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Translating differences – A hybrid model for translation training

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Summary: A hybrid method of translation was developed during a joint project that produced Chinese translations, published in 2009, of five Australian children's books. It is argued that all translation tasks fall somewhere along a continuum with domesticating and foreignising at either end according to text genre, the purpose in translating it, intended readership, etc., and each task requires different degrees of domesticating or foreignising on different levels of the text. The paper also discusses specific issues encountered during the translation process with a focus on foreignising. It compares some of the students' translations with the final, revised versions to demonstrate how cultural and linguistic differences were retained. It is clear from this that the hybrid translation model would enable students to approach translation tasks with greater flexibility and produce more appropriate translations.

Keywords: translation; foreignizing and domesticating; cultural and linguistic differences

1. Background

The hybrid translation method proposed in this paper was developed during a joint translation project entitled 'Introducing Australian Children's Literature to China' funded by the Australia-China Council and the University of Western Sydney's (UWS) School of Humanities and Languages and the Interpreting and Translation Research Group. Five Australian children's books were translated into Chinese and the translations were published by The People's Literature Publishing House in Beijing in 2009. UWS Interpreting & Translation students participated in translating two of these books, under the supervision of the author of this paper. This paper discusses specific issues encountered during the process of translating these two books. It also compares some of the students' translations with final, revised, versions to demonstrate how cultural differences were handled, and how as many different or motivated (Hatim and Munday, 2004) linguistic features as possible were retained while domesticating the information flow in the target text.

2 The Approach

In this section we examine the debate in the literature on domesticating and foreignising translation (Venuti, 1995), arguing for a hybrid method in general and discussing the specific approach adopted in the project 'Introducing Australian Children's Literature to China'.

2.1 Domesticating and Foreignising

The concept of domesticating translation and foreignising translation presents two opposite orientations that are related, but not equivalent, to the old 'word-for-word' and 'sense-for-sense', and 'overt' and 'covert' translation dualisms (House, 1977). The concept "comes out of the German Romantic tradition from the Schlegel brothers, Goethe, Schleiermacher and Humboldt to Benjamin" (Robinson, 1997, p.108), and has been refined by Venuti (1995). Schleiermacher argued that there are only two paths open to the true translator: "Either the translator leaves the writer alone as much as possible and moves the reader toward the writer; or he leaves the reader alone as much

as possible and moves the writer toward the reader." He added: "...whatever has been said about translations that follow the letter and translations that follow the meaning, about faithful and free translations...must always be reduced to those two" (Schulte and Biguenet, 1992, p.41-43). Schleiermacher made clear that his choice was to foreignise translations, i.e. to move the reader toward the writer.

The American scholar Lawrence Venuti calls Schleiermacher's two paths the "domesticating method" and the "foreignising method", "the former being an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target-language cultural values, bringing the author back home", and the latter "an ethnodeviant pressure on those values to register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad" (1995, p.21). Following Schleiermacher, Venuti advocates foreignising translations and has developed a theory that resists dominant TL cultural values and signifies the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text.

In contrast, the Anglo-American approach has long been dominated by domesticating theories with an emphasis on naturalness and fluency in translation. The most influential figure in this tradition is Eugene Nida, whose "dynamic equivalence", formulated in 1964 and restated in 1993 as "functional equivalence", has dominated the discussion of translating over the last few decades.

For Nida, accuracy in translation depends on generating an equivalent effect in the target-language culture: "The receptors of a translation should comprehend the translated text to such an extent that they can understand how the original receptors must have understood the original text" (Nida and de Waard, 1986, p.36). Such a translation "aims at complete naturalness of expression...and tries to relate the receptor to modes of behaviour relevant within the context of his own culture" (Nida, 1964, p.159). To achieve this, translators must "draw aside the curtains of linguistic and cultural differences so that people may see clearly the relevance of the original message" (Nida and de Waard, 1986, p.14). Obviously such a translation answers mainly to the cultural values of the TL and does strong ethnocentric violence to the source language and culture. This to Venuti "seems less an exchange of information than an appropriation of a foreign text for domestic purposes" (Venuti, 1995, p.22).

