古诗词翻译赏析

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前　言

　　"古诗词翻译赏析"是目前高等院校英语专业学生的专业选修课程。开设这门课程的目的是让学生在了解中国古典诗词的基础上，了解古诗词翻译成英文的过程，并将翻译理论应用到品评翻译的实践中去，从而提高英汉互译的能力，特别是古诗词英译本的赏析能力。

　　目前，市面上关于古诗词英译赏析的教程为数不多，用英文编写的古诗词翻译赏析教程更是屈指可数。考虑到英语专业的学生已经开设了翻译课程，本书对翻译学的翻译理论、翻译知识、翻译技巧等均未涉及。古诗词之美，美在意境。因而，在古诗词翻译赏析的过程中，主要是看目的语与源语中的意境是否一样或者最为接近。本书主要围绕英译本中诗词意境的重新营造展开论述。

　　与已经出版的谈论翻译赏析的书籍相比，本书有以下特点：

　　1. 专业性。英语行文，强化实际应用能力，适应英语专业英语授课的教学实际。

　　2. 实践性。立足英汉互译，旨在帮助学生巩固和应用所学的翻译理论和技巧，品评译作的利弊。

　　3. 实用性。吸收各家所长，供分析欣赏的材料取自于书刊报纸上的译作，努力使本书具有较高的学术性、思想性、知识性、趣味性和实用性。

　　4. 文化性。本书涉及中英两种文化，要翻译古诗词，首先，必须熟悉中国文化特别是古典文化，此为翻译的前提；其次，必须深入了解古诗词的背景及文化内涵。英译过程中，还需熟悉英语语言文化，运用不同的语言为媒介表达相同或相近的意境，以期达到功能对等的效果。因此，古诗词英译文赏析的过程也是考究其文化内涵对等性的过程。

5. 多功能性。本书的适用范围比较广，既可以作为高校英语专业学生的专业选修课本，也可以作为英语和古诗词爱好者的自学材料。

中国的古诗词是中国古典文学最重要的组成部分，是中国文化的瑰宝。意境是诗词的魅力所在。意境在诗词的创作和鉴赏中起着非常重要的作用，无论是中文诗词还是英文诗歌。本书围绕着中国诗词翻译中意境的传递和营造，进行了初步而系统的研究。全书分为七个章节，从诗词的意象、诗词的比喻性语言、音乐性以及模糊语这四个构成意境的主要方面来赏析古诗词的英译版本。

本书第一章简要讲述了中国诗词和诗词翻译。第二章围绕意境展开叙述。诗词意境在诗词的创作和鉴赏中都有着十分重要的作用。优秀的诗篇，都以其意境而广为传唱。意境作为诗词的核心和"灵魂"，在诗词中的作用是不言而喻的。在此章中，不仅讲述了意境的产生、本质，也着重讲述了中国古诗词意境的构成要素。意象是意境的最基本元素。第三章围绕意象而展开，介绍了意象的分类、特点，及英译过程中的常见处理方法，着重对古诗词英译本中的意象进行了赏析。意象可以表达诗人的主观感情，可以把抽象的、不易把握的概念形象化、具体化，以达到"言已尽而意无穷"的效果。第四章主要论述了古诗词英译本中比喻性语言的赏析问题。为了营造意境及氛围，诗词中常用比喻性语言。诗歌语言的表现手法有赋、比、兴，即联想、暗喻和象征。诗词常运用意象引起读者的想象，诗词的创作和欣赏必然会运用联想和想象。第五章从意境构成的另一个重要因素——音乐性入手，赏析英译本的古诗词音乐性的重构。音乐性对于诗词的意境也是很重要的，它可营造氛围，使诗词读起来朗朗上口，因而没有音乐性也就不成诗词。第六章主要赏析了古诗词英译中模糊语的处理。模糊语在中国古诗词中出现非常频繁，正是这些模糊语的出现，使得古诗词韵味无穷。对于同一首诗，不同的人读了会有不同的审美感受，且同一个人在不同的阶段、处于不同的心境也会有不同的感受。这也是古诗词的魅力所在。古诗词的翻译不是一蹴而就的，需要"独上高楼，望尽天涯路"的文学积累，需要"衣带渐宽终不悔，为伊消得人憔悴"的进取精神，需要"蓦然回首，那人却在灯火阑珊处"的瞬间灵感，也需要深厚的文化素养和文化底蕴。第七章主要分析了

