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Translation Quarterly No. 61, September 2011

Special Issue I: Papers from the FIT
Sixth Asian Translators' Forum

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Chief Editor's Note

Beginning with the present issue, we will be publishing selected papers from the FIT Sixth Asian Translators' Forum, on the theme of "Translation and Intercultural Communication: Past, Present and Future".

The Asian Translators' Forum is an international conference and a significant event in the Asian regional translation community, held every three years under the auspices of the International Federation of Translators/Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs (FIT). The first forum was held in Beijing (1995), the second in Seoul, South Korea (1998), the third in Hong Kong (2001), the fourth in Beijing (2004), and the fifth in Bogor, Indonesia (2007). The Sixth Forum, held in Macau on 6-8 November 2010, was co-organized by the Federation of Translators and Interpreters of Macau and the University of Macau.

The *Translation Quarterly* is happy to serve, once again, as the channel for the publication of papers originally presented at that Forum. Long-time readers of this journal will remember that Issues 23-29 (2002-03) were devoted to papers from the Third Asian Translators' Forum, so this is the second time around. Professor Wang Dongfeng (Sun Yat-sen University, Guangzhou, PRC) and the editors started to receive submissions at the beginning of this year; they were subsequently reviewed by experts in the various subject areas. Here the Chief Editor would like to

express special thanks to Professor Zhang Meifang (University of Macau) for co-ordinating the effort and offering assistance whenever it was needed.

Leo Chan

Fall 2011

Opening Address

FIT Sixth Asian Translators' Forum

Marion Boers

President, International Federation of Translators

It gives me great pleasure to participate in the opening of the FIT Sixth Asian Translators' Forum here in Macau and I am honoured to have been invited to attend, together with my colleagues of the Executive Committee of the International Federation of Translators. On behalf of FIT, I bring you the good wishes of the Council and all the translators represented by FIT for a successful and fruitful forum that reflects the amount of work put into the preparations by the organisers.

The FIT Asian Translators' Forums are the most significant events organised on behalf of FIT on the Asian continent and as such offer us an opportunity to engage with translators, interpreters and terminologists in Asia, also those that are not members of FIT. This is extremely important for us, because as an international federation we must be aware of the local situation in all parts of the world, and the best way for us to do this is through contact with those who are working in the profession in those areas. Personal contact always offers the greatest opportunities for learning, and we hope that this learning will

take place in many directions: for FIT and its members to learn about translation in Asia, for translators in Asia to learn about the way the profession is practised in other parts of the world, and for the delegates and speakers to share their knowledge and experience and learn from one another.

The theme of this Forum—*Translation and Intercultural Communication: Past, Present and Future*—is an appropriate one. The world of translation is changing at a great rate, and it is important to look back at where we have come from and evaluate the present in terms of where we are going. Globalisation has caused the horizons for translators to expand: it is now possible to work for clients almost anywhere in the world, and clients are also realising that they can obtain their translators from the other side of the world and benefit from differences in time zones and pricing. At the same time, with the increase in competition and opening of the world, we are seeing a move towards localisation and specialisation. It is therefore important for the translator to be familiar with conditions in their target market and the most benefit is obtained if one specialises in a real niche market or micro-domain. At the same time that these changes are affecting the daily work of the translator, they affect the training that is offered in the profession, as this training also needs to remain up to date in order to prepare translators properly for their future work. Last month I attended a conference at the European Union where they have been working for almost ten years on a European

Masters in Translation, setting the parameters that should apply for a high-quality training programme. Perhaps in time something similar may grow out of these Asian regional forums—that would indeed be a positive development and an achievement along the pathway to setting truly international standards for our profession.

There are therefore many challenges facing modern translators, and I am sure that many of them will be discussed and analysed in detail over the next three days. This is the greatest benefit of Forums like this one—bringing people together to talk. Another opportunity to do much the same thing is at FIT’s World Congresses, which are also held every three years. The next one takes place in San Francisco in the United States next year in August and it would be wonderful to see many of you attending that too. The Congress is open to everyone—you do not have to belong to a FIT member association to attend. If you would like to be considered for presenting a paper at the congress, you can submit a proposal up to 10 December—so don’t delay!

It is difficult to say what the future of the profession is going to be. There are many more opportunities for young translators, interpreters and terminologists today than there were in the past. At the same time, there is far more competition and there are many challenges. I hope that the discussions that take place over the next three days will offer the participants new ideas and encouragement in their professional lives. I wish you all every success, at this Forum and into the future.

Tsubouchi's Shakespeares and the Quest for Cultural Norms in Modernizing Japan

Daniel Gallimore

Abstract

Tsubouchi Shōyō was an influential writer during Japan's period of modernization, nowadays probably best known for his pioneering translations of the Complete Works of William Shakespeare. Following the ideologies of the time, Tsubouchi sought to hybridize elements of modern Western and traditional Japanese culture in order to stimulate the emerging modern Japanese theatre, and in this way to contribute to the formation of a modern Japanese identity; this was a pursuit that gained particular significance in the 1920s, when Tsubouchi was completing his Shakespeare translations, and as modernity was being criticized for depriving the language of its traditional networks of poetic reference. Tsubouchi's own brand of hybridity refers to a unique blend of classical and contemporary linguistic styles, which, due to language change, had become outdated by the 1970s. In particular, the translations are said to be redolent of kabuki, the popular theatrical genre that dates from the 17th century, which Tsubouchi himself frequently compared with Shakespearean drama. If we are to believe

the critics, Tsubouchi's translations obstruct the transmission of Shakespeare's meanings in an effort to accommodate Shakespeare to the tastes of an audience obsessed with its identity. Yet rather than castigating Tsubouchi for the faults of Japanese modernity, this article seeks to reassess his achievement in terms of a search for literary norms that is derived in part from the original texts. For example, in the preface to his translation of The Merchant of Venice (first published in 1914), Tsubouchi comments that while the plot is "unnatural" (fushizen) and unbelievable, the characterization is remarkably "natural" (shizen) (Tsubouchi 1933b: ii). Since Tsubouchi always aims to recreate the rhetorical effect of the original through his stylistic register, one might also argue that, like Shakespeare, he is striving to attain normativity through the congruence of "natural" and "unnatural" elements. In other words, Tsubouchi's Shakespeares espouses values that may be at odds with the cultural norms of his society, which Tsubouchi makes palatable to his audiences by presenting them as stylized dramatic fantasies that conceal their innate potential for subversion.

Translating Shakespeare in an Age of Change

The period during which Tsubouchi Shōyō (1859-1935) translated Shakespeare was a period of remarkable change in the Japanese language that is arguably as extreme as the Great Vowel Shift, which distinguished

Chaucer's Middle English of the 14th century from Shakespeare's early Modern English of the late 16th century. In the case of Tsubouchi's generation, linguistic change was accomplished over a period of forty years (the 1880s through to the 1920s) by an amalgamation of the colloquial and classical written forms (the process known as *genbun icchi*), with a further democratization of the language after 1945.^[1]

When Tsubouchi first translated Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* in 1884, the Japanese period was used solely to separate paragraphs or blocks of speech, and the comma to separate phrases from each other. The overall effect was one of statements and images piling on top of each other, and this cumulative effect was enhanced by the use of syllabic meter. The technique is deployed most dramatically in the assassination of Caesar, where the terse speech of the original is interwoven with descriptions of the characters' feelings, postures and actions, as for example Caesar's famous dying words:

Et tu, Brute?—Then fall, Caesar. *Dies.* (3.1.77)

*ya Burutasu, nanji made ga, to tada hitogoto wo kono yo wo nagori, gaitō
kazukite omote wo ōi, nijū yosō wo kōmurite, tachi narabitaru shōzō no, ōki ga
uchi ni Ponpei ga, zō no botori e fushimarobi, hakanaku iki wa taenikeri.*
(Tsubouchi 1978a: 364)

“You too, Brutus.”—saying these few words he leaves the world—his toga before him—cut in twenty places—twenty statues [in the Roman Forum] lined in a row—in the midst of them Pompey [Caesar's former rival, who had died fighting Caesar's army]—prostrate in the dust beneath the statues—Caesar's fragile body expires.^[2]

Most of the phrases observe the seven-five syllabic scheme, for example

tachi naribataru (7) *shōzō no* (5). Looking at the translation on the printed page, it is difficult to tell who is speaking when, except that Tsubouchi does invent Sino-Japanese compounds for the names of characters, and these names sometimes suggest something about the characters concerned; “Caesar” is rendered with three characters that together can mean “space of the lion’s power”, and pronounced *Shizaru*. Although Tsubouchi’s translation is linguistically accurate, and he goes to quite ingenious lengths to include the details of Shakespeare’s text into his metrical scheme, overall the impression is one of narrative rather than drama. Tsubouchi is binding the various voices of Shakespeare’s text into an argument about tyranny and republicanism in which Caesar’s killing is first applauded and then condemned, but although he translated the play against a background of political uncertainty in his own country, ^[3] he did not necessarily appreciate the historical facts of Caesar’s assassination.

By the 1880s, after some thirty years of exposure to the outside world, Japan too was learning to adapt. While intellectuals such as Tsubouchi were attracted by foreign imports such as parliamentary democracy, ^[4] such demands had to be balanced against the ideology of imperial oligarchy (*kokutai*) centred on the person of the Meiji emperor and formulated in the Meiji Constitution of 1889 and the Imperial Rescript on Education of 1890. By the time that Tsubouchi completed his Shakespeare translations in 1927, the Emperor’s role as the spiritual focus of national identity had been properly theorized, adult males at least had been granted the franchise, and since the 1900s, the written language had started to be punctuated in the English style with periods at the end of the sentence and commas to separate clauses. Moreover, whereas Tsubouchi had nativized the names of Shakespeare’s characters in the 1880s, in later years he took great pains to make the correct pronunciation of Shakespeare’s names conform with Japanese

phonology, or rather to communicate Shakespeare's original pronunciation as accurately as possible to Japanese readers. Writing with reference to Shakespeare's history plays, he explains that

For readers familiar with the pronunciation of the English names, the pronunciation of Henry, Gurney, Ketley and Wolsey as Henri, Gāni, Ketori and Ūruji, makes no difference, but for people with no knowledge of English the orthography would seem to be rather misleading. It is strange when *ji* is like the suffix *-ji* meaning "temple", and *tori* means "bird". So I changed them to Henri, Gāni and Uruji. (Tsubouchi 2010: 57-58)

Tsubouchi's initial translation of *Julius Caesar* was separated from his eventual translations of the Complete Works (including a completely new version of *Julius Caesar*) by twenty years of intensive study and teaching of the plays through to the 1900s. The impression given by these new translations is not the frenetic accumulation of images but rather a democratic allocation of parts, a dialectic of characters and voices.

However much he may have welcomed the breadth of Shakespeare's vision, Tsubouchi's motives for translating Shakespeare were typically nationalistic for a man of his age and background. As a young man growing up and coming of age in the first two decades of Meiji Japan, Tsubouchi was one of the privileged few to have access to a Western liberal education, and in a unique position to recognize the limitations of his own culture, and so propose reforms. Tsubouchi's major contributions were in the fields of drama and fiction, but in a more general sense he can be said to have contributed to the creation of *kokugo*, the national language, which emerges in the 1890s as a conscious response to the hegemony of English. As Lee Yeounsuk (2010)

has argued, the establishment of *kokugo* as a literary and communicative norm became inseparable from the existence of the nation state. If Shakespeare translation becomes one means by which the community of readers and audiences communicates with itself, albeit on the rather limited scale of early 20th century Japan, then Tsubouchi's Shakespeare's translations are surely of considerable significance. Although it is difficult to gauge the precise nature and extent of their significance, the diversity of Shakespeare adaptations and translations during the Meiji era (1868-1912), the popularity of Shakespeare in the emerging modern theatre of the 1900s, together with the interest shown by mainstream writers such as Natsume Sōseki and Shiga Naoya, have all been thoroughly chronicled (e.g., Kawato 2004).

Shakespeare translation encourages Tsubouchi not so much to extend the modern Japanese lexicon but to develop its powers of expression. One example is Hamlet's exclamation "What piece of work is a man" (2.2.269), which Tsubouchi translates as *Ningen wa, ma, nantaru zōka no myōkō ja!* (Tsubouchi 1933a: 89). This is a solemn, rhythmical translation in which what Hamlet is saying is dramatized with the little word *ma* ("well"), although what is perhaps more intriguing about this version is the similarity of the word *myōkō* ("subtle craftsmanship") to *daiku* ("carpenter" or "craftsman"), since *kō* and *ku* are written with the same character, meaning "craft". In a speech he gave in 1928 to celebrate the complete publication of his translations (quoted in Kawatake and Yanagida 1988: 740), Tsubouchi compared his role as translator with that of a ship's carpenter, the ship itself being a vessel transporting the goods of Shakespeare's plays to Japan:

The publication of my translations was a most adventurous undertaking, having been accomplished in the midst of the current world depression and brought to shore at a perilous time when the

winds were at their roughest and the waves rode high. These boats—
if I may so—bore a cargo of incomparable value, the works of William
Shakespeare, and they were Japanese boats.

By contrast, Hamlet's spiritual sense of the magnificence of human endeavour, and of the forces that create it, is immediately negated by his disavowal, "Man delights not me—nor women neither" (2.2.274-275). No doubt Tsubouchi is able to save himself from Hamlet's bipolarity—the duality of sacrifice and retention of identity—by his identification with the nation state, or at least with Waseda, the university that had employed him for the previous forty years.

Writing in 1940, five years after Tsubouchi's death, a Shakespeare scholar of the younger generation named Toyoda Minoru expressed unambiguous praise for how far Japan had come in the previous seventy years that it now had its own translation of the Complete Works, as well as gratitude "for the peace and tranquility in which I have been able to finish my task [his historical study of Shakespeare in Japan], for that peace and tranquility have been dearly won for us at home at the cost of peril and hardship to our brethren at the front in the midst of the China Affair" (Toyoda 1940: 77). Toyoda must certainly have been aware of Japanese aggression in China, although perhaps less so of the extent of the Nanking Massacre of early 1937, and yet statements such as these inevitably raise questions about the motives of Shakespeare studies and translation in pre-war Japan.