It is against this dominance of the domesticating method in Anglo–American translation practice that Venuti advocates the foreignising method and has developed "a theory and practice of translation that resists dominant target-language cultural values so as to signify the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text" (1995, p.23).

Domesticating and foreignising seem to be two opposite directions in translation that cannot be mixed. Schleiermacher was explicit about this:

> Both paths are so completely different from one another that one of them must definitely be adhered to as strictly as possible, since a highly unreliable result would emerge from mixing them, and it is likely that that author and reader would not come together at all (Schulte and Biguenet, 1992, pp.36-54).

We agree in principle with Venuti's criticism of the currently dominant practice of domesticating translations, but disagree with Schleiermacher's assertion that the two methods can't be mixed. In fact, they have always been used together, to a greater or lesser degree. Humboldt, who advocated fidelity to the original, criticised the practice of avoiding the foreign in translation and the view that "the translator should write the way the author of the original would have written in the language of the translator," as it destroys "all translation and whatever benefits translation may bring to a language and

a nation" (Schulte and Biguenet, 1992, p.58). By the same token, he distinguished between foreignness (*Fremdheit*) and the foreign (*Fremde*), stating:

> A translation should indeed have a foreign flavour to it, but only to a certain degree; the line beyond which this clearly becomes an error can easily be drawn. As long as one does not feel the foreignness (*Fremdheit*) yet does feel the foreign (*Fremde*), a translation has reached its highest goal (Schulte and Biguenet, 1992, p.58).

In proposing the daring concept of "abusive fidelity" (to be discussed below), Lewis (1985, p.41) maintains that even in "sacrificing the faithful transmission of messages to playful tinkering with style and connotation...the basic scruples of conventional translation – fidelity and intelligibility – remain intact, and in a sense, reinforced". These two "basic scruples" require a certain degree of both foreignising and domesticating.

On the other hand, while promoting domesticated translation with an emphasis on fluency and transparency, Nida does not totally ignore the cultural and linguistic features of the original. For instance, he points out the difficulty of finding an appropriate equivalent in the target language for a substandard dialect in the source language, and speaks highly of Rogers' treatment of the Megarian farmer's speech in his translation of *The Acharnians*. Rogers adapted a rural dialect from Scotland to reflect the Greek spoken by the people of the island of Megara, a dialect quite different from the speech of Attica, and Nida describes this as a remarkable case of dialectal equivalence (1993, p.112). Commenting on the difficulty of reflecting the shift between mixed social dialects in the SL and the necessity to do so, Nida also says: "Reflecting this type of shift...is extremely difficult, but without this type of distinction so much of the realism and pathos is lost" (1993, p.113).

In our view, while it is possible to domesticate a translation completely, leaving aside the question of any violence done to the source language and culture, it is impossible to foreignise a translation without on various levels domesticating it. After all, in order for a translation to be intelligible to its TL audience, familiar elements have to be used to express the foreign, as Venuti asserts (1995, p.35): "A translation can be foreignised only by putting to work cultural materials and agendas that are domestic, specific to domestic language." Since the "construction of the foreign depends on domestic cultural materials" (1995, p.29), any foreignising translation necessarily involves domesticating movement. A similar view expressed by Berman is that while foreignising a translation makes "the translated text a place where a cultural other is manifested, this otherness can never be manifested in its own terms, but only in those of the target language, and hence always already encoded" (Berman as cited in Venuti, 1995, p.20), i.e. already, in a way, domesticated.

The difference between the two approaches is best seen when there is a clash between cultural norms or values in the SL and those in the TL. As Venuti states, "foreignising translation signifies the difference of the foreign text, yet only by disrupting the cultural codes that prevail in the target language" (1995, p.20). Where there is very little or no ethnodeviant pressure on those values to register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text, a domesticated translation may not be so very different from a foreignised one.

In our view, domesticating or foreignising is a general orientation for translating, yet texts have different layers and aspects, and translation is a complicated process. What translators do is like being confronted by

numerous obstacles in going through a forest. They may often have to deviate temporarily from a set direction in order to get around an obstacle and maintain their general orientation rather than follow a straight line. If, then, foreignising or domesticating is a matter of degree rather than a simple yes or no, it is only appropriate to opt for a hybrid method (Sun, 2005).

