Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Science, 2024, 8(4), 1016-1020
https://www. hillpublisher. com/journals/jhass/
ISSN Online: 2576-0548
ISSN Print: 2576-0556

Exploring the Translatability of Poetry—Taking *Chinese-Russian Chinese Poetry Series* as an Example

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How to cite this paper: Pengyan Zhang. (2024) Exploring the Translatability of Poetry—Taking *Chinese-Russian Chinese Poetry Series* as an Example. *Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Science*, 8(4), 1016-1020.
DOI: 10.26855/jhass.2024.04.035

Received: March 31, 2024
Accepted: April 30, 2024
Published: May 29, 2024

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Abstract

Poetry is the wisdom that mesmerizes the mind. This wisdom enables numerous literati to trace and explore, creating infinite possibilities for poetry. Consequently, more and more scholars are focusing on the interlingual translation of poetry and conducting in-depth investigations into its translatability. Taking the book *Chinese-Russian Chinese Poetry Series* by translator Mr. Gu Yu as an example, this article highlights the dialectical relationship between the translatability and untranslatability of poetry in relation to "form" and "content". It then outlines some principles and strategies of translation, with the goal of enhancing comprehension of the essence of translation and offering valuable insights for translating poems. The purpose of this study is to deepen the understanding of the essence of translation, provide a theoretical basis for translating poems, and promote the dissemination of Chinese poetic culture and cross-cultural communication.

Keywords

Poetry, translatability, *Chinese-Russian Chinese Poetry Series*

Introduction

The Chinese-Russian Chinese Poetry Series is edited by Gu Yu, a professor of Nankai University and translator of Russian literature, and Sergei Toroptsev, a Russian sinologist, because the series is rich in content, including Song lyrics, Tang poems, Li Bai poems, Yuanqu operas, and readings of contemporary poems, in order to select and translate this set of contemporary poetry readings, in order to get in touch with more than 40 poets or children of poets in China and to receive their gifts of poetry collections and authorisation for translation. He has been in contact with more than 40 poets or children of poets in China over the years and has been authorised to send them poetry collections and translations. He sifted through the poems on the basis of careful reading, produced the first drafts, and then sent them to his collaborators, who revised them according to the characteristics and laws of Russian poetry, and made further poetic treatment and enhancement, so as to maintain the style and flavour of the original Chinese poems as far as possible, and to facilitate the reading and appreciation of Russian readers. In this thesis, we analyse the translatability of the translations in terms of form and content, taking as examples the popular poems in the Tang and Song poems of the *Chinese-Russian Chinese Poetry Series*.

1. A Discussion of the Translatability of Poetry

Wing Goose
King Luobin
Goose, goose, goose, song to the sky.

White hair floats in green water, red palms sweep clear waves.

Стихи про гуся
Гуси!Гуси!га-га-га
Тянут шеи в облака
Перья плавают по ряске
Лапка бьет вольну крепка

Winged Goose is the first translation of the book, the original poem is a five-line poem, in the form of his neat counterpoint, read the cycle, catchy, in the content, the imagery and mood have a full demonstration, so that people are immersed in the scene, as if into a painting of ink and wash, in which you can see a naive white swan swimming in the turquoise water, the dynamic beauty of the goose, the perfect combination of auditory and visual, static and dynamic, sound and colour! The painting is a perfect combination of auditory and visual, static and dynamic, sound and colour, which brings to life the form and spirit of the goose. Then look at the translation, no doubt the translation in the form of retaining the neatness of the battle, but also to express the meaning of the original, reflecting the "shape" and "true", and at the same time have a certain rhyme (-г а , к а , к е , к а) read catchy, have the beauty of phonetics. The beauty of the rhyme. In terms of content, the image of "goose" is restored, and the sound of the goose is expressed by the onomatopoeia г а - г а - г а instead of Г у с и ! However, when we correspond word by word, it is not difficult to find that the translation does not correspond to the words "white hair", and "red palm", which indicate the colour of the words, assuming that the correspondence will be less rhythmic beauty, the form is no longer neat and tidy, to take an eclectic approach to the rhythm of Chinese poetry into the rhythm unique to Russian poetry, although not completely word by word restoration of the poems, but the maximum proposed the beauty of the form! The translator has painstakingly tried his best to preserve the style of the original work but is not satisfied with the fluency of the words and phrases, which is also a kind of pursuit. At least he has achieved "faith" and tried his best to maintain "form" (Luo Huan, 2021).

