

A Comparative Analysis of English Translation of Romance of the Three Kingdoms from the Perspective of Literary Stylistics

Haijiao Xu

Wuhan University of Engineering, Wuhan, Hubei, 530205, China

Abstract

As one of the four great classical novels of ancient China, "Romance of the Three Kingdoms" holds a pivotal position in the literary history of China. Literary stylistics primarily studies the stylistic features of literary works, such as language, style, and structure, as well as how these features convey the author's thoughts and emotions. From the perspective of literary stylistics, this paper conducts a comparative analysis of the English translations of "Romance of the Three Kingdoms" by Moss Roberts and C.H. Brewitt Taylor from the narrative perspective. By comparing the techniques used to reproduce stylistic features, the aim is to provide valuable insights for the translation of Chinese classics into foreign languages and to promote the international dissemination and understanding of Chinese culture.

Keywords

Romance of the Three Kingdoms; literary stylistics; thai translation; luo's translation; comparative analysis

文学文体学视角下的英译本对比分析——以《三国演义》为例

徐海蛟

武汉工程大学, 中国·湖北 武汉 530205

摘要

作为中国古代四大名著之一,《三国演义》在中国文学史地位举足轻重。文学文体学则主要研究文学作品的语言、风格、结构等文体特征,以及如何通过这些特征来传达作者思想和情感。本文基于文学文体学的视角,从叙述体维度对比分析 Moss Roberts 与 C.H. Brewitt Taylor 的《三国演义》英译版本。通过对比分析文体特征的再现手法,旨在为中国典籍外译提供有益的启示,推动中国文化在国际间的传播与理解。

关键词

三国演义; 文学文体学; 泰译本; 罗译本; 对比分析

1 引言

近年来,国内学术界对《三国演义》的研究兴趣持续高涨。当前《三国演义》的英译研究虽然已触及文学人物形象、语言风格等深层次的文学性话题,但这些探讨往往仍依附于传统语言翻译研究的框架之内,侧重于词语、长句及篇章结构的翻译策略和技巧分析(李林波、刘逸凡, 2023)。然而,这种研究路径忽略了作品作为一种独特文体的整体风貌和审美价值。因此,本文从文学文体学的角度切入,分析《三国演义》的叙述体的文本特征,剖析这些特征在泰译本和罗译本中的保留、变异或重构。

【作者简介】徐海蛟(2001-),女,中国河北保定人,硕士,从事翻译理论与实践研究。

2 文学文体学与小说翻译

文学文体学是在语言学和文学批评的基础上衍生出的交叉学科(封宗信, 1999),主要研究文学作品中的语言使用方式及其效果。在实践中,向于聚焦于那些偏离常规的语言表现形式,而不是整个文本的宏观结构(Crystal, 1987)。文学文体学通常关注于解释风格与文学或审美功能之间的关系(Leech & Short, 2007)。

早期文体学侧重诗歌与戏剧,但自 20 世纪 70 年代起,文学文体学逐渐将重心转向小说翻译。申丹(1994)将文学文体学的小说分析模式概括为“逐层推进法”,“逐句推进法”与“数段比较法”。“在小说翻译中,文学文体学可以成为解决很多问题的有效工具,是值得广大译者重视和运用的。”(沈健, 2008: 108)

3 文学文体学视角下《三国演义》两个英译本的比较研究

文学文体学在文学翻译中特别关注“语言变异”的翻译(谢谦, 2005), 是因为语言变异是文学语言的重要特征之一, 它关乎文学作品的文学性和审美价值; 同时, 语言变异也是文学翻译中最具挑战性的部分之一, 它要求翻译者具备高度的语言敏感性和艺术创造力来进行再创造。申丹(1998)在《文学文体学与小说翻译》中指出小说翻译不仅仅是内容的传递, 更是文体特征的再现。

3.1 叙述体

叙述体是文学创作中的重要元素, 是指文学作品中叙述故事的特定方式, 它涉及叙述者如何讲述故事, 决定了读者如何接收和理解故事内容。《三国演义》叙述体在词汇、句法结构、修辞三个维度上展现了独特的艺术成就。因此, 探讨《三国演义》的叙事风格和语言特点是十分必要的。

3.1.1 词汇层面

《三国演义》中使用了大量的古典汉语词汇、成语典故、军事术语等。翻译这些词汇时, 既要忠实地传达原文的文化特色和历史背景, 又要考虑到目标语言读者的理解能力, 通过恰当的翻译方法保持作品的艺术魅力。

例1: 角得此书, 晓夜攻习, 能呼风唤雨, 号为“太平道人”。

泰译: Zhang Jue studied the wonderful book eagerly and strove day and night to reduce its precepts to practice. Before long, he could summon the winds and command the rain, and he became known as the Mystic of the Way of Peace.

罗译: Zhang Jue applied himself to the text day and night. By acquiring such arts as summoning the wind and invoking the rain, he became known as the Master of the Millennium.