产生误译的因素。主要分三大类进行论述：文化因素（即中西方文化差异和语言的模糊性），译者的文化素养，读者的文化素养。

中国诗词中的意境在英译文中的重新营造需注意意象、诗歌的比喻性语言、音乐性、模糊语，并包括文化、译者和读者等因素。采取何种处理方法合适则是以体现与原文最接近的意境，达到译文读者从所获的审美体验和原文读者最大限度的相近为原则的。

本书由湖北工程学院曹桂花编写。本书得以付梓，首先要感谢全国翻译界的专家学者为本书提供了丰富的素材。其次，要感谢湖北工程学院外国语学院和武汉大学出版社许多同仁的支持和鼓励，特别是湖北工程学院操时尧教授、柯军等老师的批评指正。最后，感谢湖北工程学院教材立项的资助。

为了切合英语专业的教学要求，本书用英文撰写，语言简洁易懂。由于笔者水平有限，加之时间仓促、缺乏经验，选材和分析上或多或少有所遗漏，疏漏、缺憾在所难免，衷心欢迎专家、读者们批评指正（联系方式：gillcao@hbeu.edu.cn），以帮助笔者进一步改进。

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2018 年 6 月

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Chapter 1 Chinese Poetry and Its Translation

1.1 Chinese Poetry

John Turner, an outstanding Chinese culture researcher, once commented that Chinese culture was the most artistic and longest-established culture that had ever existed. Poetry, the most succinct and culture-loaded part, is considered as the gem of Chinese language and the crystallization of Chinese culture. Poetry is the superior form of literature which is characterized as terseness in language, indeterminacy in words, richness in meaning, sharpness in emotion, fertility in rhetorical strategy, and distinctiveness in rhythm. It is considered as the most condensed and concentrated form of literature. China is a nation of poetry.

1.1.1 General History of Chinese Poetry

Every nation has its own literature. China is a nation of poetry with a history of about 3,000 years. The earliest poetry in China can be traced back to about 3,000 years ago. *The Classic of Poetry*, also *Shijing* or *Shih-ching*, translated variously as *The Book of Songs*, *Book of Odes*, or simply known as the *Odes* or *Poetry* (Chinese: 诗; pinyin: *Shī*), is the oldest existing collection of Chinese poetry, comprising 305 works dating from the 11th to 7th centuries B. C. It is one of the "Five Classics" traditionally said to have been compiled by Confucius, and has been studied and memorized by scholars

in China and neighboring countries over two millennia. Since the Qin Dynasty, its rhyme patterns have also been analyzed in the study of Old Chinese phonology (From Wikipedia). The earliest poem in *The Classic of Poetry* was composed in the early Western Zhou Dynasty (1046 B. C. -771 B. C.), but was compiled in the Spring and Autumn Period. Since the Han Dynasty, *The Classic of Poetry* has been regarded as a classic. With vicissitudes of history, it contains many culture-loaded words. The classification can be *Si Shi Liu Yi*(四始六义). *Si Shi* refers to the four poems ranking first in collection, which are *Feng*(风), *Da Ya*(大雅), *Xiao Ya*(小雅), and *Song* (颂). *Liu Yi* refers to *Feng*, *Ya*, *Song*, *Fu*, *Bi*, *Xing*. According to different types of music, *The Classic of Poetry* is classified as *Feng*, *Ya*, *Song*. And according to the technique of expression, it can be classified as *Fu*, *Bi*, *Xing*, which are what we now call the rhetorical devices. *Feng*, *or Guofeng*, altogether 160, refers to ballads or folk songs mainly in the Yellow River basin including 15 states which are Zhounan, Shaonan, Bei, Yong, Wei, Wang, Zheng, Qi, Wei, Qin, Tang, Chen, Hui, Cao, and Bin. *Ya*, the court poetry, a total of 105, includes *Da Ya* and *Xiao Ya.* It is mainly written by feudal nobles. Only a tiny part in *Xiao Ya* is from the folk. *Song*, including *Zhou Song*, *Lu Song* and *Shang Song*, a total of 40, is sacrificial songs. Though *Feng*, *Ya*, and *Song* are different in style and used in different occasions, they are all characterized by conciseness in language. *The Classic of Poetry* regards four-character verse style as the regular form, and is combined with the winding verse style.

In the 4th century B. C. , following *The Classic of Poetry*, a new style of poetry called *Chu Ci* (楚辞) appeared in the state of Chu, whose initiator is Qu Yuan. A great breakthrough was made when *Chu Ci* employed five or even seven Chinese characters in each line instead of four in *The Classic of Poetry*. It appeared and developed in the Warring States (475 B. C. -221 B. C.). Not only can *Chu Ci* better express the authors' thoughts and feelings, but also it becomes more musical and rhythmical.