Tsubouchi and the Status Quo

As I have mentioned, Tsubouchi was at heart a nationalist who worked for the advancement of his national culture, but I wish also to

argue that he is at the same time quite far removed from the status quo of the nation state, and that his Shakespeare translations may be his own way of registering and to some extent resolving the contradictions he saw in the society around him, thereby creating his own norms. The normative approach, as it has developed in Translation Studies since the 1970s, has been an attempt to account for the choices that translators make, and has therefore tended to be descriptive rather than prescriptive in aim. In Japanese translation history, one of the most pervasive norms has been the Meiji slogan of *wakon yōsai*, or “Japanese spirit and Western talent”. This is to say that the implicit purpose of translation under the Meiji Constitution would have been to frame Western ideas and literature within the evolving framework of the *kokutai* (literally, “national body”). This process is demonstrated most starkly in the choice of texts translated,^[5] but can also be glimpsed in Tsubouchi’s attempts to align Shakespeare with the *kabuki* master Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653-1724):

Fifty percent of Shakespeare is idealist; the other half is realist. Chikamatsu is not so well-balanced; he is seventy percent idealist and thirty percent realist, but probably because of the musical tone of his works, this excessive idealism becomes blurred, and what he writes strikes one as factual, although it is often a perfect fake. Both often present rather a vulgar or unethical view of life. Because, however, of their melodious pens, their writings never impress us as being worldly. (Tsubouchi 1960: 223-224)

In the post-war era, as the 1946 constitution allowed for a more heterogeneous society, with the Emperor’s role redefined and the franchise extended to women, we can say that translation has come to serve more discrete and heterogeneous purposes, culminating over the

last twenty years in “a cultural turn” of sorts, that is defined by native contexts rather than universalism or the model of cultural exchange. One of the problems of dealing with a translator like Tsubouchi is that, like Western predecessors such as John Dryden, he is both a translator and a theorist. Not only does he write at length about translating Shakespeare in the prefaces to his translations as well as occasional essays, but his whole career was based on a theory of fiction that he first propounded in his twenties in his *Shōsetsu shinzui* (“The Essence of the Novel”) (Tsubouchi 1981), which established social and psychological realism as the dominant goals of the modern Japanese novel. In Shakespeare Tsubouchi recognized a writer of unusual verbal and imaginative power that necessitated a definite critical detachment in order to avoid losing one’s identity within Shakespeare’s historical horizon.

In maintaining critical detachment, the norm that Tsubouchi established in his Shakespeare translations was a dialectic of the classical and contemporary: a reproduction of the dramatic interface between presence and absence as a linguistic and psychological duality of old-fashioned style and colloquial register, of lived history and present experience. Tsubouchi’s role as a translator was no doubt the natural consequence of his tendency to conflate past and present, Japanese and foreign. Recent scholars such as Ueda Atsuko have roundly criticized Tsubouchi’s assault on the *gesaku* fiction of the Tokugawa era (1603-1868), the unlikely tales of love, revenge and the supernatural that emerged from the merchant quarters of 18th and 19th century Japan. In *Shōsetsu shinzui*, Tsubouchi singled out the *gesaku* writer Takizawa Bakin, who died in 1846, and whom Tsubouchi appreciated as a storyteller but instinctively regarded as inadequate in the face of the English Victorian novelists. Ueda defends Bakin against the charges of two-dimensional didacticism, portraying him as a literary mentor of what was to become the People’s Rights Movement in 1880s Japan, in other

words as a writer with an audience and a political trajectory:

[Tsubouchi's] renunciation of Bakin signified a renunciation of a worldview shared and continually reproduced through a communal and ritualized practice of reading and recitation that prefigured a revolution. (Ueda 2007: 86)

Ueda is right to criticize Tsubouchi for conflating Western and Japanese literary traditions, in particular the English novel with Japanese fictional genres, which is a conflation on the same level of naivety as assuming that Japan could have had no tradition of popular protest until Nakae Chōmin had translated Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Du Contrat Social* in 1871. Tsubouchi wrote *Shōsetsu shinzui* at around the same time as he was translating *Julius Caesar*, and so it is quite likely that having exulted at the assassination of Julius Caesar, he then realized the terrible penalty that Brutus and the other assassins would have to pay for their murder of the oligarch. ^[6]

Despite his implicit defense of oligarchy, Tsubouchi was far from being at the elite centre of the *kokutai*. He was by his own account an unsuccessful student at the Imperial University, so that rather than passing into the ranks of the new bureaucracy, he had to support himself through writing and patronage, but by 1889 (when he was just 30) had established enough of a reputation to be invited to launch the Faculty of Humanities at the Tokyo Senmon Gakkō, which was in 1902 to become Waseda University. Waseda was, and still is, a leading private university for gifted provincials like Tsubouchi, who in 1890s Japan would have steered clear of the debates on Social Darwinism centred on the Imperial University. Tsubouchi himself was skeptical of Herbert Spencer's ideology of the survival of the fittest, preferring the gentler Renaissance humanism of Shakespeare.

Gentle Shakespeare, Gentle Tsubouchi

According to the cultural historian Irokawa Daikichi (Irokawa 1985: 308-309), Tsubouchi's liberalism finds its most compelling expression in the primary school textbooks that he wrote between 1899 and 1901 (Tsubouchi 2006). These textbooks were Japanese language primers that sold as many as 100,000 copies before being censored by the government. The passages that were censored were those that implicitly rejected the notion of the emperor as a living god, that praised social philanthropy above entrepreneurial gain, and which criticized racial discrimination, even though all of Tsubouchi's examples had been taken from Japanese literature and history. During this somewhat brief period of acclaim, Tsubouchi's textbooks were certainly as popular as his Shakespeare translations were later to become, although towards the end of his life, it was the translations which he regarded as his greatest achievement. Yet since in their own way, plays such as *Othello* and *The Tempest* are profoundly skeptical of both racial discrimination (in Iago's contempt for the Moorish general Othello) and the notion of a living god (in the bitterness and ultimate rejection of the magus Prospero), one might argue that his Shakespeare translations were merely an elusive version of what he had been attempting earlier.

Tsubouchi may be seen not only as a translator who conforms to and reacts against a variable but often oppressive set of norms, but also as one who seeks to create his own norms. In a sense, this is quite typical of modern Japanese writers who, feeling uncomfortable with Western-derived theories of universalism (in particular, Christianity), were forced to retreat to notions of culture that focused on the individual self as an entity that could never be adequately realized (Morton 2003: 17). Shakespeare translation, therefore, had the distinct advantage of offering neither an integrated theory of the self, nor indeed of the

translator's self. Yet even if Tsubouchi could never dare to gauge the depths of Shakespeare's mind, it is clear that he glimpsed in Shakespeare's incongruities a universalism that other writers sought to deny.

One of Tsubouchi's dichotomies—and a central concern of other Meiji writers such as Shimazaki Tōson coming to terms with concepts of nature broader than their own—is between the natural and unnatural, as when he writes that he finds the plot of Shakespeare's controversial comedy *The Merchant of Venice* “unnatural” but its characterization “natural” (1933b: xii). What he means by this dichotomy is likely to be that while the plot is obvious and easily dismissed, conversely the characters elude definition. In the story, Jewish and Christian values are conflated through the forced conversion of Shylock to the Christian faith and his betrayal by his daughter Jessica, and it is arguably this confusion of Jewish and Christian timeframes that lends strangeness to the plot, and is reflected in the strangest element of all, the power that her Portia's late father exerts in deciding her marriage partner.

Portia's suitors are asked to determine between three caskets, one made of gold, another of silver, and a third of lead, in only one of which (the leaden one) is to be found the portrait of Portia and a verse awarding her hand in marriage:

You that choose not by the view

Chance as fair, and choose as true (3.2.131-132)

The process of selection is naturalized, as it is only Bassanio, the one who is closest to Portia in terms of character and cultural background, and (not surprisingly) the only one of the three suitors whom Portia appears to love, who has the necessary gift of humility (“base lead”), and so chooses the correct casket.

Readers and audiences in Meiji Japan were fascinated by this game

of love, and it remained the most popular of Shakespeare's plays in Japan through to the end of the Meiji era, when it was supplanted by *Hamlet*. What fascinated them was not so much the casket scene but the trial scene in Act 4, Scene 2, when Shylock almost succeeds in his bid to extract from his rival Christian merchant, Antonio, a pound of flesh for his failure to repay a loan of 3,000 ducats before being stopped in his steps by Portia, in her disguise as a young male lawyer (and in reality the recently betrothed of Antonio's friend, Bassanio, to whom he has given the money to pay Portia's dowry). She cites other laws intended to prevent threats against the lives of Venetian citizens. In addition to its inherent theatrical appeal, the trial scene offered a compelling example of how a system might work that was not strictly based on codes of honour and revenge. If the plot had been more "natural", then no doubt Shylock would have got his pound of flesh, and the story would have been somewhat different, but, as it is, this was a play that in Tsubouchi's 1914 translation had all the characters "acting in character". When Shylock asks rhetorically "hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions?" (3.1.53-54), the translation comes across not only as a defense of Judaism but also a less ethnically specific question about what it means to be a human being, since as is common in Japanese, the key noun "Jew" is omitted in the sentences that follow the initial reference:

Jiu ni wa te ga nai ka? Hana ya mimi ya kuchi wa nai ka? Shishi gotai wa? Kankaku wa? Suki kirai wa, jōyaku wa? (Tsubouchi 1933b: 101)

has not a Jew hands?—nor ears or mouth?—or the four limbs and five main parts of the body?—nor the senses?—nor the capacity to tell like from dislike, to distinguish the passions?

What does it mean to love and hate, to feel things? Shylock's reach extends as far as defending his own interests and those of his race, whereas it is Portia as the young Christian lawyer who is in a position to proscribe some answers to Shylock's rhetorical questions:

The quality of mercy is not strain'd (4.1.180)

Jibi wa yondokoronaku hodosubeki mono dewa nai. (ibid.: 163)

Another quality that Tsubouchi finds “natural” about the play is the language, when he writes “there are many instances when the wordplay and other witticisms can be translated as they are without any feeling of strangeness at all” (*ibid.*: ii), as when Shylock's clown, Launcelot Gobbo, remarks of the conversion of his daughter, Jessica, to Christianity that

this making of Christians will raise the price/of hogs,—if we grow all to be pork-eaters, we shall/not shortly have a rasher on the coals for money. (3.5.21-23)

Soko e motte kite, Kirisuto shinja wo fuyashitari nan ka surya, buta no ne ga takaku narā. Minna ga buta wo kū yō ni naru to, ima ni, kane wo dashitatte mo, jōki no hitokire ni aritsuku koto mo dekinaku naru darō. (ibid.: 144)

The only information required by a pre-war Japanese audience to understand this joke would have been that Judaism prohibits the eating of pork. Thus, the naturalness of Shakespeare, and Tsubouchi's belief that with a little effort Shakespeare's naturalness could be absorbed within the mainstream of Japanese culture becomes one of the central themes of his Shakespeare studies. Shakespeare is “the writer” *par excellence* who accepts each character and situation as they come, and thus sends

his audiences away feeling better about themselves.

Although Tsubouchi may have a tendency to conflate Western literary tradition with his own, his strongly normative approach does find a parallel with the *kabuki* tradition. This is to say that if Shakespeare's impartiality excludes the author as one who is abnormally gifted in his vision and powers of expression, then it can also be observed how great *kabuki* playwrights such as Chikamatsu and Tsuruya Nanboku (about whose lives rather more is known than Shakespeare) become excluded from the theatre by the process of interpretation known as *kabuki* drama. Just as the mystery of Shakespeare's textuality opens up the plays to a range of interpretations, *kabuki* drama cannot function without the freedom of *kabuki* actors to recreate plays within their own evolving traditions of performance, stage design, costume, make-up and so on.

This no doubt rather obvious comparison is important because it underscores the dilemma Tsubouchi faced as he sought to find his own way between the two parallel traditions. In other words, he wished to naturalize Shakespeare within a culture for which Shakespeare was and is innately foreign and to do so in a way that must have seemed exotic even to the most sympathetic of foreigners. Tsubouchi's "third way" also seeks to exclude the translator as author: not by mythologizing the translator's genius or by subordinating the translation to performance but by reducing the act of writing as a formulation of ideas to an act of research that merely raises questions.

Tsubouchi's Shakespeare translations can never be wholly detached from their ideological contexts, especially given the background of rising imperialism against which he wrote them, and yet they can be said to contain an openness or lack of finality that is observed particularly in his use of *kabuki* stylization. This openness may be associated with a Buddhist mask of detachment that is temporarily removed when a

critical nexus in the path of cause and effect (*inga kankai*) is attained. When Ophelia is abused and finally abandoned by Hamlet, Ophelia exclaims in Tsubouchi's translation:

O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown! (3.1.149)

Ō *koyonō kedakai okokoro mo ano yō ni midare hatete shimauta ka!* (Tsubouchi 1933a: 12)

And then,

O woe is me

T'have seen what I have seen, see what I see. (3.1.159-160)

Ō, *nantaru inga ja, izen wo mita me de ima wo miru to wa.* (*ibid.*: 121)

“What kind of fate is this, that what I once saw with my own eyes has become what I see now.”

This perception of change is also central to Tsubouchi's notion of drama, since, as Tsuno notes (Tsuno 2002: 137), he was more interested in “practical consequence” than “logical consistency”, and Shakespearean drama is seldom wholly logical. His *Shōsetsu shinzui* had been a young man's attempt to rationalize the elements of fiction, literally “the essence of the novel”, but it was influenced by the evolutionist ideology of Herbert Spencer that fell out of favour among Japanese intellectuals in the 1890s. Rather than strive toward fixed ideals, Tsubouchi was more interested in the effects of the here and now. He inevitably felt some responsibility as Shakespeare's translator for the consequences of Shakespeare translation in his society, and so looked to Shakespeare for an understanding of “the secrets of cause and effect”,

in other words of a dramaturgy that could not be explained reductively. In order, therefore, to prevent Shakespeare's plays from being dismissed as irrelevant by educated Tokyo audiences of his time, Tsubouchi took considerable pains to render them as contemporary and colloquial as possible; the fact that they are no longer considered contemporary, or performable, is merely an indication of the extent to which the language has changed since Tsubouchi's death in 1935.

This was a process that began in earnest following the production of *Hamlet* at the Imperial Theatre in 1911, in other words after Tsubouchi's initial, admittedly archaic translation of the play in 1909. When he came to revise this translation in 1933, he was able to write that

except where the harmony of Shakespeare's rhetoric might be disrupted I have attempted to change the difficult archaisms into language more accessible to the ears of modern audiences. As a result, there are many places where the original forms are not preserved. (Tsubouchi 1933a: ii)

Of course, this loss is one that will happen inevitably in a language as syntactically and morphologically different as Japanese is from Shakespeare's English. And since Shakespeare himself metamorphizes the myths and histories of his own hybrid classical, Christian and English heritage, he can hardly expect more favourable treatment from his translators.

By way of example, one might consider how Tsubouchi translates Hamlet's rebuke of Horatio,

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy. (1.5.165-166)

Hamlet is insisting that he has indeed conversed with the ghost of his father, and that the logical, empirical worldview is therefore insufficient.