2.2 The Hybrid Method

Translation strategy is determined mainly by the genre to which the text belongs, the purpose of the translation and its readership.

Nida's translation theories have been "motivated by the exigencies of Bible translation", and "designed primarily for Bible translators and missionaries" (Venuti, 1995, p.22). His "functional equivalence" with a focus on the message and effect on the receptor, whatever ethnocentric violence it perpetrates on the source culture, nevertheless, serves Christian evangelism that instructs the audience how to behave in the context of their own culture without necessarily understanding the culture of the source language. It is in that sense that "give one another a hearty handshake all around" is said to be a quite natural translation of "greet one another with a holy kiss" (Nida, 1964, p.160).

While domesticating that focuses on the message serves for functionally oriented texts, it is not adequate for literary works that have no specific message and whose function is not to transmit information. As Benjamin puts it: "a literary work...'tells' very little to those who understand it. Its essential quality is not statement or the imparting of information" (Schulte and Biguenet, 1992, p.71). If it does have a function, it is aesthetic. A key difference between translating the functional and the aesthetic is that it is difficult to achieve in the latter the same effect as in the original; a dynamic equivalent can generate only one of many potential effects of a literary work on its readers, and that is most likely to be the effect it had on the translator. By so specifying it, the translator deprives readers of many other possibilities. Thus it is more appropriate to present the original as is and leave readers to respond as they will, according to their experience and background knowledge, just as SL readers do with the original.

As the art of language, the proper role of a literary work "is seen as one of de-routinisation, de-automatisation: art is the enemy of habit; it renews, refreshes our perceptions; by 'making strange', it defamiliarises" (Brooker as cited in Brooker 1999, p.68). It is through literature that language extends its capacity, representation and complexity. And literary translation not only "increases the expressivity and depth of meaning of one's own language", it enriches one's own culture and nation. If translation is to fulfil the role of literary works of defamiliarising, which in essence works against domestication, then it should be foreignised. Fidelity through foreignising is the first requirement "if translation is to give the language and spirit of a nation that which it does not possess or possesses in another form" (Schulte and Biguenet, 1992, pp.56-57).

If we regard purely functional texts, such as manuals or recipes, and literary works as located at either end of a continuum of domesticating and foreignising, each translation task falls somewhere along that continuum according to genre, the purpose in translating it, intended readership, etc., and each requires different degrees of domesticating or foreignising on different levels of the text.

2.3 The Hybrid Method Used in This Project

The purpose of the project was to introduce Australian children's literature to a Chinese readership in China. This readership was seen as children who are sensitive, curious about new and different things, able to understand and accept new things, and have limited competence in reading comprehension.

Consequently, we identified the appropriate translation method as towards, but not quite at, the literary works end of the continuum, since a higher degree of readability was necessary for the target readers.

We tried in our translation to do two things: 1) retain the cultural differences in the original text as well as relevant/motivated language use in order to provide Chinese children with something new and fresh that would challenge their cultural and linguistic curiosity (Sections 3 and 4); and 2) provide some domesticated discourse flow to reflect the original information structure while enhancing readability for Chinese children (Section 5).

3. Cultural Differences Reflected in Language Use

As indicated above, we sought in our translations to recognise and express the linguistic and cultural differences in the Australian children's books. What we were looking for was not, as Venuti puts it, "an indiscriminate valorisation of every foreign culture or a metaphysical concept of foreignness", but those features that "enable a disruption of target-language culture codes", so that their "value is always strategic, depending on the cultural formation into which it is translated" (Venuti, 1995, pp.41-42). It is often the case that unmarked or slightly marked features in one culture turn out to be marked or highly marked, even unthinkable, in another culture. Such differences are at the very core of what translation attempts to convey. However, when such a clash arises, domesticating translation resorts to "dynamic" or "functional equivalence" to avoid disrupting cultural codes and tries to "produce in receptors the capacity for a response very close to what the original readers experienced" (Nida, 1993, p.118). However, receptors in the target culture cannot possibly come up with a response to the situation presented in the original that is very close to that of receptors in the source culture. To produce a text that generated in receptors in the target culture a response similar to that experienced by receptors in the source culture would, in this case, eradicate the essence translation is called upon to convey, and conceal such a partial interpretation by complete naturalness of expression. Foreignising translations, as Venuti (1995, p.34) acknowledges, "are equally partial in their interpretation of the foreign text, but they tend to flaunt their partiality instead of concealing it".