In the Han Dynasty (206 B. C. -A. D. 220), *Yue Fu*, a new type of poetry which is sung to music appeared. Its language form is more diverse. In each line, there are four characters, five characters, and mixed words. During this period, the seven-character verse developed greatly. Before Wei, Jin, and the Southern and the Northern Dynasties (A. D. 220-A. D. 589), there were no unified rules on poetic rhyme and meters. What poets did was writing only according to the content and poets' feelings on the phonology. Until the Wei and Jin Dynasties, metrical poetry appeared. The characteristics of poetry are: the pursuit of rhythm, tones and rhymes. In the Wei and Jin Dynasties, Chinese phonology, influenced by music of India, developed greatly. During Qi and Liang period of the Southern Dynasties, Shen Yue, a great master of poetry at that time, and Zhou Yu summed up the pronunciation rules of Chinese characters, and put forward the "four-tones and eight diseases", a term on sound in ancient Chinese poetry. They proposed that poets should pay attention to tones, rhythm, and rhymes, which are the main elements of metrical poems.

The Tang Dynasty is the heyday of Chinese poetry, and is also the golden age of the Classical Chinese Poetry. During the Tang Dynasty, the poetry had a further development, and formed a stationary classification. Mainly it is divided into two categories: one is the ancient poetry, also called pre-Tang poetry or *Gufeng*. *Gufeng* is a form of pre-Tang poetry, usually having five or seven characters in each line, without strict patterns or rhyme schemes. It is a traditional verse without any strict regulations on rhyme, length, and tones. The number of words in each line is either the same or different. The other one is modern style poetry or present poetry (here, "present" refers to the Tang Dynasty), which is what we call metrical poetry. Modern poetry, not as free as ancient poetry, has strict requirements on length, rhyme, tonal pattern, and antithesis. It basically can be divided into two types: metrical verses or *Lüshi* (a poem of eight lines, each containing five or seven characters, with a strict tonal pattern and rhyme scheme) and quatrains or

Jueju (a poem of four lines, each containing of five or seven characters, with a strict tonal pattern and rhyme scheme). Both metrical verses and quatrains can contain five or seven characters in each line. Verses and quatrains with more than eight lines are called *Pailü* (排律).

In the middle of the Tang Dynasty, a new style of poem—*Ci*—emerged. It peaked in the Song Dynasty. Therefore, it is also known as *Song Ci*. *Ci* is derived from the metrical poetry, so it is considered as the subsidiary works of metrical poetry, called *Shi Yu* (诗余). In addition, the number of characters in one line may be more, and characters in the other one may be less. So it is also known as lyrics (poetry written to certain tunes with strict tonal patterns and rhyme schemes in fixed numbers of lines and words 长短句). *Song Ci* is mainly used to express feelings.

Following the Southern Song Dynasty, the Mongols established the Yuan Dynasty. A new musical melody with new genre emerged. That was poetic drama, which we now call *Qu*, *Sanqu* or *Yuan Qu*. *Qu* can be seen as another variant of poetry. Chanting lyrics is often accompanied by musical instruments, and the language used in it is closer to the spoken language. The most prominent feature is that *Chen Zi* (衬字) can be added. *Chen Zi* is the word inserted in a line of verse for balance or euphony. Take Zhang Yanghao's *One of the Three Living Idly* (张养浩《闲居三首之一》) as an example："昨朝杨柳依依，今朝雨雪霏霏，社燕秋鸿（忒）疾。若（不是）浊醪有味，（怎）消磨（这）日月东西。" Words in brackets are Chen Zi.

In the late Qing Dynasty, classical poetry was not able to meet the requirements of social progress.

The main stream of modern poetry is the free verse. The vernacular Chinese is used in free verse poetry, breaking the metrical bound in old style poetry and focusing on new life and new ideas, which is the outcome of the May 4th Movement.

In the long history of Chinese poetry development, *Tang Shi* (唐诗), *Song Ci* (宋词) and *Yuan Qu* (元曲) are the most spectacular, magnificent

and popular. *Shi*(诗) in the Tang Dynasty, *Ci*(词) in the Song Dynasty and *Qu*(曲) in the Yuan Dynasty are flowery in style. The Tang Dynasty witnessed the heyday of economic and cultural development in China. Poetry also flourished in the Tang Dynasty. During this age, numerous poetic masterpieces were written which exerted a profound influence on literary creation of later generations. They have been read and praised, and regarded as true classics until now. In the Song Dynasty, the predominant poetic form is *Ci*. After the Yuan Dynasty, prose took predominance over poetry. The Ming Dynasty and the Qing Dynasty witnessed the decline of Classical Chinese Poetry.