Kono tenchi no aida niwa na, iwayuru tetsugaku no omoi mo oyobanu daiji ga aru wai. (ibid.: 56)

between this heaven and earth—there are important things—which the thoughts/ideas—of so-called philosophy—do not reach

Tsubouchi ignores the comparative construction in the original and any direct reference to Horatio as the addressee. Moreover, apart perhaps from the particle *wai*, this line of Tsubouchi's translation would be immediately understood by audiences today. It is clear from the context that Hamlet can only be referring to Horatio's way of thinking. Yet, as if to compensate for the loss, Tsubouchi dramatizes the antagonism between these two individuals, however friendly, namely the fact that Hamlet has had a profound and traumatic experience that the other has only glimpsed, by the use of the demonstrative pronoun *kono*, "this heaven and earth". "This" becomes the shared space or stage on whose philosophy's grip is only tenuous at best. The final particle *wai* has the effect of cushioning the force of the statement: of framing the pose rather than honing it into something more pointed, of concealing and thereby dramatizing the danger behind Hamlet's words.

One common device in traditional Japanese poetry is the pillow word, or *makura kotoba*, used to suggest connections between words and phrases, but as Tsubouchi argues, his intention was always to translate Shakespeare in a contemporary style, and so his own "cushioning words" serve to differentiate speeches and characters rather than connect them. The integrative force of Shakespeare's rhetoric is felt in the general exigency to bring comedy, tragedy and history to their natural, if not

strictly logical conclusions. Another particle that Tsubouchi uses quite frequently is the end particle *ja*, as in Claudius' curt rebuff: "Love! His affections do not that way tend" (3.1.161), *Koi ja? Iya iya, koi dewa nai wai* (*ibid.*: 121). Despite the King's brusqueness, *ja* is used not only by old or middle-aged men but also by younger characters such as Hamlet and Ophelia. Used in this way at the end of the sentence, the particle *ja* is characteristic of the Kansai dialect of western Japan, and has become obsolete in contemporary standard Japanese (*hyōjungo*), where Tokyo dialect became dominant after the war. Yet Tsubouchi was translating Shakespeare during a period when the language was still far from standardized, and so his usage of the final particle *ja* may not necessarily have sounded archaic.

Conclusion

Tsubouchi is not necessarily setting a stylistic precedent, but is suggesting that Shakespeare's texts create their own norms. The two translations I have discussed are of plays that set the norm for Shakespeare's reception in pre-war Japan. Revenge had been a tolerated and indeed honourable convention under the feudal system that lasted until the Meiji Restoration of 1868, and yet here in Shakespeare was a writer who suggests that revenge is ultimately more destructive than the evils it purported to destroy, albeit a hugely interesting facet of human behaviour. Shakespeare's plays premise a Christian society in which losers cut their losses and learn from their mistakes to create new opportunities for themselves, whilst at the same time insisting that the most extreme theatricality is to be found in the duality of vengeance and forgiveness. The bitter irony of Shylock's pardon and forced conversion to Christianity is echoed in the horrible, if momentary,

possibility at the end of the play that Portia and Nerissa might refuse their new husbands their conjugal rights for having given away the rings which the two women had forced from their husbands as payment for legal services in their disguises as lawyer and clerk. Likewise, the domestic carnage enacted at the end of *Hamlet* is made all the worse by the loss of that most precious possession of all, the kingdom of Denmark itself, to the Norwegian prince Fortinbras.

In the context of Tsubouchi's lifetime, the young writer's disparagement of didacticism and obscenity in Tokugawa fiction becomes part of a national effort to overcome the cultural and economic stagnation of the past, and so to produce and reproduce. Yet these efforts are inevitably undone by the consumerism of the Taishō era, the culture of *ero guro nansensu* ("erotic, grotesque nonsense") that Tsubouchi criticized in his old age, as in a satirical *waka* poem he composed in around 1926:

jazu, dansu, ero, guro, rebyu, nansensu, sanjūsen de nakazeni mo nashi
(Tsubouchi 1998: 109)

indulging oneself in jazz, dancing, erotic displays, reviews and nonsense—no change out of thirty pennies

Given that Tsubouchi's 1911 *Hamlet* as well as subsequent productions of his translations were first staged at the Imperial Theatre, the famous advertising slogan of the Mitsukoshi department store, *Kyō wa Teigeki, ashita Mitsukoshi* ("Today, the Imperial Theatre, tomorrow Mitsukoshi"),¹⁷ must have held a particular irony for the thrifty Tsubouchi: "See Shakespeare, then go shopping", or even, "Let Shakespeare help you decide what you want to buy".

The fact that Taishō consumerism was largely predicated on class

differences (Sato 2003: 9), and that new commodities such as the motor car and telephone could be no more than fantasies for the majority of Japanese workers, as well that Tsubouchi was as unsympathetic to Marxism as he was to licentious living, suggest that Tsubouchi's Shakespeare occupied the middle ground; his translations were cheaply but professionally published by the Chūō Kōron publishing house before being published in a complete set in 1927. Tsubouchi had, in that sense, succeeded in making Shakespeare's fantasies everyone's fantasy.

Notes

- ^[1] Almost all of Tsubouchi's translations were carried out after 1909, by which time the English system of punctuation had become standardized within written Japanese.
- ^[2] All back-translations provided in this article are my own.
- ^[3] Much of the political uncertainty stemmed from tensions within the Freedom and People's Rights Movement between its proletarian members and aristocratic leadership. One of its leaders, Itagaki Taisuke (1837-1919), was almost assassinated in 1882 in Gifu, close to Tsubouchi's birthplace. The mood is clearly comparable to the mood at the outset of Shakespeare's play, when the Roman authorities act to curtail a personality cult around Caesar in the wake of his military successes.
- ^[4] Tsubouchi majored in politics at the Imperial University, but spent much of his time there pursuing literary interests. He initially lectured on British constitutional history at Waseda before devoting himself to Shakespeare studies.
- ^[5] Other influential translations of the period included those of Goethe, Turgenev, Verlaine and the Bible, whilst a substantial body of Chinese and Korean literature had been translated since ancient times (Hara and Nishinaga 2000).

- [6] The rule of Marcus Brutus was short-lived, as he committed suicide following his defeat by Caesar's supporters at the Battle of Philippi only two years after Caesar's assassination.
- [7] Mitsukoshi was the first department store to be opened in Japan, and the Imperial Theatre was the first modern theatre. They were located within walking distance of each other in central Tokyo.

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Translating Victorian Slang in Taiwan: Telling a Fable in Paratexts

Chao Jui-yin

Abstract

This paper studies how paratexts are used in a short story and its translation. "A Victorian Fable (with Glossary)", by Angela Carter, was translated into Chinese in Taiwan in 2005. The story highlights the role of paratext, and specifically of glossaries/ footnotes, in framing a tale on two levels. As a compositional technique, the English glossary brings the Victorian scene into a contemporary context; as a translational apparatus, the glosses mediate between the source context and the target readers. The translator's consideration in rendering the archaic source text is encapsulated in the initial translational footnote, which explains her endeavour to retain the absurdity and awkwardness of the source text. This paper explores the translator's contentions in two stages. It first examines the semantically and culturally loaded vocabulary of the source text to establish the reliability of Carter's glossary and its role in shaping the story it accompanies. Subsequently, it analyses the strategies used to achieve the same effect in the target text.

This paper is an exploratory study of how paratexts are used in writing a short story and in presenting its translation. “A Victorian Fable (with Glossary)”, a 1966 composition by the English novelist Angela Carter, is written entirely in Victorian slang and accompanied by a substantial glossary. When translated into Traditional Chinese for publication in Taiwan in 2005, the story and glossary were complemented by a set of translator’s glosses. Known for her narrative mode that skilfully blends postmodernism, feminism, gothic themes, and magic realism (Munford 2006; Sage 1994), Angela Carter has reached readers in the Chinese-speaking world since 2004 through the efforts of Flâneur 行人出版社,^[1] an avant-garde publisher in Taiwan. Among the five translations released by Flâneur between 2004 and 2007, *Mingzhi de haizi* 明智的孩子 (2007) and *Xinxiawa de jiqing* 新夏娃的激情 (2007) have appeared in China in Simplified Chinese editions in 2009 with the purchase of the copyright of the translated texts from Flâneur by Nanjing University Press, a transaction that confirms the value of the translations and complements the established reputation that Carter translations have enjoyed in Taiwan. The short story collection *Fenzhouji* 焚舟紀 (2005), for example, is among the best ten translated books of 2005 selected by *Chinatimes* 中國時報.^[2] The endorsement in the public domain is meaningful since it symbolises the successful reception of a publication, be it addressed to a mainstream audience or to a niche market. It is within this context that the translating strategy applied in the translations is worth examination. One distinctive feature of Carter’s fiction is the experimental technique of writing that is crucial to Flâneur’s selection of her fiction as source texts, which reflects how the publisher sees its potential readership. The implied audience of Carter translations, as the chief editor Zhou Yi-Zheng 周易正 points out, consists of educated groups who are more adventurous in their reading habit; they can spend more time on reading a novel, and have greater tolerance as far as

experimental vocabulary and writing style (Eslite 2008) are concerned.

The experimental vocabulary used by Carter stands out particularly clearly in one of her short stories, due to the compositional technique Carter employs: the provision of a glossary, which gives a wealth of data for the analysis conducted in this paper. “A Victorian Fable (with Glossary)”, first published in 1966 in *Nonesuch* (summer/autumn) and later collected in the anthology *Burning Your Boats* in 1996, is written entirely in Victorian slang and accompanied by a substantial glossary. Of the nine-page source text (BYB 1996: 16-24), ^[3] the main text comprises just one and a half pages; the rest is the glossary, which serves as a paratextual dictionary to modern English readers, who may find the archaic expressions inaccessible. This prominent feature in the source text, together with Flâneur’s agenda, influences the translation, most prominently in the use of translational footnotes: in addition to the glossary’s one hundred and fifty entries, sixteen translational footnotes are inserted to complement both the main text and the glossary, since the translator considers that some of Carter’s glosses need further explanation. These two layers of notes highlight the role of paratexts in framing a tale and open up a new pathway to approach a literary text and to study a literary translation. To understand how these notes shape the story, I propose to analyse them in three categories by adapting the analytical tools relating to the paratext.

Three Types of Notes

“Paratext refers to the materials that accompany a text and contribute to the formation of a book” (Genette 1997). Notes, among other paratextual features, can be further categorised into authorial, allographic and fictional notes (*ibid.*: 319-343), based on “the status of

the sender” (*ibid.*: 324) and their “temporal characteristics” (*ibid.*). With reference to a framework generated from Genette’s classification, the notes used in “A Victorian Fable (with Glossary)” and in its Chinese translation can be considered as forming three groups: the author’s glossary in the source text, the translator’s footnotes on the glossary, and the translator’s footnotes on unannotated parts of the source text.

A. The Original Notes

Carter’s glossary corresponds to what Genette calls “original notes” (Genette 1997: 325), a sub-category of authorial notes. The primary function of original notes is to supplement the main text with “definitions or explanations of terms used in the text” (*ibid.*), as is obviously the case here. These original notes support Carter’s use of the lexicon of Victorian slang in composing the obscure narrative found in the main text, as seen in their frequency in relation to the story’s opening paragraph:

The Village, take a fright.

In the rookeries.

Here the sloops of war and the dollymops flash it to spie a dowry of parny; there the bonneters cooled their longs and shorts in the hazard drums. [...]

Glossary

Village, the	London
take a fright	night (rhyming slang)
rookeries	a slow neighbourhood inhabited by dirty Irish and thieves
sloop of war, a	whore (rhyming slang)
dollymop, a	a tawdrily dressed maid-servant, a street-walker

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flash it, to	show it, to display one's wares
dowry of parny, a	a lot of rain
bonneter, a	one who induces another to gamble
cool, to	to look, to look over (back slang)
longs and shorts	cards made for cheating
hazard drum, a	gambling dens, where the honest escape penniless, if at all

(BYB 1996: 16, 17)

From the very beginning, Carter inserts eleven entries in the glossary to complement the main text, a text bearing the feature that, in Salman Rushdie's words, "exhumes the past by exhuming its dead words" (*ibid.*: x). These dead words, reinvented by Carter, are made accessible to modern English readers through the annotations in the glossary. Carter's original notes provide definitions of the unconventional vocabulary on which the story's obscure style is based, creating an approachable context within which the text can be situated. Examining Carter's glossary against specialist dictionaries allows its validity to be verified: nine of the eleven entries, "the Village, take a fright, rookeries, a sloop of war, a dollymop, to flash it, a dowry of parny, a bonneter, to cool", are directly reproduced from entries in dictionaries, some verbatim and some with minor revision. For example, John Camden Hotten provides Carter's explanation of "dollymop" in *A Dictionary of Modern Slang, Cant, and Vulgar Words* (Hotten 1860), while "dowry of parney" as "a quantity of rain" (*ibid.*: 186) is mildly colloquialised as "a lot of rain" (BYB 1996: 18) in the glossary. Similar operations take place in the revision made to dictionary definitions. "Flash it" (*ibid.*: 17), defined in Hotten's dictionary as "show it—said when any bargain is offered" (Hotten 1860: 141), is revised as "show it, to display one's wares" (BYB 1996: 17), allowing a local detour from the authority represented by specialist dictionaries without distorting

the original meaning of the slang. The borrowed dictionary entries authorise the linguistic reliability of Carter's original notes, with occasional rewriting to enhance their accessibility to modern readers. Such revision is meaningful in that an enhanced original note based on the established authority, here in the form of a specialist dictionary, introduces a strong "presentation of supporting authorities" (Genette 1997) to the main text, and confirms the main text's credibility as an authentic linguistic exercise, developing the supplementary function of the original.

Among these borrowings from the dictionary, potential misprints or typos do occur, which are valuable because they suggest the fluid nature of the original notes when the author's performance is based on prior knowledge. The definition of "rookery", for example, is "a low neighbourhood inhabited by dirty Irish and thieves" in the specialist dictionary, while in Carter's glossary, the word "low" is replaced by "slow". Whether it is an intended manipulation or an unfortunate typo we do not know, but it highlights the fact that, while taking advantage of the original notes to build another layer of discourse upon the main text, the author also risks increasing the obscurity of a narrative, as the above example demonstrates. This further complicates the task of producing its translation.