While trying to express such cultural differences in our translations, we encountered two types of problems in students' translation: lack of recognition of differences, and appropriate expression.

3.1 Mistranslation Caused by Cultural Differences

A prerequisite of foreignising translators is that they be bicultural and able to recognise the difference between the two cultures. It is true that "...understanding and appreciation of the source text are fundamental to any attempts at translating. In fact, it is failure at this point which is responsible for most deficiencies in translating" (Nida, 1993, p.147). I would add that it is not only linguistic "understanding and appreciation of the source text" that is required, but pragmatic and cultural understanding as well. The source text has to be interpreted in the pragmatic and cultural context of the SL to be appreciated. Misinterpretation happens when the source text is read in the pragmatic and cultural framework of the TL, e.g:

> (1) Context: Jeff and his dad are removalists from the township where Rain's grandma used to live. They have just moved Rain and her mum from Melbourne to Rain's grandma's old house in the country. Jeff's dad is telling them where the gas bottles are and checking whether there is any gas left.

> "There's a bit," Jeff's dad called through the kitchen window, "but you'll have to go easy on it. When we've unloaded, Jeff'll go down and order them for you – they'll deliver 'em Monday – won't do it on the weekend. You'll have to be careful though. I wouldn't run that gas heater if you want a couple of hot baths."
>
> a. 如果你们想要洗几个热水澡的话，那我就不开那用煤气的暖气机了。"If you want a couple of hot baths, I won't turn on the gas heater (for you)."
> b. 如果你们想多洗几次澡的话，我建议就别开那煤气取暖器了。"If you want a few baths, I suggest you not turn on the gas heater."
> c. 如果是我，想洗几个热水澡的话，就不会开那煤气取暖器了。"If I were you and I wanted a couple of hot baths, I wouldn't turn on the gas heater."

The mistranslations here show that the students didn't understand the ST accurately, but the reason for their misunderstanding was more cultural than grammatical. The students interpreted the ST in the pragmatic framework of the TL, where the functioning principle is drastically different from the SL with regard to politeness (Brown and Levinson, 1987). While face is a universal consideration in verbal interactions, the way face is maintained varies across cultures.

While in English the focus is on negative face, i.e. not imposing, or being non-interfering, out of respect for the individual, the primary concern for Chinese is positive face, i.e. being friendly and helpful, due to their emphasis on family and groups. It is partly due to this difference that English speakers can address family members by name, whereas Chinese speakers address even strangers in kinship terms. As a result, in verbal interactions Chinese people might think English speakers are not friendly enough or are indifferent, whereas English-speaking people might consider Chinese a bit pushy or that they are imposing.

It is clear that version (a) came about because the ST was interpreted according to the politeness principle of maintaining positive face: it was seen as an offer of help from the removalist to actually not turn on the gas heater for the family they were helping move. Version (b) got the meaning right, but the suggestion was put in a much more direct way, showing the positive-face factor in action. To maintain cultural differences, we had to render the ST in the pragmatic framework of the SL, and the result was version (c), where the suggestion is expressed in the most unimposing way of the three. This example demonstrates that in order to express the foreign, the translator has to be bicultural, i.e. to be able to appreciate the foreign in its own pragmatic and cultural context.

3.2. Expressing Cultural Differences

In foreignising translations, once a cultural difference is registered translators will try to express the foreign in the TL in a way that resists dominant target cultural values. However, some student translations showed that, while they had no problem understanding the ST, what they neglected to address was the purpose of the translation. The problem was translation method. For example, the contextual interpretation of 'argue' as *dingzui* in the following would be a good choice from a Chinese perspective in a domesticating approach, but it would not work in a foreignising approach.