Jiang Xue
Liu Zongyuan
From hill to hill no bird in flight, from path to path no man in sight.
A lone boat with a straw hat, fishing alone in the snow of the cold river.

Снег над рекой
Уже и птиц на склонах не осталось
Уже и тропы к ноги опустили
На сирой лодке одинокий старец
В плаще из трав рыбачит под метелью

Liu Zongyuan's five-character stanza "Jiangxue" describes a snowy scene in the river countryside, where mountains and hills are snowy and roads are white. The mountains and hills are covered with snow, and the roads are all white. The birds are extinct, and the people are lost. The mood is secluded and desolate. The poet used only twenty words to depict a quiet and cold picture (Zeng Pingping, 2017). The poetic beauty of the original poem is embodied by the syntax and context, your eyes can not see but your heart can feel the purity of that lone boat, an old man, isolated from the world. At the same time, the combination of the real and the imaginary, the expression of static and dynamic, and the oblique rhyme achieved an unexpected effect. In the translation, the translator has completed the translation of imagery, and poetic communication, to achieve the "true" but more to give people a sense of story, and tell the reader a state of affairs, with a certain degree of "sublimity". We should be able to realise that in some aspects, there is also an inherent "refusal to be translated", as in the line "Birds fly away from a thousand mountains, and people's traces are extinguished along ten thousand paths", which characterises the cold winter mountainous landscape of rolling hills and thick snow cover through a number of images, and it is a combination of many images. It is a combination of many images, which is intended to imply rather than to explain or reproduce. The part of the poem that was rejected for translation as mentioned above is also found in the Song textbook, such as Yanshu's Raccoon River Sand.

Huanxi Sand

Yan Shu

A new song and a glass of wine. Last year, the weather was old at the pavilion. When will the sunset return? Helplessly, the flowers fell and the familiar Yan returned. The fragrant path of the small garden lingers alone.

Мы каждый новый стих вином отметим...
Мы каждый новый стих вином отметим,
Тут все,как прежде,-и денек,и сад.
Закат погас.Вернется ли светило?
Цветы уходят-что поделать с этим?
Извечно так, и ласточки летят...
Брожу в цветах душистых сиротливо.

Raccoon River Sand is the name of a Chinese poem, the name of a Tang opera, which is named after Xi Shi's washing her veil on Ruo Ye River, and has a specific cultural background. In the translation, we can find that it is impossible to translate the name of the poem directly, so we directly use the first sentence of the poem to translate it. In addition, there is also a way to express the potential meaning by turning the original statement into a question in the translation.

Yulouchun—Peach Stream Not Made to Live in a Tranquil Manner

Zhou Bangyan

The Peach Stream does not live with ease, and there is no place for the autumn lotus root to continue. At that time, we waited for each other at the Red Ridge Bridge, but today we are alone on the Yellow Leaf Road. There are countless green mountain peaks in the smoky sky, and the setting sun behind the geese is turning red. I am like a man who enters the river after the wind, and my love is like the flotsam that clings to the ground after the rain.

Лишён спокойствия, стою перед рекой Цветущих персиков.
Осенний корень лотоса, коль вырвешь - уж не пересадишь.
Тогда - мост с красными перилами был местом нашей встречи,
Сейчас же - в одиночестве ищу дорогу, жёлтою листвой укрытую.
Туман подкрадывается к множеству вершин зелёных,
Пред темнотой краснеет солнце на пути гусей, домой летящих.
Бриз облаками реку всю заполнил: это на меня похоже...
После дождя серёжки ивы льнут к сырой земле: это любовь...

The Chinese see the glyphs and the meanings behind them as coherent, expressive images, written in broad strokes, without the clarity and certainty we expect. According to Wen Wenxian, this creates a sentence structure that is simple and clear, but at the same time, there is a disguised relationship between the emotion and the setting, fused but not fully integrated, leaving large gaps for the reader to perceive.