B. Translational Footnotes for the Glossary

The "second level of discourse" constructed by the application of the original authorial notes "contributes to textual depth", as Genette has noted. Nonetheless, the validity of the source text is at stake when an effort is made to translate it. While both the main text and the glossary can be reproduced, albeit with some predictable difficulty due to the antiquated nature of the lexis, the explanatory function originally expected of the authorial notes can suffer a great loss in terms of usefulness after being transferred into another culture and to another

audience. The glossary, which is designed to facilitate the readers' understanding of the main text, is found to be in need of further elaboration from the translator's viewpoint: five translational footnotes are appended to compensate for the insufficiency of the translated glossary. The textual depth promoted by the original notes is subject to the historical and temporal context that accommodates it, which encourages the production of another layer of paratext, i.e. the translational footnotes. The five translational footnotes (Nos. 12-16), dedicated to five of the glossary entries, address the underlying discrepancy between the source readers' and the target readers' knowledge of English language and culture. Some are concerned with the non-transferable nuances of languages, and some are related to specific information on the socio-cultural background. For example, "(T)he water of life" (BYB 1996: 16), glossed as "gin (from aqua vitae?) [sic]" (*ibid.*: 18) in the source text, generates a translational footnote elaborating this Latin term:

拉丁文，亦即“生命之水”，指蒸餾烈酒；在歐洲蒸餾酒初發明時被煉金師視為長生不老之藥，具有醫療效果，故名。

The Latin means "water of life". When distilled spirits were first invented in Europe, they were regarded by alchemists as the elixir of eternal with curative properties. Therefore the name. ^[4] (BYB 2005: 57)

The assumed familiarity with the Latin term cannot be expected of the target readers, and hence the usefulness of the glossary in extending the main text is maintained through this translational footnote, which preserves access to it for target readers to whom comprehension would otherwise be denied.

In addition to unfamiliar language, wordplay also gives rise to

translational footnotes. “Mullingar heifer” (BYB 1996: 17), as Carter’s glossary explains, is:

said of a lady whose ankles are “beefy”, or thick. A term of Irish origin. It is said that a traveller passing through Mullingar was so struck with this peculiarity [sic] in the local women that he determined to accost the first he met next. “May I ask,” said he, “if you wear hay in your shoes?” “Faith, an what if I do?” said the girl. “Because,” says the traveller, “that accounts for the calves of your legs coming down to feed on it.” (*ibid.*: 21)

This term is supported by an anecdote in the glossary, and to help the target readers make sense of the wordplay in this conversation, the translator explains the coincidence of two meanings within a single lexeme in a translational footnote:

英文中，“小腿”與“小牛”皆寫做 calf。

In English, “calf” refers to both “the back portion of the lower leg” and “the young of domestic cattle”. (BYB 2005: 63)

The phonetic value of English is another linguistic feature that elicits the translator’s attention in the form of translational footnotes. “(B)arnacled” (BYB 1996: 17), “applied to a wearer of spectacles” (*ibid.*: 22), is suspected to be a “corruption of Latin binnoculi” (*ibid.*) by Carter as expressed in the original note. The translation of “barnacled” into *tenghu* (藤壺) suppresses the similarity in the pronunciations of “barnacled” and “binnoculi” in the source text, and is compensated by a translational footnote stating that the terms are “two words with similar pronunciations” (BYB 2005: 65).

Finally, translational footnotes clarify aspects of socio-cultural background. Carter describes a man in the story as having “a Newgate fringe” (BYB 1996: 17). The “Newgate fringe”, Carter explains, is:

the collar of beard worn under the chin; so called from its indicating the position of the rope when Jack Ketch operates. (BYB 1996: 22)

To fully understand the “operation” mentioned in this original note, readers have to familiarise themselves with the name “Jack Ketch”, assimilating an amount of information at least equal to that suggested in the translational footnote, which states that:

Jack Ketch 是 John Price 的外號，此人為十八世紀初倫敦負責執行吊刑的劊子手，素行不良、作惡多端，一七一八年自己也因殺人罪被吊死。新門 (Newgate) 為監獄名。

Jack Ketch is John Price's nickname. He was the hangman in early 18th-century London and was notorious. He himself was hanged for murdering in 1718. Newgate is the name of a jail. (BYB 2005: 65)

This brief biography of Jack Ketch the hangman, together with the historical information on Newgate, provides the socio-cultural background of the source text. Similarly, “vertical care-grinder” (BYB 1996: 17), with an original note indicating it is a “treadmill” (*ibid.*: 23), is considered not sufficiently clear to the target readers. The lack of a historical equivalent from the target culture results in a translational footnote:

為一平置圓板，用人或畜踩踏使其轉動，帶動各種機械。古時用作監牢內的刑罰，所以亦代稱監獄。

A flat round board turned by men or cattle to operate machinery. It was used as punishment in ancient jails, so was used as a synonym for it. (BYB 2005: 67)

The addition of another layer of notes to the existing ones, other than strengthening the validity of the original notes, also conforms to the translator's principle, which she explains at the beginning of the translation in a footnote:

文中有許多原無註解、又遠非今日通用英語的字詞片語，盡量直接意譯是一種做法，但譯者也希望保留原文的突兀陌生、難以卒讀感，因此其中一些斟酌加以註解，而不直接翻成容易了解的名詞。

This piece is full of unannotated and antiquated vocabulary and expressions. One solution would be to directly translate the meaning. However, the translator hopes to preserve the absurdity and awkwardness in the source text, so instead of opting for more accessible terms, the translator has intentionally kept the peculiarities and annotated them when necessary. (BYB 2005: 51)

Through a close examination of the translational footnotes, we can establish that, in rendering these linguistically and socio-culturally loaded terms, the translator abides by her principles assiduously. Indeed, the translator's endeavour to retain the absurdity and awkwardness of the source text is found to be consistent throughout the target text, as the final set of translational footnotes reveals.

C. Translational Footnotes on the Unannotated Source Text

While the first type of notes establishes the function of the original notes in extending the main text, the second manifests the translator's

efforts in enhancing the validity of the original notes, and the third type comprises the translator's footnotes on unannotated parts in the source text. For the last, an absence of original notes has left a space within which the translator has an opportunity to play the role of author by supplying translational footnotes. These translational footnotes, at this point, function to maintain the obscure style intended in this story, as demonstrated by the translational footnotes on the following passage of the source text:

In every snickert and ginnel, bone-grubbers, rufflers, shivering-jemmies, anglers, clapperdungeons, peterers, sneeze-lurkers and Whip Jacks with their mortis, out of the picaroon, fox and flimp and ogle.

A Hopping Giles gets a bloody Jemmy on the cross of a cut-throat; the snotters crib belchers, bird's eye wipes, blue billies and Randal's men.

In a boozing ken in the Holy Land, a dunk-horned cutter—a cock-eyed clack box in flashy benjamin and blood red fancy—shed a tear by the I desire. [...] (BYB 1996: 16)

在每一條使你嗑和擠挪兒裏，刮骨頭的、亂毛的、打哆嗦的、釣魚的、裝可憐的、劈特拉的、西貝乞丐和帶着姘頭的鞭子傑克，下了海盜船，來誑人、詐人、吃人。

一個癩吉爾斯惹火了割喉曬的，落得傑米血淋淋；扒帕的拐領巾、鳥眼紋手巾、換帖的跟做兵的。

在聖地一個酒窩，一個耍帥傢伙——鬥雞眼，刀子嘴，穿戴招搖花俏的班傑明和血紅手帕——在路人雜貨旁掉了一滴淚。（BYB 2005: 51-52）

In this passage, only nine original notes accompany the three sentences, including those on “snickert”, “ginnel”, “bone-grubber”, “ruffler”,

“shivering-jemmy”, “angler”, “clapperdodgeon”, “shed a tear” and “I desire”, a sharp contrast with the annotation of the opening paragraph. “(P)eterers, sneeze-lurkers and Whip Jacks”, “(a) Hopping Giles” and “a bloody Jemmy” and so on are left unannotated in the source text, which contributes to the puzzling nature of the text. This leads to the insertion of ten translational footnotes as listed below, each presented with the source and target texts, followed by the translational footnote and its back translation:

Peterer/劈特拉的	偷車輛上行李的賊
sneeze-lurkers/西貝乞丐	Thieves that take luggage from vehicles 西貝，賈（假）也，這裏指假扮乞丐 趁亂扒竊的小賊
Whip Jacks/鞭子傑克	Hsi-bei, fake. Here it means burglars in disguise as beggars 指冒牌水手，姘頭是他號稱自船難中 救起的女子
Hopping Giles/癱吉爾斯	Refers to fake sailors. Morts are women he claims that he rescued from a wrecked ship 跛腳的人，聖吉爾斯是跛腳者的守護 聖人，故名
a cut-throat/割喉嚨的	A cripple. Saint Giles is the patron saint of cripples; hence the name “Hopping Giles” 以殺人或其他暴力行為為業的惡棍
Jemmy/傑米	Villains make a living by killing people or other violent behaviour 腦袋 head
snotters/扒帕的拐	偷 steal

the Holy Land/聖地	聖吉爾斯，倫敦的一區，當時是窮人及罪犯聚集之處 St. Giles, an area in London. It used to be an area crowded with the poor and criminals
boozing ken/酒窩	酒館 drinking den; ale-house
Benjamin/班傑明	外套，大衣 coat

These translational footnotes suggest that the linguistic challenge to the source readers is attenuated for the target readers, not in the translated narrative itself but in the translational footnotes. With their presentation, the unannotated and thus “unextended” text (to use Genette’s terminology) experiences subsequent modulation in the translator’s hands. Compared with the source readers, the target readers are in a privileged position to learn the precise meanings of the antiquated expressions. The insertion of these translational footnotes responds to the lack of original notes and once more highlights the significance and power of paratextual features in telling this particular story.

Conclusion

The concept of paratext has acquired increasing importance in Translation Studies in recent years, since it reveals striking connections between translations and their socio-cultural context. Angela Carter’s story highlights the role of paratexts, and specifically of glossaries/footnotes, in framing the narrative on two levels. As a compositional technique, the English glossary gives the Victorian story a contemporary context; the translational footnotes support the archaic language in the

main text and mediate between the source context and the target readers. Notes, as a marginal space, allow both the author and the translator to arrange their texts to create an effect that is literary and aesthetic, and to engage readers with various levels of the narrative. The detailed examination of the three types of notes found in “A Victorian Fable (with Glossary)” establishes that, in addition to their widely-recognised function of offering supplementary information, notes, broadly defined, offer another means of enriching a story. The multiple notes found in the Chinese translation have enriched and further extended this story, a result that duly matches Carter’s intention and reveals the translator’s strategic intervention.

Notes

- [1] The publisher Flâneur changed its name to “Flâneur Culture Lab” (行人文化實驗室) in 2009, with a new agenda to expand their current publishing domain into the areas of scriptwriting, documentary film-making, and culture creativity management.
- [2] See <http://blog.chinatimes.com/openbook/archive/2005/12/25/31451.html> [last accessed 27 February 2011].
- [3] The references to *Burning Your Boats* (1996) and to *Fenzhouji* 焚舟紀 (2005) (the target text) are distinguished by the years of publication: BYB 1996 and BYB 2005, respectively. The source text consulted here is published by Vintage in UK in 1996, although there was an edition published by Chatto & Windus in 1995. As for the target text, there are only two thousand copies in the first print-run. Because of the good reception, there was a second printing in 2011 and it has been a success on the best-selling lists of translated literature. This can be understood as the result of the reputation accumulated by the Carter translations published by Flâneur.

[4] All translations of the footnotes are mine.

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Translating Western Musical Lyrics: Adaptation for a Popular Arts Entertainment *

Stella Lanxing Sorby

Abstract

Since Les Misérables appeared at the Shanghai Grand Theatre in 2002, Chinese audiences have been fascinated by the opportunity to share and enjoy this globally popular art form—Western musicals. The Phantom of the Opera, Cats, Mamma Mia!, The Lion King and others have been enthusiastically received in several Chinese cities. However, behind these successes, problems caused by differences between languages and cultures have also surfaced. Hence, it has opened up a challenging area for research into the translation of Western musicals.

It is only relatively recently that Western musicals have started to enter the Chinese entertainment market and, therefore, the translation work is still at its initial, experimental stage. Even in the West, where musicals are well established and developed, “[t]he topic of translation and music has remained on the periphery of translation studies” (Susam-Sarajeva 2008: 190). Using methods informed by descriptive translation studies, this paper

bases its case studies on some of the Western musicals which have already been performed in China. It investigates strategies which have been employed by the translators and how they have taken into consideration both consumer reception and performer requirements to situate the translation into the target culture in order to achieve their skopos. It focuses on the dual aspects of content and form: namely the balance between accuracy for transmission of storyline on the one hand and questions of singability and staging on the other. This paper also intends to identify how translators negotiate between the translation norms and the audience reception. The observations may serve as reference points for future analysis and comparison with translation practice, as well as with the changing patterns and trends of such practices in different periods of time.

1. Introduction

Since *Les Misérables* was staged at the Shanghai Grand Theatre in 2002, Western musicals have been enthusiastically queuing up to enter the Chinese entertainment market. With the help of the Mandarin surtitles projected on both sides of the stage, the Chinese audience are able to see at first hand those once unreachable grand works, such as *Cats*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *The Lion King*, *The Sound of Music* and *Mama Mia!*. Thanks to prolonged and extensive promotions, the Western musicals enjoy a warm welcome from their Chinese audiences. Their record box office receipts are constantly being reported from cities such as Shanghai

and Beijing (Zhao 2007). In response to such demand, the Musicals Department in the Shanghai Conservatory of Music and the Musicals Programme in the Shanghai Theatre Academy were established in 2002 and 2003 respectively (Wu, Lin and Xu 2008; Zhang Yu 2003). Fans of Western musicals are exchanging views and sources through setting up websites and blogs. Some university students have even themselves funded unprofitable performances of some of their favourite western musicals (Wu 2005).

However, below the apparently smooth surface, considerable difficulties caused by language and cultural barriers have also been noted. In 2004, when *Chicago* was performed in Beijing, there were media reports describing the audience as being “unused to it”, a fact which resulted in a disappointing reception. One report even concluded that “China does not have the tradition of watching musicals” (Jin 2004). Professor Jin Fuzai 金復載 from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music was sympathetic to the Chinese audience:

There were no surtitles when I watched musicals abroad and there was no language problem. However, in China, watching surtitles distracts very much from following the performances. Language is a major problem for the audiences’ enjoyment, and it is impractical to have such detailed information in the programme. (Zhang Xia 2008)

Although operas are often sung in their original language, musicals are nearly always performed in the native language of the host countries. Chinese audiences are justified in demanding their Chinese versions. Acknowledging such a huge potential audience, the Western producers were alerted and began to realize that making the Chinese translated version of these musicals is the key to winning a sustainable audience in China. In June 2010, the China Arts and Entertainment Group (CAEG)

and Littlestar Ltd from London's West End signed a five-year agreement for the Chinese language production of *Mamma Mia!*. After its premiere in Shanghai in July 2011, the production will tour Beijing and Guangzhou, and then move on to Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan, and Singapore before playing in selected second-tier cities around China.