(2) Context: Jazzi is Bee's dad's girlfriend. She has asked Bee to get up 5 minutes earlier every day to tidy her room, but Bee doesn't like the idea, saying that she'd rather enjoy her dreams.

Jazzi: "Why do you always have to argue?"
Bee: "I don't always argue, it's just that I prefer dreaming..."

"你怎么总要跟我(顶嘴)争论呢？"
"我并不是总要(顶嘴)争论。只是我真的更喜欢做梦..."

Here, the students translated 'argue' as *dingzui*. However, this is a culturally loaded word that has negative connotations. It means to 'reply defiantly' or 'answer back', and is used exclusively in situations where one 'talks back' to an elder or superior, which is considered inappropriate in Chinese culture. Since Bee is talking back to her father's girlfriend—and future stepmother—*dingzui* is to a Chinese reader exactly what Bee is doing, so the students' choice would have been contextually and culturally perfect in a domesticating approach.

However, for our purpose—introducing the Australian way of life to China—it was inadequate because it added to the target text a connotation that does not exist, or at least is not as strong, in the SL culture, and wiped out cultural differences between China and Australia in the relationship between children and parents. While in China children are expected to obey their parents, the individual is more respected in Australia and children are more encouraged to voice their opinions. To leave *dingzui* in the TT would have misled Chinese readers into thinking that Australian and Chinese cultures place the same value on children talking back to parents. Consequently, we replaced *dingzui* with *zhenglun*, which simply means to 'argue' without any implications of unequal power or status. In a Chinese context this neutral wording could somehow mark Bee's arguing with her stepmother-to-be as more like *dingzui* between a child and parent, rather than 'argue' between two people on an equal footing. That is exactly what our translation was meant to convey.

Another cultural difference relating to family and individuals is addressing or referring to one's parents and elders (e.g. Rain's mother and her father's girlfriend) by their given names. In the story, Rain addresses her mother as Maggie (3a), refers to her mother and to her dad's girlfriend, Julia, by their given first names (3b, 3c), and to her mother by her given name and as Mum (3c).

(3) a. Rain wants to know why they have to move, but her mother, Maggie, misunderstands her.

R: "I don't understand. Why?"
M: "He's an artist. Apparently he wants to paint in Tasmania."
R: "No Mum, Maggie—I mean, why do we have to move? What about my school? What about my friends?"

b. Maggie was all glittery and brittle the day of the move.

c. When Dad moved out of our home and into Julia's apartment, Mum changed her name to Maggie, put our house up for sale and had a huge clean out.

In China it is considered extremely rude for young people to call their parents, or anyone older than them, by their given name. China has a centuries-old tradition of valuing family ties and seniority and valuing the

family over the individual, as is manifest in the order of Chinese names: family name first, personal name second. Thus in a Chinese family or community only your elders, superiors and peers will address you by name; you will address family members older than you by kinship terms; and you will address unrelated elders by their title, profession or kinship term followed by their family name.

Had we here adopted a domesticating approach to find 'functional equivalence' that would generate in the Chinese receptor a similar response to that of the receptor in the source culture, we would have translated as 'Mum' or 'Mother' all instances of Rain addressing or referring to her mother as 'Maggie' (her mother's given name), and we would have translated as 'Aunty Julia' all instances of Rain addressing or referring to her father's girlfriend as 'Julia' (the girlfriend's given name). However, this would have erased a fundamental difference in personal relations between the family-oriented culture of China and a more individual-oriented culture, as this is an essential feature of contemporary Australian society that we wanted to introduce to Chinese readers.