The poem must capture imagery, associations, and symbols while being understood by people with different frames of mind and different languages. Inevitably, this loses the expressiveness, relief, and imaginative power of the poetic work, much of which has been added from the “creation”. It has been argued that the reason for this is not only the great distance between cultures and poetic traditions but also the ability of the translators and the cultures they represent, which makes a great difference to the attitude of the translators when translating, resulting in a “figurative and symbolic loss”, which is very damaging to the context of the translation.

2. Strategies for Translating Poetry

We are very fortunate to be able to feel in the different readings of Mr Gu Yu's *Chinese-Russian Chinese Poetry Series* a very high balance between content and form, focusing on the conveyance of the imagery of the original work, and trying our best to show the beauty of rhythm and rhyme, which is worthy of our study and reference, and at the same time, it also makes us pay more attention to the strategy and method of translating poems, and how to translate the translation more similar to the original text, because a translation is a translation, and the meaning of a work needs to be interpreted by meaning, due to the limited ability of the language to convey the meaning. Because translations

are translations after all, due to the limited ability of language to convey meaning, the meaning of a work needs to be interpreted in terms of meaning. In addition to the translator's linguistic ability and translation skills, the translation of ancient poems also needs to consider the readers' acceptance and emotional response, so it inevitably has its untranslatable aspects (Rong Rong & Guan Yiheng, 2021).

When judging the quality of ancient poems, we usually set the highest standard as the aesthetic emotion, while the form and content are the surface layer, and in the middle are the mood and imagery, which can be summarised in the following figure

Content, form—Imagery, mood—Aesthetics, emotion

Therefore, the most difficult thing for translators to touch is how to let the audience feel the beauty of the emotions conveyed in the poem. However, sometimes they over-pursued the upper layer and neglected the construction of the surface layer, which would result in the phenomenon of flamboyant rhetoric but not the meaning of the text, which would be a loss of authenticity, therefore, we should achieve the first step of the "authenticity" because the translator is not the exact copy or simulation, but reproduction. "It is because the translator does not copy or simulate exactly, but reproduces, that the translation has its creativity and artistic charm, and the pursuit of the "true" in the mind, from the "hopeful" to the "acceptable". The pursuit of the "truth" in the mind, from the "desirable" to the "real", is also possible. In addition, the things depicted in the poem are imagery, the image of the imagery, and the external is the realm, and the emotion is the ineffable and inaccessible "realm". Hidden emotion is expressed through explicit expression, which is implied, not just interpreted or reproduced, so it should be recognised that the indirectness of imagery and context has its own untranslatability, then we should pay more attention to the communication value of language and culture, and we can leave the context appropriately, leaving a perfect balance between blankness and the reader's accurate understanding of the two, I am afraid that it is only an ideal state. Secondly, we need to pay attention to the translatability of the audience groups and understand their needs, and here we can learn from Mr Gu Yu's way of translating with the Russian translators so that the Russian people can understand the translation better.

3. Conclusions

Taking Mr Gu Yu's *Chinese-Russian Chinese Poetry Series* as an example, this paper selects a few poems and discusses the translatability of the poems in terms of their form and content, imagery and mood, and argues the dialectical relationship between translatability and untranslatability, and then mentions the strategy of translating poems, that is, recognising that the poems are untranslatable, preserving the original poem's "truth" in the context, and leaving a gap to achieve the purpose of cultural exchange, and pointing out that the audience's point of view should be taken to maximise translatability. It then mentions the strategy of translating poems, that is, acknowledging the untranslatability of poems, preserving the "truth" of the original poem, leaving a gap in the meaning to achieve the purpose of cultural exchange, and maximising the translatability from the audience's point of view.

In fact, the translatability and untranslatability of poems are relative and dialectical. Subject to the constraints of the poem's genre, imagery, mood, and emotion, as well as the translator's own cultural knowledge and translation practice level, it is unrealistic and impossible to make the translated text and the original text completely equal, and the artistic effect of the translation is absolutely the same (Yang Bo, 2017).

It is not easy for us to try our best to translate poems with poems as in the series of books, to take into account both content and form, to pay attention to the conveyance of the original imagery, and to try our best to show the beauty of rhythm and rhyme, and at the same time, we should know that at some levels and on some sides, a poem has its inherent "refusal to be translated", and the translator can only narrow the gap between the two as much as possible in the continuous practice. The translator can only try to minimise the differences between the two in the course of continuous practice and strive for approximation.

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