Having one of the most ancient theatrical traditions of the world, Chinese audiences' receptions of Western musicals could be influenced, to some extent, by their cultural heritage. The limited scope of this paper does not permit thorough discussions of all aspects; and therefore the focus is: in what ways can translation and adaptation contribute towards the effective reproduction of musicals into a different language and culture and achieve audience satisfaction—in this case, the translation and adaptation of Western musicals into Chinese singable versions. Currently, the majority of the Chinese translations of Western musicals still take the form of surtitles, although a few small-scale musicals have already been translated and performed in Chinese by local casts, such as the off-Broadway musical *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change* (2006, 2007, 2009), the Finnish musical *Spin* (2010) and the German rock musical *Linie 1* (2008, 2010). Through examples from the current translations of Western musicals, this article investigates the strategies employed by the translators and the influences which affect their decisions. By analysing the evidence gathered from the preliminary study, the paper attempts to illustrate the translators' negotiations between the translation norms and their considerations of the audience reception, as well as the implications for this particular genre.

In the West, “[t]he topic of translation and music has remained on the periphery of translation studies” (Susam-Sarajeva 2008: 190). Western musicals have only recently begun to enter the Chinese market. Thus, musicals translation in China is still at a pioneering stage. The translators' practices inevitably reflect their conscious or unconscious

negotiation or manipulation between their own judgments and social value orientations. This not only reflects their personal style, but also the changes in demand from their target audience as well as the influence of that particular social condition. The investigation of these translation practices may serve as a reference for further examination of future practices, changing patterns and trends.

2. The Characteristics of Lyrics in Musicals

Musical and opera lyrics are different from poetry and other text-based literary work in the sense that they must have the dual characteristics of both literature and staging. In the 17th century, Li Yu 李漁 (1610-1680), a Chinese playwright, producer and director, stressed this important characteristic of lyrics in his book *Xianqing Ouji* 閒情偶寄, or *Random Notes on Leisurely Thoughts* (Li Yu 1671/2007: 100): “*Tianci zhi she, zhuān wei dengchang*” 填詞之設，專為登場，“The purpose of the lyrics is specifically for staging”.

Lyrics translation is also different from surtitle translation, even though they are both for theatrical performances. Surtitles are intended for viewing (normally above or either side of the stage) and accordingly they may be in a summarised form. The translation for sung lyrics, on the other hand, is for listening to, and therefore both content and form need to fit into the musical framework of the ST for singability by the actors (initially) and subsequently for understanding by the audience. It therefore needs to take into account both the rhyming systems and the singability of the respective languages.

Also, musical lyrics do not stand alone. They not only serve the dual purpose of shaping the characters and developing the story, but

are also constrained within stage practicalities—for actors’ singability and for audience’s understanding. As one of the many semiotic systems in musicals, lyrics work together with music, dancing, costumes, lighting, props, backdrops and stage-settings, etc., to create an imaginary world of which the audience can temporarily be observers. Although these songs have a certain degree of independence, they always follow closely the theme of the play. From this perspective, musical songs are very similar to opera songs. However, there are still fundamental differences between the two, of which the most prominent manifestations reflect the different target audiences.

Although there are similarities between the translation of opera lyrics and musical lyrics, they are very different in respect of their cultural attributes. Opera is regarded as “high culture”. Sun Huishuang, a veteran translator of opera lyrics, describes opera translation as too highbrow to be popular—*qu gao he gua* 曲高和寡 (Sun 1999: 333, my translation)—and says: “Opera libretto is both a theatrical and a poetic work. The translated lyrics have to be singable” (1999: 3). Musicals, on the other hand, belong to popular culture, and are thereby “a form of popular performing art”, according to Alan Jay Lerner’s description (cited by Liao 2006: 48). Liao points out that the ultimate goal of musicals is to “seek a balance between commercialism, popularism, entertainment and art” and thereby “to obtain the highest box office receipts” (2006: 42-44).

The creative work from music composing and lyrics writing through to choreography and stage setting, etc., also follows this criterion. In order to reflect the characteristics of their popularity, musicals prioritise the story over the songs, which is the opposite to operas’ strict prioritisation of their songs over their story in order to highlight vocal accomplishments. Liao states that musicals also accept both classical operatic virtuosity and popular singing methods (2006: 85). As “the

most fundamental elements for musicals” (2006: 63), their lyrics are also significantly different from those of operas in terms of style. From the perspective of the composition and the reception, Liao contrasts the differences between the lyrics of operas and musicals:

Whilst with opera the lyrics are required to be poetic for their aesthetic beauty, musical lyrics, due to their characteristics of commercialism and popular culture, are required to be simple and easy to understand in order that the majority of the audience, from differing age-groups and different cultural backgrounds, is able to hear clearly and to understand without any repetition. Therefore, the lyrics are close to everyday language use through their simplicity. ... This kind of lyric will be easier for the audience to absorb, receive and reflect on. (2006: 63-64)

When reflecting on his experience, Herbert Kretzmer, the well-known lyricist for *Les Misérables*, says that musicals “needed a popular, by which I mean accessible, style of lyrics” (Sheahen 1998: 4). He also emphasizes the importance of them being non-repetitive and easy to understand:

Writing for the musicals theatre also means that your text must be instantly understood. A reader can mull over a line of poetry. But music, in a song, is relentless. You can't ask an audience to pause and reflect on a line of lyrics. You get on with it. Songs don't wait around for you while you solve their little secrets. The golden rule is: if it comes easily out of the singer's mouth, it will go easily into the audience's ear. (Behr 1989: 83)

This is precisely why Qian Shijin 錢世錦, the art director of the Shanghai

Grand Theatre, was concerned about the first sample translation version of *Les Misérables* and subsequently turned it down. He said that if the translation contains too much classical and poetic style in its language and idioms, the audience may not be able to understand through listening and consequently lose their interest (Wang Chen n.d.).

Understanding the characteristics of the musical will help the translator to grasp the aims, strategies and, above all, the effects of their translation. Through some examples, the following section will illustrate how translators reach their own *skopos* through employing various methods and strategies to balance aspects of the different language and cultural environment, as well as the different semiotic systems.

3. Case Studies

Bassnett and Lefevere (2001: 93) have pointed out: “The context in which the translation takes place necessarily affects how the translation is made. Just as the norms and constraints of the source culture play their part in the creation of the source text, so the norms and conventions of the target culture play their inevitable role in the creation of the translation”. The following are some examples from a Chinese context.

3.1 Singability

Since musicals belong to popular culture, their predominant concerns are the wider audience participation and engagement. Franzon (2008: 375) points out, “Here singability means not just ‘easy to sing’ but something akin to the way *skopos* theory describes a good translation: suitable in every relevant way for the particular purpose”. Wang Keming (2006: 610-611) summarises three points for the purpose of music

vocal works: “first, the singer likes to sing; secondly, the audience’s enjoyment; thirdly, and only in this way can the musical works be enduring, entertaining and spiritually cultivating”.

However, in trying to achieve these goals, there are specific problems to be faced. Compared with other forms of literary translations, the “confrontation between two linguistic codes as well as between two art forms, poetry and music (in addition to the scenic, that is, visual arts)” (Gorlée 1997: 244) creates more constraints for translating musical libretto. Peter Low also says: “as for singable TTs, although people have often attempted to devise them, it is a difficult task. Translators are subject to huge constraints imposed by the pre-existing music, because they cannot ignore the rhythms, the note-values, the phrasings or the stresses in the music—even phrasings and pitch-levels may have to be considered” (Low 2003: 105). On top of the foregoing, Chinese translators are faced by specific language constraints such as the tones. Xue Fan (2002: 56), the veteran song translator, even describes song translation as “dancing with chains”, invoking a well-known metaphor of the difficulties and constraints that translation involves.

Various translators and scholars have proposed their own methods and strategies. Peter Low, who proposed his pentathlon criteria (singability, sense, naturalness, rhyme and rhythm) for the singable translation of songs, regards singability as the first principle (Low 2005: 192). This is particularly important to the Chinese, not only for the actors’ singing on stage but also for the audiences themselves to sing elsewhere, since they very much enjoy singing in get-togethers such as Karaoke. Wang Keming also gives some practical suggestions: the number of Chinese characters should match the ST syllables; the meaning group should be in line with the ST music’s rhythm; the rhyme of the Chinese translation should be suitable for singing, whenever possible, with open vowels, and try to avoid using closed vowels, such as /i:/ with a higher register (Wang

Keming 2006: 615).

Source text:	Target text:	Back translation:
<p>Women 1 Facial creme from a spa, lingerie, wonder bra, Hairspray, hairspritz, wax the legs, shave the pits.</p>	<p>女 #1 爽膚水，抗氧化、 沐浴露，光滑滑， 胸豐臀肥 再刮掉腿上毛——</p>	<p>Women 1 skin lotion, oxidation resistance shower gel, smooth buxom, curvaceous also shave the leg hairs</p>
<p>Women 2 Appetite, coy and pert, don't eat much, No dessert, sweet and low, half and half, smile a lot, fake a laugh.</p>	<p>女 #2 裝優雅，扮嬌小， 主食零食，全拋掉， 大聲笑，添皺紋， 假裝笑，皮膚好——</p>	<p>Women 2 pretend to be elegant, dressed as petite staple food and snacks, all thrown away laughing loudly increases wrinkles, faking laugh keeps the skin fine</p>
<p>Women 1 I have primmed and plucked</p>	<p>女 #1 我要精心扮。</p>	<p>Women 1 I want to do my make-up meticulously.</p>
<p>Women 2 I have rubbed on hair.</p>	<p>女 #2 我要仔細瞧。</p>	<p>Women 2 I want to look at every detail.</p>
<p>Women 1/2 I have spent two hours on my face and hair. And I did all this for a guy I barely know, and I bet he won't even care.</p>	<p>女 #1#2 我要肌膚滑， 還要頭髮俏， 花了兩小時， 梳妝和打扮， 他還不知道為了他。</p>	<p>Women 1/2 I want my skin smooth, and hair beautiful, I have spent two hours on dress and make-up. He wouldn't know this is for him.</p>
<p>(TheBroadwayMusicals.com)</p>	<p>(youtube 版)</p>	<p>(youtube version)</p>

Example 1: “Cantata for a First Date”, *I Love You, You’re Perfect, Now Change* (“第一次約會 (合唱)” ，《我愛你》)

Example 1 clearly illustrates some distinct shifts from the ST and TT in “First Date”, although the translated lyrics cover the core idea of the source text. Lin Yilun, the leading actor in the cast, describes their pre-rehearsal process:

We actors would get together with the American director Bishoff and the script translator, as well as the director’s translator, to discuss and finalise the libretto sentence by sentence. We all sit together. I read a sentence in Chinese which the translator relays to him in English. He tells the translator of his comments and suggestions, which the translator relays to me in Chinese; I then think of a performable sentence in Chinese and the translator passes it on to him again. If he thinks that it is ok, that sentence is accepted. Otherwise, we go through the cycle again until his “OK”. (Lin 2006)

As different languages follow their own systems of rhyme and rhythm, one of the most creative aspects of lyrics translation is to re-establish the ST in a TL’s system of rhyme and rhythm within the existing music framework. In the above example, “oxidation resistance” 抗氧化, “smooth” 光滑滑, “increasing wrinkles” 添皺紋, “keeping the skin fine” 皮膚好 do not exist in the ST; yet the TT conveys the central meaning of the ST whilst these 3-word phrases not only follow the rhyme and rhythm comfortably for singing and stage acting, semantically they also make better sense in the Chinese cultural context. This is exactly what Joel Bishoff wishes to achieve in his Chinese mission: the vigorous process of assessments, involving the whole performing team aims, to make sure that the TT is easily understandable to the audience as well as attaining the best stage effect (Chen 2007).

“The libretto must be in a singable form (the singable poetry and even the dialogue are recitable). The tones and rhymes are stressed to a

very exquisite extent” (Lan 2008: 440). Under the influence of this theatrical heritage, the Chinese audience would expect similar effects from musical song translations. Fei Yuanhong 費元洪, who has translated several western musicals for the Shanghai Grand Theatre, has been influenced by audience feedback in his revision and shift from the emphasis on meaning (surtitles) to singability:

All performances in foreign languages need translations to enable with the audience’s understanding. In past years when translating Western musicals, I considered foremost the accuracy of the meaning. However, since *The Phantom of the Opera*, I started to consider foremost the music in order to make the lyrics more rhyming and rhythmical, even singable. (Fei 2007)

Different purposes will of necessity result in translators adjusting their translation strategies, and to subsequently “reconstruct the norms that have been in operation during the translation process” (Munday 2001: 115, discussing Toury). When Fei was translating *Mamma Mia!*, although the translation brief from both the producer and the theatre was for surtitles, he realised that singability is very important for these well known ABBA songs. He then made special efforts to match the syllable count as well as seeking to achieve rhyme and rhythm:

In *Mamma Mia!*, the songs are mainly for expressing emotions rather than for story development as in some other musicals. Therefore, the translation of these songs can be freer and primarily express their spirit, with their meaning being of secondary importance. Yan Fu 嚴復 (1854-1921) proposed fidelity (*xin* 信), fluency (*da* 達), elegance (*ya* 雅) in that order of importance. However, in song translation, it is perfectly alright to treat “*ya*” as the first priority. (Fei 2007)

Source text:	Target text:	Back translation: (literally translated by the author)
I believe in angels, Something good in everything I see, I believe in angels, When I know the time is right for me, I'll cross the stream, I have a dream	天使在我心中， 美好生活就在我眼 前， 天使在我心中， 總有那一刻為我守 候， 歲月匆匆， 我有個夢。	Angels are in my heart, Beautiful life is right in front of me, Angels are in my heart, There is always that moment waiting for me, Time flies, I have a dream
(ST Lyrics)	(Fei 2007)	

Example 2: “I Have a Dream”, *Mama Mia!*

By traditional standards, some of the translations are not really faithful, e.g., translating “When I know the time is right for me, I’ll cross the stream” into “there is always that moment waiting for me, time flies”. However, “time flies” (*suiyue congcong* 歲月匆匆) is a Chinese personification metaphor which creates a personalised image of swiftly moving time. It also matches well the tempo and rhythmic pattern of the original song. The translation’s lucid and lively style means that the audience are able to repeat some of the words, thus creating a warm interaction with the performance. His efforts resulted in positive responses, as Fei (2007) recalls: “when the audience look at the nicely rhyming and rhythmical surtitles, they are happy and some of them even follow the surtitles and hum along with the performers”.

3.2 Cultural Adaptation

Cultural issues have long been appreciated by producers as one of the key ways to win over the wider global audience. Having spent much time in China over the past five years, trying to understand the

country and find the right approach, David Lightbody, executive producer of the forthcoming *Mamma Mia!* in China, says: “It is an interesting time to develop commercial entertainment here in China” (Yue 2010).