在中国文化中, “呼风唤雨”常被用来形容某人具有非凡的能力或影响力, 能够轻易地改变局势或环境。两个译本都成功地捕捉到了这一点。泰译: “summon the winds and command the rain”准确地传达了“呼风唤雨”的字面意思, 这种翻译方式直接且易于理解。罗译: “By acquiring such arts as summoning the wind and invoking the rain”, 通过“arts”一词暗示获得了一种技艺或能力, 体现出更为文学化或浪漫化的翻译风格, 增加了译文的文采。

例2: 玄德谓关、张曰: “贼众我寡; 必出奇兵, 方可取胜。”乃分关公引一千军伏山左, 张飞引一千军伏山右, 鸣金为号, 齐出接应。次日, 玄德与邹靖引军鼓噪而进。贼众迎战, 玄德引军便退。

泰译: “They are many and we but few,” said Liu Bei to his brothers. “We can only beat them by superior strategy.” So they prepared an ambush. Guan Yu and Zhang Fei, each with a goodly party, went behind the hills, right and left, and there hid. When the gongs beat they were to move out to support the main army. These preparations made, the drums rolled noisily for Liu Bei to advance. The rebels also came forward. But Liu Bei suddenly retired.

罗译: “They are too many for us. We can win only by

surprising them,” Xuande told his brothers. He had Lord Guan and Zhang Fei march off with one thousand men each and conceal themselves along both sides of a hill. The following day Xuande and Zou Jing advanced noisily but drew back when the enemy gave battle.

从准确性角度分析, 泰的版本中, “出奇兵”被翻译为“superior strategy”, 虽然传达了策略上的优势, 但并未直接体现出“出奇”的意味。罗通过“surprising them”更直接地传达了“出奇”的意思。两位译者通过“hid”以及“conceal”传达出“伏”的含义。在泰的版本中, “鸣金为号”被翻译为“*When the gongs beat*”, 用“gongs”来代替了“金”。从历史准确性的角度来看, 将“金”翻译为“gong”并不完全精确, 因为“金”在这里特指“钲”, 而不是指“锣”。用“锣”代替“钲”发生在北魏时期。但是, 对于不熟悉中国古代军事文化的外国读者来说, “gong”作为一个相对通用的词汇, 更容易被接受和理解。

泰译在准确性、文化内涵和语言风格上更贴近原文的风格。他的翻译更注重字面意义的传达, 尽量保留了原文中的文化元素和军事术语, 译文在风格上更接近《三国演义》的古典文言风格。而罗译虽然在流畅性和易于理解方面做得较好, 但在还原原文的词汇风格和文化内涵方面略显不足。因此, 从贴近原文风格的角度来看, 泰译更为出色。

3.1.2 句法层面

《三国演义》中的句子结构多样, 长句与短句交错使用, 既有长句的复杂结构, 又有短句的简洁明快, 使得叙述节奏感强烈。在叙述时, 既有散文的自由流畅, 又有韵文的节奏韵律, 二者结合, 相得益彰。

例3: 张纯专一凶暴, 士卒心变, 帐下头目刺杀张纯, 将头纳献, 率众来降。张举见势败, 亦自缢死。渔阳尽平。刘虞表奏刘备大功, 朝廷赦免鞭督邮之罪, 除下密丞, 迁高堂尉。

泰译: Zhang Chun was cruel, and his leaders turned against him. One of his officers then slew him and brought in his head, after which the others submitted. The other leader Zhang Ju saw that all was lost and killed himself. Yuyang being now tranquil, Liu Bei's services were reported to the Throne, and he received full pardon for the insult to the imperial inspector. He was made Deputy Magistrate of Xiami, then Commanding Officer of Gaotang.

罗译: In several days' hard fighting Xuande beat down the impetuous spirit of the rebels, who then turned upon Zhang Chun, their violent and autocratic leader. He was killed by one of his own chieftains, who brought Chun's head to the government authorities and surrendered with his soldiers. Zhang Ju, his position collapsing, hanged himself. Now Yuyang, too, was fully pacified. Protector Liu Yu reported Xuande's great service to the court. Not only was he forgiven for having flogged the inspector, but he was promoted to deputy magistrate of Xiami and made judicial officer of Gaotang.

泰译文中包含大量并列句和复合句, 倾向于使用较长

的句子来表达原文中的多个信息点，没有明显的短句来打断这种连贯性。整个段落也保持了这种相对均匀的句子长度。而罗译更加符合原文的句式变化，做到了长句和短句交替出现，形成了明显的节奏感。

例4：玄德拨马便走，张宝驱兵赶来。将过山头，关、张伏军放起号炮，秽物齐泼。但见空中纸人草马，纷纷坠地；风雷顿息，砂石不飞。

泰译：Liu Bei turned, as before, to flee and the rebels rushed on. But as they pressed through the hills, the trumpets blared, and the hidden soldiers exploded bombs, threw down filth and spattered blood. The masses of soldiers and horses in the air fluttered to the earth as fragments of torn paper, the wind ceased to blow, the thunder subsided, the sand sank, and the pebbles lay still upon the ground.

