese. Influenced by the original word order, the translation may start with “streets,” following the narrative in the source text. The target text would be more idiomatic if the translator stays conscious of the “zooming-in” norm in Chinese and probably becomes:

伊斯多拿……街上空無一人。

In the translation, humans are placed in the context of streets, which are then situated in the city, which is the largest in size among these three items.

Another impact is that the same idea is expressed from both the positive and negative sides simultaneously. The idiom *tǎntè bùān* 忐忑不安 serves a good example. The meaning of *tǎntè* is “worried” and that of *bùān* is “not at peace.” The juxtaposition of *tǎntè* (worried) and its negated antonym *bùān* (not at peace) contributes not only to a sense of holism, but also a sense of balance, which is the last defining feature of Chinese to be explored below.

4.7 *Emphasis on a Sense of Balance*

The ultimate goal of Confucianism does not only inform how one behaves in relation to the planet Earth, but also contributes to an emphasis on a sense of balance in the Chinese language, for it is only when things are in pairs which will lead to stability. The sense of balance is seen in several aspects.

First of all, such an emphasis gives rise to repetition in monosyllabic words (*diézi*) and bi-syllabic or polysyllabic words (*diécí*). In the previous pages, two examples

were given, which are *tōngtōng* and *kèqì kèqì*. To better illustrate the Chinese predilection for a sense of balance, more examples are given. When one extends his/her gratitude to others, another response could be “*xiǎoshì* 小事,” which is comparable response to *don't mention it* or *it's nothing* in English, but the phrase is usually repeated, reading “*xiǎoshì xiǎoshì*.”

Moreover, the penchant for a sense of balance encourages the repetition of the same idea in different wording (in the same number of words) in order to sound stable. Take the following excerpt from the obituary of Arthur Waley by David Hawkes for example:

The devoted attention of Mrs. Waley, however, enabled him to make a gradual recovery from the despondency and prostration of that period, and his zest for work had fully returned to him by the time he was struck down...There is every indication that a period of vigorous and productive work was abruptly ended by the *unlucky conjunction of accident and disease* (Hawkes 1967, 143; italics added).

然而，韋利太太悉心照料，他得以漸漸好轉過來，病重離世前已完完全全重拾幹勁工作……[凡此種種]，皆見意外病魔雙至，禍不單行，教韋利過去數年孜孜不倦、成果豐碩的歲月戛然告終。(my translation)

In my translation, “*jiànjiàn* 漸漸” and “*zīzī* 孜孜” are monosyllabic repetitions. It must be noted that they are morphologically different. While the repetition in *jiànjiàn* serves the function of emphasis, *zīzī*—the two characters together—is a lexeme per se. The bi-syllabic repetition of *wánwán quánquán* 完完全全 is also for emphatic purposes. “Unlucky conjunction of accident and disease” has been rendered as “*yìwài bìngmó shuāng zhì, huò bù dān xíng* 意外病魔雙至，禍不單行.” “*Huò bù dān xíng*” is an idiom, which is an antithetical comment on “*yìwài bìngmó shuāng zhì*,” not only creating a sense of syntactic balance, but also succinctly bringing the meaning of “unlucky” across.

The partiality for a sense of balance may perhaps explain the predominance of four-character words, which are often idioms, in Chinese, for they do not only create a touch of succinctness, but also a strong sense of stability. It must be noted that the sense of balance is not only achieved on the lexical level, but also on the phonetic level, a dimension which might be unfamiliar to translation students. Take “*sānxīn liǎngyì* 三心兩意” and “*yánnián yìshòu* 延年益壽” for instance. Semantically speaking, *sānxīn* and *liǎngyì* are interchangeable in everyday use, so as *yánnián* and *yìshòu*. Since Chinese is a tonal language, the tone of an individual character may also be a factor in the decision-making of the choice of words. In these two examples, *xīn* and *yì* represent the two ends of the dichotomy between the level tone (*píngshēng* 平聲) and the oblique tone (*zèshēng* 仄聲): the former is a level-tone character whereas the latter is an oblique-tone one. In similar fashion, *nián* is of the level tone and *shòu* fits to the category of the oblique tone.

5 Concluding Remarks

In the foregoing pages, with reference to the concept of translation universals, it has been argued that translation can be seen in the light of resistance to underrepresentation, and that the inclusion of the defining characteristics of the Chinese language in an E–C translation course syllabus and textbook may enhance the effectiveness of teaching translation into Chinese. The seven defining characteristics of Chinese are *yìhé*, linearity, dynamism, concreteness, and an emphasis on humans and human relationship, on holism, and on a sense of balance. It must be noted that while these characteristics were explored separately, two or more of them often appear in an example simultaneously in real practice. For instance, my translation of Hawkes's obituary of Waley in the previous section does not only reveal the sense of balance in the Chinese language, but also a holistic perspective as both the positive side (*shuāng zhì*) and negative side (*bù dān xíng*) are presented simultaneously. A preponderance of holism is also noted in my translation of the excerpt from Culler's novel debut.

At a glance, the idea of defining characteristics of Chinese may suggest prescriptivism, which is in contrast to the trend of a descriptivist approach in Translation Studies. It has been pointed out in the introductory section, however, that it is readability that this chapter is concerned with. With reference to the clarification by Venuti, fluency and readability are not necessarily compromised with foreignization. I hope to throw more light on this before bringing this chapter to a close. Studies on Europeanized constructions in Chinese tend to conclude that Westernized structures are an irreversible development in this language with contact with the West in a globalized era. Needless to say, Europeanized Chinese is a foreignizing strategy as far as translation is concerned. Nevertheless, communication—the very purpose of translation—would not be undermined if these defining characteristics of the Chinese language can be preserved.

This chapter is significant in pushing back the frontiers, setting the scene for further discussion on the delicate balance between language teaching and teaching translation. Moreover, it has implications for educators on the design of course syllabuses of E–C translation and for authors of textbooks on translation into Chinese. Its originality lies not only in the incorporation of the defining characteristic of Chinese in an E–C translation textbook or course syllabus, but also in the presentation of them in a systematic manner in the context of Chinese culture.

Nonetheless, this piece of study is not without limitations. It represents a theoretical exploration based on the current landscape of textbooks on E–C translation. Empirical studies are called into play for evidence as to the effectiveness of the approach proposed. Moreover, this chapter presents a broad way forward only. Further deliberation is warranted when more delicate issues such as students' stage of learning are taken into consideration.

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