As musicals strengthen their position in the world’s popular arts arena, various strategies of cultural adaptation and localisation have become widely employed in approaches by translators between different cultures around the world. Successful examples (apart from the famous ones such as *Les Misérables*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *The Lion King* and *Cats*) include the adaptations of the German rock musical *Linie 1* (“Line 1”). In South Korea alone, up until 2007, their performances had broken two records: one for the number of performances (over 3,500); and two for the number of continuous run (14 years). The director Kim Min-gi was praised for “giving new life to the original story” (Hata n.d.).

Although China is currently in the same global playground and shares the same resources with the West, we must not forget that only 30 years ago Western values were almost foreign to the Chinese. The impact from the West on traditional Chinese culture and heritage was also limited. When the imported Western culture meets Chinese tradition, a clash is inevitable. Among the various approaches, such as globalisation, with which translators have been experimenting, one of the most influential is Vinay and Darbelnet’s method of adaptation for creating a new equivalent situation “where the type of situation being referred to by the SL message is unknown in the TL culture” (Vinay and Darbelnet 1995: 39).

Other theories have also provided rationale for adjustments in the translation process. For instance, although skopos theory takes the translators’ perspective concerning the purpose of the translation, whilst the theory of aesthetics of reception takes the perspective of the effect of the literary work, they are both concerned with the interests of the

target readership. The purpose of the translation, in the case of musical translation, is the audience's satisfaction. According to the theory of aesthetics of reception, "in the triangle of author, work, and public, the last is no passive part", thus, "[t]he historical life of a literary work is unthinkable without the active participation of its addressees" (Jauss 1982: 19). In translating musicals, the audience's active participation is crucial to the effectiveness of the performance. Therefore, the audiences' understanding is the first step leading towards their enjoyment and willingness to participate.

From the viewpoint of the internal structure of the text, deconstruction theory also encourages translators' participation: owing to the differences between signifier and signified, the meanings of the original text cannot remain unchanged. They can only be determined temporarily. However, during the translation process, the transition from the external environment can change the internal variables, which increases the uncertainty of the original meaning. Therefore, deconstruction theory believes that the translator should seek the original meaning and uncover its revivable elements. Through the linguistic exchange, the original text can develop to its maturity, enabling a dependable relationship between the ST and TT, but not the relationship of imitation as defined by traditional theories (Liao Qiyi 2000: 73).

Cultural adaptation has been applied in many ways in musical translation depending on the various individual, cultural and social conditions. The following are some aspects concerning the skopos of the translation for consumer-oriented popular arts entertainment: relevance, humour and current-ness.

3.2.1 Relevance

When different cultures meet, if it is not handled carefully,

misunderstandings will occur. For the translation of musicals, if the audience cannot grasp the intended meaning, their enjoyment will be adversely affected. Therefore, cultural adaptation is one of the strategies widely employed in these translations. Various approaches for translation adaptation have been proposed.

Nida suggests that when necessary, the literal translation, the original order and the voice can be compromised to maintain a functional equivalence.

The greater the differences in the source and target cultures, the greater the need for adjustments; the greater the differences between the source and target languages, the greater the need for adjustments. In general, however, the differences in culture give rise to more important adjustments than the differences in language; the more distinctive (whether idiosyncratic or elevated) the style of the source text, the greater the number of adjustments; the greater the differences in social and educational levels of the source and target audiences, the greater the number of adjustments; the more a translated text is dependent on an accompanying code, the greater the number and variety of adjustments. (2001: 95)

These conditions for adjustments show that Nida is concerned about the TT users' receptivity. In other words, these conditions could become a potential barrier for the TT users and therefore cultural adaptation is most frequently applied.

In his domestication and foreignization approaches, Venuti (1995: 23) points out that "translation is inevitably domesticating since it is usually made to conform to the needs and values of the domestic culture".

Various musical productions have demonstrated that localisation

is one of the key factors for their offshore success. Joel Bishoff believes that the success of *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change* stems from the audience being able to identify themselves with the characters and feel familiar with them (Qiu and Luo 2006). That is why he spent three months in Shanghai with the translator Nick Yu and the actors trying to make it fit into the Chinese cultural context. He said: the Chinese version is for the Chinese audience, otherwise what's the point? Since it is for the Chinese audience, the story must be relevant to them (Chen 2007). The audience always burst into massive laughter and applause when they hear the Chinese references such as the Hong Kong film star Stephen Chow's famous quotation in *A Chinese Odyssey*: "If there had to be a time limit of this love, I wish it would be 10,000 years". Jimmy Roberts, the composer for this musical, greatly appreciates the necessary cultural adaptation. He said that it is far better to make the audience feel moved, to make them laugh and to stimulate their resonance rather than translating word by word (Chen 2007).

Relevance also seems to be one of the major factors which contribute to the Korean success of *Linie 1*. Dr. Uwe Schmelter, director of the Goethe-Institut Seoul, said, "Mr. Kim successfully adapted the German original to express the Korean situation" ("Theater Links Divided Nations", 2003). This year, the Yemeni version of *Linie 1* has also attracted viewers, in a country "where theatre doesn't have a big following" (Bartlick 2010). In the Yemeni version, the original Berlin subway setting was transferred to a shared taxi in Aden, and the girl from the countryside was changed to a young mother, who was the victim of a so-called "tourist marriage". The director Amr Jamal "said he tweaked the plot to reflect contemporary issues in his country, noting that people want to come to the theatre when they see a part of themselves and their problems in the performance" (*ibid.*).

In mid-July 2010, the Chinese version of *Linie 1* was performed

thrice in Shanghai following its debut in Guangzhou in 2008. Li Jianming 李健鳴, the translator for both versions, made a great effort in adapting the original story to add local flavours such as some familiar underground scenes in Shanghai. In order to make the audience feel its relevance and to achieve resonance with them, she replaced the original scenes of the German Nazi widows gathering in a café wearing black feather hats with some talk about Chinese current phenomena such as “*ken lao zu*” (people who live on their parents’ expenses) as well as property tycoons, run-away school girls and retired workers. She admits that the most challenging part of the translation was the lyrics. She said that the original melody and its rock style are fully retained in the Chinese version but she spent a long time re-writing the lyrics into the accustomed Chinese expressions (Xu 2008; Wang Jia’na 2009; Wang Lin 2010).

3.2.2 *Humour*

Humour is a determining factor for the successful reception of popular culture’s arts entertainment. Their busy life style and their intense pressure at work prompt audiences to seek relaxation through something witty and humorous. Fei believes that the language differences mean different understandings of humour: “the Chinese audience may not laugh at the point where the Westerners laugh, and vice versa. Therefore, we have to add some Chinese-styled humour to it”. When the surtitle translation of *Mamma Mia!* was touring Shanghai and Beijing in 2007, the British producers stressed that humour was key and that it must be kept in the Chinese version. They even translated the Chinese version back into English to assess its effects. Fei, together with Qiu Ye 裘擘, another non-professional but very talented musicals fan and translator, generated laughs from the audience for their Chinese humour, by referencing well-known Chinese film stars, an Oscar winning film story and even using some local dialects catering to the audiences in different

cities (Mei 2007).

However, sometimes translating humour or jokes may not be as straightforward as finding an equivalent. The balance of cultural sensitivity could be rather difficult to achieve. Ellen Gamerman (2010) observes the following incident in the Korean version of *Billy Elliot*:

Adapting the humour has been particularly delicate. When Billy misinterprets “Billy Elliot Esquire” as “Billy Elliot is Queer” in the London and New York versions, the joke is obvious, but there’s no equivalent Korean wordplay. To get a laugh in that spot, Billy instead confuses the phrase with a bit of Korean profanity. Foul language carries its own problems. “Such languages are not often publicly said in Korea, so we had to think hard how to tone them down”, said Moon Mi-ho, chief executive of Magistella, the Korean producer of the musical. (When the young boys were reluctant to swear during rehearsals, the production had to ask the parents to tell the children it was OK to do so.)

Although adapting foul language may, to some extent, fit into Billy Elliot’s working class background, it is at the expense of making the young performers act against their moral and social upbringing. When they feel uncomfortable, the effect on their audience would be equally uneasy. Since this musical is very much intended for a young audience, the question is whether the parents would feel comfortable telling their children that it is OK to swear in this musical, or would they rather avoid it due to adverse consequences in the future? As popular culture’s arts entertainment is very much consumer-oriented, the balance between the faithfulness to the ST and the reception of adapted humour requires both creativity and sympathetic consideration of the TL cultural context.

3.2.3 Currentness

Like humour, currentness has always been one of the key attractions in popular arts and commercial entertainment. More current references would reflect the contemporary social context as well as offering a sense of the fashionable. Yu Yi 于毅, one of the leading actors in the Chinese version of *I Love You*, says: “Most of our audiences are young people. Even though we would not pander to them, we hope that our story is novel and fashionable, so as to attract the audiences’ interest and their resonance” (personal interview). For these reasons, there are more attempts at adding fashionable references to create a contemporary flavour as well as humorous effects. When *Cinderella* was touring around China, it was reported that the contemporary flavour became its highlight. Some currently popular references to events such as stock market depressions and the sharp rise in oil prices were inserted into the translation and the audience were laughing aloud when they saw these translations (“Yinyueju ‘Huiguniang’”, 2008). However, there are some audiences, including actors, who oppose this method. Their main reason is that some adaptations are rather confusing and devoid of the original flavour (Yang 2008). It is very important to carefully achieve balance when adapting and avoid any unfavourable effects which could put off the audience.

In 2008, some localised references to famous mainland Chinese, Taiwanese and Hong Kong celebrity figures and popular quotations, inserted in the Broadway musical *Hairspray* being performed in Shanghai, generated considerable audience debate. Some praised these methods as adding a contemporary flavour and making them laugh, while others thought these methods as rather far-fetched in pursuit of humorous effects. Fei Yanhong, the translator for this musical, explains: “Its background was 1960s America and the original scriptwriter made a lot of references to it. If we do a literary translation, our audience could

be distracted due to their inability to understand. If we add explanations in the surtitles, they would become too long to follow. Therefore, we employed the method of substitution”. He also says that it is only a recent new trend to adapt the original musical lyrics sympathetically towards Chinese culture. The Western producers also prefer to have the libretto shift towards the Chinese audience orientation, provided that it doesn't distort the original meaning. Other musicals, such as *The Lion King*, did likewise. Our aim is to localise the libretto in order to make the Chinese audience feel more at home (Yang 2008).

In its 14 years of performance, the producer of the Korean version of *Linie 1* has revised and amended the show for each year's performance in order to ensure that it maintains its association with current events and continuously reflects the Korean society of that particular time. Also, the characters have been gradually updated to reflect changes in South Korean society (Hata n.d.), hence making the shows enjoyable for viewers of all ages (Korean Tourism Association). An audience member named Huantian recalls her viewings of the South Korean version of *Linie 1* in 2001 in Beijing. She says that this musical was very good at catching the “hotspot” with a newspaper seller in the underground shouting: “Come quickly, the Chinese football team has got into the world cup final!” She was very impressed and remarked that it was exactly the “hotspot” of the year (Huantian 2004).

4. Conclusion

The current influx of Western musicals into the Chinese entertainment market has opened up a new and challenging arena for the translation of Western musicals. As a popular art entertainment form where commercial gain stems from winning a wider audience

engagement and enjoyment, musical translation requires that the translators always have their target audience in mind when dealing with both the form and content—singability for lyrics translation and cultural adaptation for the libretti—as well as achieving their optimum balance. Their negotiations and adjustments reflect the prevalent translation norms in responding to the demand of the target audience. Their valuable experiences will not only help enhance the Chinese reception of Western musicals in the Chinese-speaking world, but also contribute to the developing studies in the translation of musicals in a global context.

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Translations in International Organisations: Is the Non-native Character of Target Language Texts Inevitable?

Mats-Peter Sundström

Abstract

This article proposes to discuss why texts produced within international organisations and subsequently translated often leave target language speakers with an impression of non-nativeness, despite all formal correctness. The root cause is found in the substantial variance between conceptualising processes in different languages (initial lexical anisomorphism coupled with lexeme coinages in a given language lacking equivalents in other languages). Stylistic factors may be at work (is the style ideal terse and concise or rather elaborate and verbose in the source and target languages respectively?). Language pragmatics is also of importance. A given content may lend itself to mechanical translation from the source language into the target language, although were this content to be originally expressed in the target language, other formulations would most likely be employed. Underpinning his argumentation with illustrations drawn from six of the twenty-three official European Union languages, between

which translating is an ever-ongoing process, the author argues that for considerations of semantic fidelity to source languages it is not always even desirable to completely avoid this non-native character in texts of the kind discussed, although evidently source language texts should strive to make use of constructions natural to the source language to the greatest extent possible.

1. Introduction

It is a well-known fact that a translated text, no matter how grammatically correct, sometimes leaves the target language recipients with a vague feeling of hesitation or even unease. While acknowledging the formally faultless character of the text, the target language reader somehow, perhaps only subliminally or semiconsciously, identifies the text as something very unlikely to have originated in the target language. This condition was given eloquent expression in literature by the Franco-Chinese author François Cheng who in his novel *Le Dit de Tianyi* has the main character doubt whether, when reading the gospel of St. John in Chinese translation, he would ever be able to make anything out of this translation which is Chinese without being Chinese, with its troublesome neologisms, its sometimes halting syntax and its perturbing rhythm (Cheng 1998: 390).

This paper aspires to shed light on those situations where a text in its translated versions is formally correct and nonetheless appears unidiomatic or non-native to the target language native speakers. The present author holds there are basically three reasons for this, *viz.* (1) source and target language lexicographic anisomorphism; (2) source and

target language differences in text volume used for information presentation; and (3) source and target language differences in language use pragmatics. These three aspects will form the core of the paper below.

The author will draw on close to sixteen years' experience of translating documents at the European Parliament into his native Swedish language. Thus the paper focuses on translations of texts compiled within the work of the European Union (decidedly non-fiction products) and the issue will be approached from the somewhat uncommon angle of a decidedly lesser-used language as a target language. Even so, he hopes the points will also be of more broadly universal applicability, although some of the languages from which the illustrations have been drawn (all told: English, Finnish, French, German, Polish and Swedish) may appear unusual to a broader international readership.

2. Source and Target Language Lexicographic Anisomorphism

Lexicographic anisomorphism is a term usually connected with the late lexicographer Ladislav Zgusta and refers to the lack of equivalent lexemes that quite frequently characterises the relationship between any given language pair. To overcome this lack during the translation process, neologisms may turn out to be necessary in the target language, giving the target language text a markedly non-native aspect, at least until these neologisms become established elements of the target language itself.