Poetry records the history and voices the aspirations of Chinese people. The broad and profound Chinese culture is embodied in Classical Chinese Poetry, which demonstrates its boundless charm to the Chinese descendants and to other countries. Nearly all the tasteful and learned people like poetry. Even the illiterate can recite some lines. No matter what form poetry takes, artistic conception is the soul of poem. In order to translate poetry well, we'd better reproduce artistic conception in English versions. If we are to translate poetry, we must bear its features in our minds.

1.1.2 Classification and Characteristics of Poetry

In general, poetry can be classified in different dimensions. According to form, poetry can be divided into metrical poetry and free verse; according to phonology and rhyme, it can be divided into ancient poetry and modern poetry; according to content, it can be divided into narrative poems, lyrics, farewell poems, frontier poems, pastoral landscape poems, historical poems, object-chanting poems, elegiac poems and allegorical poems. Poems in this book are mainly about modern poetry, including *Tang Shi*, *Song Ci*, and *Yuan Qu*.

Poetry is the earliest literary genre, which has the following unique distinctive characteristics.

The first characteristic is that there are images in poetry.

There are many images in poetry. Images are used mainly to arouse the readers' imagination. Poetry is bound to association and imagination.

Michael Meyer wrote in his book *Poetry: An Introduction*, "An image is language that addresses the sense. The most common images in poetry are visual. They provide verbal pictures of the poet's encounters — real or imagined — with the world" (Meyer, 1967: 69). The American writer and professor, Laurence Perrine, also stated, "Since imaginary is a peculiarly effective way of evoking vivid experience and since it may be used by the poet to convey emotion and suggests ideas as well as to cause a mental reproduction of sensations, it is an invaluable resource of the poet. In general, he will seek concrete or image-bearing words in preference to abstract or non-image-bearing words" (Perrine, 1969: 55). These images, real or imaginary, are mixed with the poet's emotions. Poet usually does not express his/her feelings directly, but will present them by means of images. Typical and well-chosen images are chosen carefully to make emotions concrete. Both Chinese and English poetry employ images.

The second characteristic is conventionalism.

In poetry, conventionalism refers to archaic diction, historical allusions and traditional tendency in poetic patterns. Poets usually make use of rich connotations of the archaic words and allusions to express feelings indirectly and powerfully. As Perrine said, "Poetry is the most condensed and concentrated form of literature, saying most in the fewest number of words" (Perrine, 1969: 9). The form of poetry is less flexible and less changeable than other literary works. Chinese poetry follows strict rules of Chinese characters and tonal patterns. For example, in regulated verses (or *Lüshi*), poets must make sure that they use five or seven characters only in each line, and follow the rules of tonal patterns. If poets choose a tune (词牌), they must use a proper number of characters at proper places. Or what they make out may not be regarded as a poem or *Ci*. English poetry follows strict rules,

too. For instance, when poets write a sonnet, they must rhyme at the form of *abab bcbc cdcd ee*. All these are conventions. No one can change them.

The third characteristic is its figurative language and deviant grammatical structures.

Figures of speech are broadly defined as ways of saying one thing in terms of something else. "Although figures of speech are indirect, they are designed to clarify, not obscure, our understanding of what they describe. Poets frequently use them ... to capture the readers' interest and imagination" (Meyer, 1969: 88). Figurative language provides a means of achieving color, vividness, subtle power and intensity.

Classical poetry is refined and implicit. The language of poetry is actually a kind of special and mysterious symbolic system. It not only contains a kind of abstract and systematic rational implication, but also contains aesthetic beauty on emotions. The ancient Chinese poetry is characterized by using the least words to show the most abundant contents and ideas, which is the predominant characteristic of the ancient poetry—conciseness or refining.

Refining and implicitness are always related. But refining is not equal to implicitness. To be implicit, poets can not be straightforward. The real meaning and emotions are expressed through metaphor, synaesthesia, pun, allusion, symbolization, etc., which make people feel subtle, obscure and implied.

The figures of speech in classical poetry include not only metaphor, but also metonymy, synecdoche, zeugma, transference, enallage, hyperbole and so on.

Apart from the use of figurative language, poets often employ deviant grammatical structures to achieve an intended effect. By using figurative language, poets can tell the truth slantingly and make the poem really achieve the aim of saying most in the fewest number of words. It can also evoke readers' interest and imagination, just as Meyer said, "A poet can manipulate the syntax of a line to place emphasis on a word by varying the normal word