We deliberately retained in Chinese the way Rain addresses and refers to her mother by her given name, for two reasons. Firstly, although calling one's parents by their given name is a fairly recent phenomenon in Australia, it does reflect something of a culture oriented to the individual, where one's given name is far more widely used than in a culture that is oriented to the family. Even if might be frowned upon by some Australians, it is still far less offensive than in Chinese culture. Such a slightly marked feature in the source text can cause a drastic disruption of cultural codes in the target culture, and this needed to be made explicit. Secondly, contextual considerations also supported our choice. The story actually starts with (3c) where Rain's mum changed her name to Maggie, and decided to change her life. Rain calling her mother Maggie can be seen as Rain endorsing her mum's new identity. Besides, throughout the story Rain and Maggie are portrayed as two fairly liberal and egalitarian individuals, and the given name mode of address does not sound unnatural in the ST at all. To signify a cultural difference that is absolutely unacceptable in the target culture, as in this case, exemplifies what Venuti (1995, p.20) says about foreignising:

> Foreignising translation signifies the difference of the foreign text, yet only by disrupting the cultural codes that prevail in the target language. In its effort to do right abroad, this translation method must do wrong at home, deviating enough from native norms to stage an alien reading experience...

4. Linguistic Differences that Enrich the TL

Foreignising translation has been a major driving force of language change, since it allows a language to be powerfully affected by the foreign tongue. A language can be expanded and deepened by the foreign language, particularly through translations from a language very remote from it (Pannwitz as cited in Schulte and Biguenet, 1992, p.81). The Chinese language, for example, was powerfully affected by translations of Buddhist inscriptions from India in the Tang dynasty (7th–10th centuries) and of texts from the West since the late 19th century (Xu et al, 2001). Since both Sanskrit and English (as well as other European languages) are linguistically very remote from Chinese, the translators of these texts had to "go back to the primal elements of language itself and penetrate to the point where work, image, and tone converge" (Pannwitz as cited in Schulte and Biguenet, 1992, p.81), and sometimes had to transplant directly into Chinese foreign concepts as well as foreign ways of

saying things. This greatly enriched the Chinese language and has continued to shape it still today.

Over the last few decades since the period known as ‘economic opening up and reform’ began in the 1980s, the Chinese language has undergone swift changes, especially in vocabulary. New words have been created or borrowed from other cultures almost daily and existing words have been used in novel ways to communicate new concepts and ideas in a rapidly changing society, and to enable people to express themselves in innovative and original ways in the ocean of texts, especially on the internet, in which our attention-oriented economy is now situated. These new expressions and new ways of saying things have made the Chinese language more tolerant, more diverse and more powerful.

In our translation we tried to reflect in the TT the motivated or different uses of linguistic items in the ST by using some of these neologisms and novel ways of saying things.

4.1 Neologisms

The expression “embrace change” in (4) is a motivated use.

> (4) Of course, I couldn’t tell Mum my plan, because she’d go off on one of her ‘<u>embrace change’</u> rants and stroke my hair in that way she does when she’s telling me I’m a goose.
>
> 当然，我不能把这个计划告诉妈妈，如果说出去，她又会开始她那“拥抱变化”的激情演说并且抚摸我的头发，就像在说我是小傻瓜时那样。

The word ‘embrace’ is used here in the sense of ‘accept gladly or eagerly’, a metaphorical extension of its basic meaning of ‘hug’. ‘Hugging’ is a Western concept which has been accepted in Chinese culture only since late last century, after China opened its doors to the world. Instead of rendering the extension in Chinese, as would be the case in a domesticating translation, we kept the direct translation of the word: *yongbao* ‘hug’. The word *yongbao* is more vivid, concise and powerful than the straightforward Chinese counterpart of ‘accept gladly or eagerly’ – *xinran jieshou* 欣然接受, which, as an explanation of the metaphor, is natural, but rather plain and boring. Since the metaphorical extension of meaning based on human cognitive ability is universal (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980), this metaphor will not cause any problem of understanding for target readers. On the contrary, it will make the reading more enjoyable as the metaphor defamiliarises and prolongs the process of perception, which “is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged” (Shklovsky as cited in Lodge, 1988, p.20).