Basically there are two types of lexicographic anisomorphism (hereinafter referred to as LAI): externally and internally conditioned LAI. Most cases of externally conditioned LAI could also be subsumed under the heading "culturally conditioned" LAI and most internally

conditioned LAI under the heading “structurally conditioned” LAI (cf. Sundström 2001: 88). An externally conditioned LAI owes its existence to differences in the external world surrounding two languages (whether physical or cultural). At its simplest it is manifested by the somewhat trivial fact that, for instance, Polynesian languages have no word for *snow*, European languages have no indigenous words corresponding to core elements of Buddhist doctrine, etc. This is of course a phenomenon well known for instance to Bible translators all over the world.

Internally conditioned LAI refers to situations where a phenomenon, procedure, etc., is a common element of human experience but there is no fixed word or expression to describe it in a language A as opposed to a language B. Perhaps surprisingly for the non-linguist, internally conditioned LAI sometimes concerns very common words in everyday use. As an illustration may be used the fact that English lacks an exact equivalent of a verb found in several other European languages, like in Finnish *ehtiä*, Polish *zdażyć* and Swedish *hinna*. Basically these verbs mean *have the time, get something done in time*.

Obviously, externally conditioned LAI is a common enough feature in the work of international organisations. New problems are formulated, new procedures and approaches elaborated and this manifests itself in neologisms. A good illustration is offered by a concept originating with the United Nations, namely *peace enforcement* (cf. <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military>). Another is found in an originally French term connected with refugee policy: *non-refoulement*, which has been borrowed into other languages such as English. Originating in the French verb *refouler* (with meanings such as *push back*), it refers to the act of sending back a protection-seeking person to an area where he/she may be subject to persecution. Perhaps the external similarities with the English adjective *foul* have contributed to preserving the French loanword as a stock expression of international refugee debate in the English language.

2.1 Focalising words

LAI is commonly caused by the presence in a given language of what I have chosen to call focalising words. These words are usually nouns, but there are sometimes verbs that express an often rather complex development, procedure, chain of events, etc. To appreciate the problem these focalising words may cause to users of English, we may refer to the French nouns *littoralisation* and *judiciarisation*. Not confined to the usage associated with any given organisation, they are quite frequent in French-language public debate about society and social questions, and neither one has any direct English equivalent. The former means *the concentration of settlements and urban activity in areas close to the seafront* whereas *judiciarisation* refers to *the fact that something (society, life in general, etc.) comes to be increasingly seen in legal terms, dominated by courts, lawyers and legislation*. If these words occur frequently enough in any given context, the recourse to circumlocutory expressions may finally turn out to be too time- and space-consuming and so the translator may well either adopt the French words into English (easy enough, owing to the large number of Latinate loanwords in English) or try translating them by way of some new coinage (such as *coastification* for *littoralisation*).

Somewhat similar is the case with the French *saisir* and the corresponding adjective *insaisissable*. In legal language the verb refers to *bringing a matter before a court or taking legal action at a court* whereas the qualifying adjective *insaisissable* means that *a given issue cannot legally be brought before a court or similar organ*. In neither case there is a direct English equivalent.

English is abundantly rich in focalising words of the kind described above. A case in point is the English noun *empowerment*, a frequent word in discussions inter alia about women's rights and development assistance. Taken at its simplest it means, according to a definition provided by

Wikipedia: “increasing the spiritual, political, social or economic strength of individuals and communities. It often involves the empowered developing confidence in their own capacities” (Wikipedia 2011). In a recent article in the British magazine *The Economist* it was pointed out that among the favourite words in the language for special purposes used by international organisations (“NGO-speak” in the language employed by the author, where NGO stands for *non-government organisation*) were found “empowerment”, “capacity-building” and “stakeholder” (“Anyone here speak NGOish?” 2011). The word *empowerment* gave translators of European Union texts a problem, as it existed in neither Finnish nor Swedish.

When in 1995 Finland and Sweden acceded to the European Union (EU for short), with the ensuing conferral of official EU language status on the Finnish and Swedish languages, the need to find translation equivalents for *empowerment* in these two languages increased exponentially. Finally, neologisms were created. In Finnish, essentially *voimaannuttaminen* was chosen (derived from the basic noun *voima*, meaning “power” to which has been added a causative affix transforming it into a verb, which then in turn has been nominalised). In Swedish, the word formation procedure was less uniform, resulting in *egenmakt* (“own power”) and *maktmobilisering* (“power mobilisation”) (Rittershausen 2010: 1).

Sometimes, however, it was not deemed necessary to impart all the nuances conveyed by *empower(ment)* to the text recipient. Is that a case of “lost in translation”? Not necessarily. We may consider the case below, taken from the European Commission document COM(2010) 0193, page 2: *a cohesive society in which people are empowered to anticipate and manage change*, where the Swedish official translation simply called for *ett sammanhållet sambälle där människorna kan förutse och hantera förändring*. In other words, it was considered sufficient to represent the complex meaning area covered by the verb *empower* by the simple expedient of

the modal auxiliary verb *kan* (as in English: *can*). Here, the avoidance of all-covering translation equivalents certainly added to the native-like character of the text.

Other examples of English-language lexically anisomorphic focalising words in relation to Finnish and Swedish that are frequent in international organisation parlance are: *mainstreaming*, *resettlement* and *ownership* (the latter in contexts such as “identifying with something”, “having a sense of being concerned with something”), represented in Swedish by such neologisms as *jämställdhetsintegrering* (“the integration of gender equality”) *vidarebosättning* (“further-on settling”) and *egenansvar* (“own-responsibility”). Although over the time well-established in Swedish texts, they nonetheless have a certain flair of “organisation-speak” to the average Swedish-language reader.

In the usage of international organisations, focalising words often have the marked character of jargon. To illustrate this tendency, we may select English words such as *frontloading* (“placing budget expenditure in the first part of a period covered by a budget”), *goldplating* (“resorting to excessive regulation”, “overregulating”; often pejorative), *grandfathering* (“allowing an entity to retain rights, benefits, etc. already acquired”) and *greenwashing* (“pretending to make one’s activities more environmentally friendly, although just for appearances’ sake”). Since target languages as often as not lack equivalents, neologisms may be introduced during the translation process, thus making the target language look alien.

2.2 LAI above and below the word level

LAI may be a characteristic not only of individual words, but also of expressions and word combinations and of elements forming part of a word. To exemplify LAI at the level of multi-word lexemes, consideration may be given to a French expression such as *une fuite en avant*. This expression is common enough in texts dealing with political

and economic issues. It literally means *a flight forward* (*flight* in the sense of “escape”) and basically refers to an unreflecting pursuit of a given path of action, without any thoughts for the consequences. Admittedly, it sometimes lends itself to translation by the English *(take) blind action*, although this is far from always the case.

On the word-formation level, LAI can be found in what F. Steurs refers to as productive splinters, that is words that function as figurative elements of speech and can be used productively to form new lexemes (Steurs 2010: 1). To draw illustrations from lesser-known languages, we may consider the Swedish word *material* (essentially invested with the same meaning as its English counterpart) but used also in the coinage of words such as *elevmaterial* (“pupil material”), *soldatmaterial* (“soldier material”), etc. In a construction such as *elevmaterialet är heterogent* what it says is simply *the pupils are a heterogeneous group* and need not be translated into English at all. Somewhat more complicated is the case with the Finnish noun *putki* (“pipeline”, “tube”) when used as a productive splinter in phrases like *opintoputki* (“studies pipeline”) or *uraputki* (“career pipeline”), where it is used only as a figure of speech to denote the way someone’s studies or career proceeds. In translating a Finnish phrase like *elämä opintoputken ulkopuolella* into English as *life outside studies* we arrive at a denotationally correct solution although we will be missing out on connotations and shades of meaning that make themselves felt to a person familiar with Finnish, since the metaphor *putki* usually implies a development that proceeds in a predictable and unimaginative way, without offering any genuine alternatives.

2.3 LAI relating to style, register and connotations

LAI may also relate more to style rather than semantics. For instance, the Finnish adjective *turhamainen* certainly corresponds to the English *vainglorious* as far as meaning is concerned, but the differences

in style are obvious. The Finnish word is an element of everyday language while the English equivalent decidedly belongs to a very formal style. Likewise, LAI may be a question of register differences, where a lexeme belonging to everyday language in the source language has target language equivalents only in LSP, or language for special purposes. As examples, there are the Finnish noun *harju* and its Swedish semantic equivalent *ås*; both refer to a geological formation very common to the Scandinavian landscape after the last Ice Age, namely a gravel ridge formed by retracting inland ice and usually growing pine trees. The corresponding English term *esker* is a term almost exclusively found in the usage of geologists and other specialists.

A particular case of LAI is one in which source language items and their target language equivalents, although virtually identical as far as denotational meaning is concerned, evoke altogether different connotations or associations in the recipient's mind. This issue was raised *inter alia* by Professor Valeryi Berkov, who at the third conference of the Euralex organisation in Budapest 1988 pointed out that the word *yacht club* and its Russian-language equivalent give rise to perfectly different mental images: the English word is perceived as representing an elitist club whereas, in Berkov's words, the Russian corresponding term is construed as referring to a democratic sports association (Berkov 1990: 105). Here, obviously, factors in the surrounding extralinguistic reality are at play. For a comparison, reference may be made to the expression *summer house*, or, even more markedly, *summer residence* that in the Anglo-Saxon world evokes the idea of a wealthy lifestyle whereas in Scandinavia it will mostly refer to a modest woodframe structure somewhere in the countryside.

An even more telling example is provided by the French word *banlieu* generally considered to match the English *suburb* or the Finnish *lähiö*. Even a perfunctory examination of underlying reality will show

that this is far from the case. The difficulty lies in the fact that the associations evoked by these words differ considerably. At this stage, reference must be made to purely extralinguistic factors. As Wikipedia quite correctly noted: “In many parts of the developed world, suburbs are different from the American suburb, both in terms of population and in terms of what they represent” (Wikipedia). An American suburb will normally be perceived as a housing area composed of one-family homes with front and back gardens and brings to mind a vision of middle-class life. A Finnish *lähiö* will conjure up images of multi-storeyed houses made of prefabricated concrete elements, grouped around a shopping mall (of very modest size by American standards) and separated from other such suburban areas by bands of forest, several kilometers wide. Given these differences in the extralinguistic reality, it may even be argued that some other word ought to be found to designate in English this structure of urban development in Finland and other Nordic nations. The situation gets even more complicated if we include the French word *banlieu*. As Wikipedia points out, a *suburb* generally signifies areas of low-density housing, inhabited by the wealthier strata of society whereas in France, *banlieues* are more frequently low-income areas with social housing projects.

2.4 Illusory or specious LAI

Then, there is also illusory or specious LAI. This notion covers cases where basically the same extralinguistic reality is expressed by semantically very dissimilar elements in a given pair of languages. For illustrations, we may turn to the field of labour relations and labour market procedures. In English there is an expression *the social dialogue* which finds a Swedish equivalent in *diskussionen mellan arbetsmarknadens parter*, i.e., *the discussion between the labour market parties*.

Likewise in Luxembourg there is something colloquially referred

to in French and German as the *tripartite*, meaning an ongoing process of determining labour relations through discussions between employers' associations, trade unions and representatives of the national government. In Finland, the overall procedure is remarkably similar, but there it goes under the name of *tulopoliittiset neuvottelut* or, in English, *income policy negotiations*.

Yet another illustration of illusory LAI is found in the names used for a certain Bible passage, *viz.* Mt. 28, 18-20, where Jesus orders his disciples to go out in the world and preach His word to all mankind. In Swedish this passage is known as the *missionsbefallningen* (literally *the mission order*) whereas in English it is traditionally referred to as *the Great Commission*, an expression where the exact nature of the commission is not made explicit.

This tendency of specious LAI is also present in the language for special purposes. Suffice it to mention two examples. First the military term *subwarhead*, represented in Finnish by *tytärammus*—literally *daughter projectile* although the Finnish language does have elements corresponding both to the prefix *sub-* and the noun *warhead*. Secondly, mention may be made of the English *softwood forest* and *hardwood forest*, usually rendered into Swedish as *barrskog* (*needletree forest*) and *lövskog* (*broadleaf tree forest*) respectively. Of interest is that although *needletree forest* does exist in English, the (for all practical purposes) synonymous *softwood forest* was attested two thousand times more frequently when a Google search was made on June 30, 2010!

In both cases above, LAI is only apparent, although potentially misleading to a translator not initiated in the underlying technical domain.

Specious LAI is perhaps at its most formidable when it involves transposition in translations from source to target language, i.e., a shift of word class. Here we have an element of language psychology at work. Leapfrogging from one word class to another often erects mental

blocks: subliminally we may have difficulties realising that a verb phrase can communicate the same content as a noun. We may consider the German noun *Querdenker*, literally *cross-wise thinker*. Taken in isolation it is certainly untranslatable. Contextually speaking, however, we find perfectly adequate English equivalents. Thus the phrase *Querdenker sind die Quelle vieler Erfindungen* has a close linguistic correspondent in English: *Many inventions have been made by people thinking out of the box.*

2.5 LAI solved by neology or semantic extension

LAI as a source of neologisms and hence a primary source for a possible non-native character of texts in translation becomes all the more obvious in texts produced by international organisations if consideration is given to the legal requirements governing such texts. In this respect, reference may be made to the 1969 Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, which unequivocally establishes (in Article 33 paragraphs 1 and 3):

When a treaty has been authenticated in two or more languages, the text is equally authoritative in each language, unless the treaty provides or the parties agree that in case of divergence, a particular text shall prevail [...]. The terms of the treaty are presumed to have the same meaning in each authenticated text.

Against such a background, it is understandable that translators may wish to coin new words to ensure that terminological correspondence may be ensured *a prima vista*.

Such neologisms may be exemplified by the Swedish neologism *bevarandestatus*, a word for word match of the English *conservation status*, a key concept in European Union environment legislation, defined in article 1(e) of directive 92/43/EEC. In Swedish-language discussions

on environment issues, however, a seemingly altogether different word is used in this same sense, *viz.* *fortlevnadsmöjligheter*, i.e., *life-continuation possibilities*. The difference is only superficial, since the *conservation status* of a given species refers precisely to the possibilities of the species concerned to go on existing. While the precise reasons for choosing the evidently foreign-sounding *bevarandestatus* are bound to remain a matter of conjecture, it is probably safe to say the translator may have been at least subliminally guided to stay as close to the original as possible, also in terms of surface structure, thus preferring a neologism to an established native term for considerations of legal security. Interestingly enough, both in Finnish and Polish different and more native-like solutions have been adopted. In Finnish the concept is referred to as *suojaelun taso*, i.e., *level of protection* while the Polish term is *stan ochrony*, literally *protection state*.

At this junction, mention should be made of the fact that the instruction manual for translations into Swedish of EU texts explicitly warns against indiscriminate use of native terms referring to local conditions, procedures and institutions, since the concept formulation underlying EU terms may be different from what is found on the national level (“Att översätta EU-rättsakter” 2009: 104).