罗译：Xuande wheeled and fled, drawing Bao in pursuit past the hill. At the given signal Lord Guan and Zhang Fei dumped their concoction over the enemy. In front of everyone's eyes, the storm died away, and the mist dissolved as paper men and straw horses tumbled from the sky every which way. Sand and stone lay still.

这段描述首先以散文的形式叙述了战斗的过程，“但见空中纸人草马，纷纷坠地；风雷顿息，砂石不飞”则通过短句的排列，形成了节奏感。“风雷顿息，砂石不飞”形成了对仗结构，具有韵文的特征，使得整个句子读起来朗朗上口，富有音乐美感。泰译在叙述上保持了散文的流畅性，并且在最后一句中通过列举和对称结构，尝试还原了原文的韵文特点，但相比原文，节奏感略弱。泰译更多地采用了散文形式。值得注意的是，泰译“sand sank”，罗译“Sand and stone”都运用了头韵，能够在一定程度上模拟原文中的散韵结合特点，增强了译文的节奏感和语言的表现力。

3.1.3 修辞层面

修辞手法是文学创作的重要组成部分，通过语言的巧妙运用使小说呈现出一种独特的文学美感。《三国演义》运用了各种修辞手法，如对偶、设悬念、设问夸张等，对于故事情节的发展、人物性格的塑造以及整个作品的艺术效果都有着深远的影响。

例5：正是：欲除君侧宵人乱，须听朝中智士谋。不知曹操说出甚话来，且听下文分解。

泰译：*Wouldst thou withdraw wicked people from thy prince's side, Then seek counsel of the wise people of the state. What Cao Cao said will be disclosed in later chapters.*

罗译：Wise counsel can undo the harm of vicious ministers—When and if it is heeded.

What did Cao Cao say?

READ ON.

“欲除君侧宵人乱，须听朝中智士谋。”使用了对偶的修辞手法；“不知曹操说出甚话来”使用了设问的手法，“且听下文分解。”这句话直接告诉读者接下来的内容将会揭示曹操的话语，制造了悬念，促使读者继续阅读下去。

泰译“*Wouldst thou withdraw wicked people from thy prince's side, Then seek counsel of the wise people of the state.*”原句的对偶形式在罗译中没有被直接保留下来，而是被转化为了一种条件句的形式。泰译“*What Cao Cao said will be disclosed in later chapters.*”并没有直接使用设问的修辞，而是采用了陈述句。这句话在语义上成功地制造了悬念，这与原文的“且听下文分解”在功能上是等效的。罗译“*What did Cao Cao say?*”直接使用了设问句式，引发读者的好奇心。“*READ ON.*”制造了悬念，鼓励读者继续阅读以找到答案。总体来说，泰译在对偶的还原上更为接近原文，而罗译在设问和悬念的修辞上更忠实于原文。虽然两位译者在保留原文修辞手法的具体方式上有所不同，但都成功地传达了原文的意思和修辞效果。

例6：众诸侯听得关外鼓声大振，喊声大举，如天摧地塌，岳撼山崩，众皆失惊。

泰译：Those in the tent heard the fierce roll of the drums and then a mighty sound as if skies were falling and earth rising, hills trembling and mountains tearing asunder. And they were sore afraid.

罗译：The assembly of lords heard the rolling of drums and the clamor of voices outside the pass, and it seemed as if the heavens would split open and the earth buckle, as if the hills were shaking and the mountains moving. The terror-struck assembly was about to make inquiry when the jingling of bridle bells announced Lord Guan's return.

泰译通过“*skies were falling and earth rising*”和“*hills trembling and mountains tearing asunder*”，成功地传达了原文中那种极端震撼的场景，保留了原文的夸张意味。而泰译是“*earth rising*”（地升），虽然这种差异可以接受，但“地塌”可能更直接地对应原文的意象。罗译“*the heavens would split open*”和“*the hills were shaking and the mountains moving*”都很好传达了原文的夸张意味。但罗译中的“*the earth buckle*”（地皱）可能不如“地崩”或“地陷”那样强烈地传达出原文中的震撼感。综上所述，尽管在细节上有所差异，两个译文都保留了原文的夸张修辞。

4 结语

本文通过对比泰译本和罗译本，探究了不同译者在把握和再现《三国演义》原文文体特征上的差异，总体而言，两个英译本在叙述体的翻译上各有优劣。泰译在文化内涵保留和风格贴近原文方面表现突出，而罗译在语言流畅性和节奏感营造上更具优势。这一研究结果启示我们，在典籍外译过程中，译者需充分考量不同翻译策略对文体特征再现的影响。

参考文献

- [1] 封宗信.文学文体学——文学翻译批评的试金石——评介《文学文体学与小说翻译》[J].中国翻译,1999,(05):40-42.
- [2] 李林波,刘逸凡.《三国演义》英译研究二十年:回顾与展望[J].大连大学学报,2023,44(03):21-26.
- [3] 申丹.文学文体学的分析模式及其面临的挑战[J].外语教学与研究,1994,(03):7-13+80.