4.2. Novel Use of Existing Words

In example (5), we translated ‘American’ directly as *Meiguo* (America) instead of paraphrasing it as *Meiguoshide* (of American style):

> (5) “She’s got so many clothes,” Becky told us. “And they’re so, I don’t know – <u>American</u>.”
>
> “她有非常多的衣服”贝基告诉我们说，“美国人就是这样，无法理解。

> “她有好多衣服，”贝基对我们说，“而且都那么—
> 我不知道该怎么说 – 美国。”

There is an emerging use in Chinese of nouns that can accept degree modifiers and act as adjectives, e.g. *hen zhongguo* (very China) to mean ‘very Chinese’, and *hen nüren* (very woman) to mean ‘very feminine’; this is obviously because of the influence of inflected languages such as English in which a noun can be inflected and turned into an adjective. As Chinese lacks inflection, the traditional way of forming an adjective from a noun has been to add *de* (of) to the noun. However, this sort of combination, as in *Zhonguode* (China of), is more like a possessive than an adjective as it cannot accept degree adverbials. As a result, there has been no direct way of saying what is meant in English by ‘He’s very Chinese’. It has had to be paraphrased as something like “He very much has Chinese style”. This gap of expression in Chinese that has been opened by the necessity to translate from other languages, especially English, has now been filled by the new pattern “degree modifier + noun”, where the degree modifier virtually marks the following noun as an adjective. Therefore our direct translation of America as *Meiguo* (America) retained both the meaning and form of the SL and signified the linguistic difference in the SL by a novel grammatical pattern in the TL.

The emergence of this marked use in Chinese, a non-inflected language, to express what an unmarked linguistic form in an inflected language expresses fully demonstrates how a language can be expanded and enriched by foreignising translation. It is indeed true that:

> It is not too bold to contend that everything, from the most elevated to the most profound, from the most forceful to the most fragile, can be expressed in every language...Nevertheless these undertones of language slumber, as do the sounds of an unplayed instrument, until a nation learns how to draw them out (Schulte and Biguenet, 1992, pp.56–57).

And one important means of ‘how to’ is foreignising translation.

5. Domesticating information flow

While trying to retain the cultural differences and motivated language use of the original text through foreignising, we also domesticated some of the information flow to maintain the original information structure and enhance readability for Chinese children. It is well recognized that Chinese is typologically different from English, the former being topic-prominent and the latter subject-prominent (Li and Thompson, 1976). As a topic-prominent language, Chinese is more pragmatically controlled, its word order following the information flow from topic to comment or focus. The relative lack of syntactic control in Chinese is compensated for by pragmatic principles (Tai, 1993; Wu, 1995) that govern the information flow. Or, phrased differently, the pragmatic principles underlying Chinese word order have made a certain degree of surface syntactic control unnecessary. Consequently, word order in Chinese manifests more of its information structure and follows the end-focus principle (Quirk et al. 1985). For instance, the typical Chinese version of the English ‘it’s a pleasure to meet you’ is literally: ‘meet-you-I-very-pleased’, which starts with what is given in the situation and ends with what is new to the hearer, i.e. the focus. In general, linguistic forms expressing any kind of result of the action indicated by the main verb are limited in a Chinese sentence to the post-verbal position, whereas those that express concomitant

features of the action can occur only in pre-verbal positions (Shi 2002:234). The unmarked focus of a Chinese sentence normally falls on the results of the action concerned, and some marked structures are available to focus on the concomitant features of the action (Wu, 1996). As a result, pre-verbal elements in a Chinese clause are normally topical, whereas post-verbal ones are focal.

English, on the other hand, is highly syntactically controlled, and grammatical principles have priority in determining word order. English sentences are built around the subject-verb axis, which is usually established first, with whatever is left added later under an end-weight principle (Quirk et al, 1985, pp.1357-1362), i.e. the structurally more complicated constituent takes the end position. English is therefore "so little susceptible to the requirements of FSP[1] as to frequently disregard them altogether", and the focus of a sentence is more flexibly positioned. Due to different priorities in word order, the tension between syntactic organization and information packaging of these two typologically different languages "necessarily involves a great deal of skewing of patterns of information flow" (Baker 1992, p.167) when translating. As a result, it is often the case that the original information flow can only be maintained in the translation at the expense of formal syntactic equivalence. In other words, it is necessary to adjust word order in translation to domesticate the information flow. And inattention to this consideration resulted in some translations by students that were grammatically perfect, but informationally inadequate. Two examples will be discussed below to illustrate this point.