LAI may also be resolved by investing existing target language lexemes with a new or extended meaning, making them correspond semantically to target language lexemes. This technique was classically used when concepts related to Christianity were introduced into other languages, as in connection with Bible translation work as mentioned above. An outstanding exponent of this approach was of course Matteo Ricci, who in the words of Jourdain took pains to assimilate concepts well known from Chinese philosophy with basic tenets of Christian doctrine, as in representing the Christian notion of love (most probably love in the Greek sense of *agape*) by a term drawn from Confucian

teaching: *ren* (cf. Jourdain 2010: 69). A case well-known from translations of European Union documents into Swedish is the semantic extension of the Swedish *oegentligheter* (literally “improprieties”, referring to misappropriation or embezzlement of funds) which has been established as a translation of the French *irregularité*, referring essentially to any contravention of rules.

Thus, in the words of de Corte: “The phenomenon of neology is extremely important not only for the renewal of our national languages but also for the creation of the eurolect” (de Corte 2003: 70). If for “eurolect”, denoting the language specific to European Union institutions, we substitute something like “organisolect” we arrive at an understanding of the role played by neologisms in translations of the kind discussed in this study.

3. Differences in Text Volume Used for Information Presentation

Differences in text volume used for information presentation can be dealt with rather more summarily than the issue of lexicographic anisomorphism. The differences between source and target languages in the above respect turn basically on three aspects.

3.1 Variations in information density at sentence level

With respect to information density at sentence level, languages tend to fall in two categories. With a somewhat cavalier wording they could be labelled “squeeze in” and “spread out” languages respectively. In an instruction manual for persons translating Amnesty International texts into Swedish, English was considered to belong to the former category. Translated into English, the relevant passage in the manual

points out “In our [=Amnesty International’s] English texts it is considered a virtue to bring together as much information as possible within the confines of the same sentence”. It goes on to underline that in Swedish-language translations of these texts the objective to pursue whenever possible consists of having one main clause in every sentence, and no more. The following example is given in English:

Five of the prisoners had been sentenced to prison terms ranging from seven to 20 years in November 1982 after a trial before the [...] Court which AI considers to have been unfair.

For the Swedish version it is recommended that the subordinate clause at the end of the sentence be separated to form a sentence on its own.

As for the tendency of the English language to concentrate information on the level of the individual sentence, it should be said, for the sake of balance and objectivity, that this is not necessarily an ideal of English legal writing. Thus it is pointed out in the instructions for persons drafting EU legal acts in English: “Sentences should express just one idea [...] The text must split up into easily assimilated subdivisions [...] following the progression of the reasoning” (JPG 2003). However, it is probably safe to say that, after decades of purposeful language planning, this precept is more frequently honoured in languages such as Finnish and Swedish than in English.

3.2 Variations in presentation conciseness

There is also the issue of how many words are used for information presentation in a given context. Source and target languages may find themselves at very different ends of the scale ranging from a prolix, wordy style and terse, lapidary style. English texts produced in international organisations often use a striking number of abstract words

virtually devoid of semantic contents. An example is taken from a European Commission document, with the reference number COM (2008)0133, page 8: *develop a joint proposal for setting up technology watch activities*, which, in its Swedish version, in perfect compliance with Swedish linguistic conventions was translated as: *utveckla ett gemensamt förslag till teknikebevakning* (literally: *develop a joint proposal for technology watch*) where the semantically rather thin elements of *setting up* and *activities* had been left out, implicit as they were in the main elements of the sentence.

In the author's experience, this high frequency of abstract words is typical for instance of the Polish language. This tendency is amply illustrated by an example from a European Union regulation (Commission Regulation No 63/2011/EU, recital 1). The Polish version included this passage was *wystąpić z wnioskiem o ustalenie alternatywnych docelowych poziomów zmniejszenia emisji* (literally: *turn up with an application for the establishment of alternative target levels for emission reductions*). The corresponding Swedish version was *ansöka om alternativa utsläppsminskningmål* (literally: *apply for alternative emissions reduction targets*). By way of comparison, the English original also was *apply for alternative emissions reduction targets*.

Yet another striking contrast in terms of information presentation can be found in a sentence created in the course of European Parliament debates: *take measures to encourage the involvement of fathers in caring for children*, which finds a correct but somewhat unidiomatic Swedish word-for-word translation in *vidta åtgärder för att främja pappors deltagande i vården av barn*. When searching through examples of parliamentary debate in Sweden, where obviously the statements are produced spontaneously in Swedish and not translated from other languages, a semantically synonymous expression was found, however, with the following words: *aktivera papporna i vården av barn* (literally: *activate fathers in childcare*).

Interestingly enough, the instruction manual for linguists translating

European Union documents from English into Swedish specifically points out that nouns with a contextually speaking limited information value may be left out (“Att översätta EU-rättsakter” 2009: 138). Also, it is underlined that participles conveying little or no information need not be translated. Thus, *the procedure laid down in article 251* is recommended to be translated simply as a word-to-word equivalent of the English: *the procedure in article 251*.

Here, a literal transfer of source language expression patterns to the target language will result in constructions which, while formally correct, will nevertheless make the text look unfamiliar to target language native speakers. Copying mechanically into the target language translation the source language information presentation patterns with their many elements virtually devoid of any semantic load-bearing function is likely to make a tedious impression on the recipient. At this point, we may ask ourselves what impression the reverse approach will give, that is, using a concise and lapidary style in translations into languages used to greater verbosity. In this case, most probably the unfamiliar non-native character will go hand in hand with an impression of simplicity perhaps bordering on naivety. Alternatively, it may even cause offense by its abruptness and curtness, inducing the reader/hearer to wonder whether (s)he is not worth wasting any more words on!

3.3 Variations as regards preferences for nominalisations vs. verb phrases

Straddling the border line between information presentation and syntax proper there is the issue of nominalisations versus verbs. In this respect, the Scandinavian languages are far less prone to use nominalisations with their ensuing abstract character than languages such as, notably, English and German, but also Polish. The instruction manual for EU language officers translating texts into the Swedish language

highlights this tendency by pointing out that source language (=English and French) texts have a relatively large number of nominalisations by comparison with texts originally produced in Swedish, followed by a statement to the effect that other constructions often give a smoother and more natural impression in that language (“Att översätta EUrättsakter” 2009: 136). Strikingly enough, the tendency towards a nominal style has been pointed out as a “classic example” also of translations from Chinese into English (cf. Radtke 2007: 10). However, excessive nominalisation, at least by means of directly translating nominalising suffixes, also seems to affect translations made in the opposite direction, i.e., from English into Chinese. In a private communication, the author’s Chinese linguist colleague Tianyue Yi pointed out that both the English suffix *-er* and the suffix *-sation* may be translated into Chinese by way of characters essentially copying over these affixes into Chinese, resulting in a construction that is grammatically correct but gives a “very strange” impression, “because we almost never” employ such constructions in spontaneously produced Chinese (Yi 2010: 2).

All the three aspects discussed above may, if indiscriminately copied over from the source language conventions, give translated texts a non-native character.

4. Differences in Language Use Pragmatics

Last, there is by far the most disparate and disjointed category among the causes for the occasional non-native character of translated texts. Put simply, semantically different words are used to cover what is essentially the same content. A good example is offered by the texts on signposts. While a sign bearing the text *Smoking/fishing/entry (etc.) prohibited*

would no doubt be understood by any English speaker, there is no changing the fact it looks somewhat alien; the idiomatic expression being *No smoking/fishing/entry (etc.)*. To expand on the same theme: in both French and German a text warning the public of some threatening danger may be intensified by an added element such as *Lebensgefahr* in German (literally: *Life danger*) or in French *Danger de mort* (literally: *Death danger*). By comparison, a sign bearing the text *Lethal danger* or *Mortal danger*, although perfectly possible in English, would nevertheless look alien.

Another illustration drawn from everyday language is provided by the French text on a traffic sign in Luxembourg, forbidding entry to other vehicles than those engaged in *combat de gel*, literally *frost fighting*. Reference is here made to vehicles used in snow removal and the spreading of road salt, in brief *winter maintenance*, which in turn would correspond to *entretien hivernal* in French. Again we see how semantically different elements are used to convey the same content. Here, it is not so much a matter of lexicographic anisomorphism, as the requisite lexical items are manifestly available in both the source and target languages, but rather a matter of usage pragmatics.

4.1 Overuse and underuse of target language elements

The absence of lexicographic anisomorphism certainly does not mean that source and target language lexical items, although for all practical purposes equivalent in terms of semantics and style, are equally frequent in both languages. Owing to source language interference, various target language lexemes are sometimes overused or underused, as compared to usage in texts originally written in the target language. Consider the English verb *promote*. While the Swedish language has a verb *främja*, which constitutes a well-nigh one-to-one equivalent, the latter verb is far less frequent in texts originating in Swedish than in

texts translated from English (or French) into Swedish. Instead, Swedish seems to prefer constructions such as *arbeta för* (*work in favour of*) or *verka för* (*act in favour of*). Inversely, in English translations of Finnish or Swedish texts, the adjective *holistic* is likely to occur more frequently than in English originals. This overuse is occasioned by expressions such as *kokonaiskuva/helbetsbild* or *kokonaisnäkemyks/helbets syn*, traditionally represented in translations made into English from Finnish or Swedish by *holistic picture* and *holistic view*. In texts originating in English, the underlying idea would probably be expressed primarily by a construction such as *a/the broader picture* or *a/the overall view*.

4.2 Personification as a stylistic device

Pragmatic differences are evident also in the respective role of personifications in source and target languages. While the English language liberally personifies abstract nouns, having them function as the subject of a sentence, a language such as Swedish is rather more reticent about such personifications. Thus a sentence such as *The adoption of the agreement will have to address the following question* would normally translate into Swedish without the noun *agreement* as a personified subject; rather like an English alternative such as *When the agreement is adopted the following question will have to be addressed*. Failure to introduce such a shift of perspective when translating an English text into Swedish would result in a decidedly non-native target-language end product.

4.3 Variations in style level commonly used

Pragmatics also dictate to what extent a non-fiction text in a given language is “elaborated” or “plain” in terms of elements not directly necessary for expressing the subject under discussion. By such elements I refer to literary quotations, allusions, puns and similar plays on words. As for literary quotations and allusions, they are decidedly more common

in, for instance, languages such as French, while puns and plays on words are quite common in the English language, sometimes also in rather matter-of-fact text environments. Apart from the fact that such “decorative elements” do not necessarily travel well across language borders, the basic attitude towards them also differ between languages. In northern Europe they are likely to be seen, not as style-enhancing elements, but rather as irrelevant linguistic deadwood.

The “elaborated” versus “plain” style may of course also be predicated on factors going deeper than language itself. In an article about a French legislative project Schnapper refers to *cette manière très française, théorique, idéologique de mener les débats*, i.e., *this very French manner of conducting debates in theoretical and ideological terms* (cf. Schnapper 2010: 3). Another aspect related to the presentation of a subject is mentioned by Mole who gives the following characterisation of linguistic (or actually paralinguistic) conventions related to the use of Finnish, where, after first having stressed the value attached to plain and open expression, he continues with the following observation: “It is not done to be expressive, assertive or emotional. Or to say things more than once” (Mole 1996: 125).

A final, although minor, reason why a target language text of the kind referred to in this study may give a decidedly non-native impression is the use of neologisms in the source language itself. The present author vividly remembers the stir it caused among the linguist staff when in a European Parliament debate concerning anti-personnel mines it was deemed necessary to coin a new word *anti-people mines* to better underline what was perceived as the inhumane character of these weapons. Such a coinage of course necessitated similar neologisms in all the other official languages, and for morphological reasons in some languages these neologisms were sometimes difficult to create.

Source language neologisms are one of the most salient aspects

of forum-related language varieties such as *Globish* or *Eurospeak*, the latter referred to earlier in this presentation. “Globish” is a term coined by Jean-Paul Nerrière a Frenchman, not a linguist by profession but owing to his work as a IBM executive very familiar with international parlance. McCrum characterises this language variety as “essential English merged with the terminology of the digital age and the international news media” (McCrum 2010: 32). Since texts written in such varieties of international English are bound to make a somewhat foreign impression on native English speakers themselves, it logically follows, if only from the requirement of dynamic equivalence in translations, that they should appear non-native also when translated into other languages.

5. Conclusions

The question as to whether a text should “show” that it is in fact a translated product opens itself to endless interpretations. Evidently the target language should be formally correct and make use of target language native resources. Equally evidently, though, situations may arise when simply considerations of legal security may oblige the translator to resort to neologisms and turns of phrase not known to or less used in the target language. Thus it is perfectly understandable that translators may sometimes be reluctant to use target language idiomatic lexical items for fear that they may not convey the source language meaning with sufficient accuracy. In shunning idiomatic expressions, their translation work thus contributes to the non-native character of the target language texts. To some degree there is a perfectly valid reason for this. For arguably, some of the most treacherous translated texts are those displaying eloquence and an idiomatic target language grammar and vocabulary—while misrepresenting the contents of the source

language original. Exercising due diligence to avoid such misrepresentation, the translator may feel compelled, for instance, to “flatten out” allusions, figures of speech and so forth. Then, as for the paralinguistic character, there is obviously no need to change it. We cannot reasonably cut short an ornate, wordy style (except by leaving out language elements that are obviously devoid of semantic content) and still less could we expand on a plain and short style, even if it seems curt and abrupt when translated into the target language. And once again, considerations of legal security may induce translators to adhere more closely to the original text, resorting to foreign-influenced constructs rather than native-like ones.

The ultimate consequence will thus be yet another nod of recognition to the words of an anonymous German commentator to the effect that a translation should be *so frei wie möglich, so treu wie nötig*, that is, *as free as possible, as faithful as necessary*, with all the attendant consequences the latter part of this adage may imply for the native like or non-native-like character of the target language end product. And this being so, the question in the title of this paper will eventually have found an answer, basically in the affirmative, although with some important qualifications.

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Mats-Peter Sundström was born in 1956 in Tampere, Finland. He got his Master’s degree from Åbo Akademi, Finland in 1980, majoring in Scandinavian philology, then licentiate of philosophy from Åbo Akademi in 1983. He was acting lecturer of Scandinavian philology at Turku University, Finland 1979–1984. He worked as assistant editor for the *Finnish–Swedish General Dictionary* at the National Languages Research Centre in Helsinki 1986–1995, along with translating educational material for the Finnish Board of Vocational Training. He started working at the European Parliament Swedish translation unit in November 1995, and has worked there subsequently. He participated with paper presentations at all Asialex conferences since 2001 and presented a poster on verbs in European Parliament resolutions at the FIT Shanghai conference 2008.

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