> (6) Context: Rain's mum is trying to secure a possum house in a tree in their backyard. Their next door neighbour, Daniel, and his mother, a good carpenter, have come over to help.
> Within about five minutes Daniel and his mother were standing in our yard with planks of wood, a jar of nails and a small saw. Our mothers murmured names to each other and then shook hands. Over her slim jeans and blouse, Daniel's mother wore a professional carpenter's apron.
> "Mum built the tree-house," Daniel said.
>
> a.“我妈妈做了树屋，”丹尼尔说。
> "My mum built *le* tree-house," Daniel said.
>
> b. “那树屋就是我妈妈做的，”丹尼尔说。
> "The tree-house *shi* (was) my mum built *de*," Daniel said.

Students' translation (6a) kept the English syntactic structure, where the object "the tree-house" takes the end focus position, and the particle *le* is used to render the English past tense. Grammatically, (6a) is almost a standard rendition of the original. Informationally, however, this version is inappropriate because it misrepresents what is given and what is new in the original. The point of Daniel's remark "Mum built the tree-house," is to tell everyone that his mum is a good carpenter and she was actually the person who built the tree-house everyone can see right there in front of them. In this context, "Mum" carries the stress and information focus, whereas "the tree-

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[1] Functional sentence perspective: the organization of a sentence in terms of the role of its elements in distinguishing between old and new information, esp. the division of a sentence into theme and rheme.

house” is highly given. However, in (6a) “built tree-house” receives focus not only because it is in an end focus position, but also because the Chinese particle *le* is used to report a new event. As a result, (6a) may serve as a reply to “What did your mum do (or build)?” and obviously does not fit the original context. The revised version (6b) is in a special “*shi...de*” construction, where *shi* is a focus marker, and *de* is to mark the verb preceding it as presupposed and thus out of focus. The function of this structure is to shift the focus from results in the default end position to the concomitant features of the action in pre-verbal positions. As a result, in (6b) given information “the tree-house” is the topic, “my mum” carries the sole focus, and the action “built”, presupposed by the completed tree-house, is out of focus. Informationally, the effect is similar to an English sentence in the passive, “The tree-house was built by my mum”, and fits the context well.

> (7) Context: Rain’s mother is telling her why they have to sell their house.
> “It’s the settlement arrangement your father and I made. Anyway, I don’t want to live here. <u>We need a fresh start. We’re going to live in Granny’s old house.”</u>
>
> a.我们需要一个新的开始，我们会去外婆的老房子住。
> “We need a new start, we will go to grandma’s old house (to) live.”
>
> b.我们要去外婆的老房子住，在那里开始新的生活。”
> “We are going to grandma’s old house (to) live, and there (will) start a new life.”

Students’ translation (7a) is a good formal syntactic equivalence to the original, but does not sound natural for two reasons. Firstly, as a topic-prominent language, Chinese features topic chains (Tsao, 1990), i.e. a topic followed by several comments, and two or more topic-comment (or subject-predicate) clauses with the same topic (or subject) often sound awkward. They are better expressed by a topic chain without repeating the topic. Secondly, the story is all about Rain’s mum’s decision to live differently after her divorce, and “a new start” should receive more focus. The revised version (7b) expresses the meaning of the two paralleled English sentences in one topic chain, and has reversed the original order. As a result, “We are going to grandma’s old house (to) live” is now more cohesively linked to the preceding sentence “Anyway, I don’t want to live here” and “start a new life” has been emphasised in the end focus position.

The examples above demonstrate that, in a translation process that endeavoured to retain as much of the motivated language use and cultural difference of the original text, it was also necessary, in order to reflect the original information packaging, to manipulate word order in the target text to domesticate the information flow.

6. Concluding remarks

The two opposite directions in translation, of domesticating and foreignising, can be seen as complementary when applied to different aspects and layers of text. In general, foreignising is most necessary and effective where there is a clash between the target and source cultural codes. On the other hand, the foreignisation of SL linguistic features is somewhat restricted by disparities between the source and target languages. While lexicon in a linguistic system

is more fluid and more readily accommodates novel creations, being thus more tolerant of foreignising, the syntax and information structures underlying it are more stable, and thus more resistant to foreignising. However, foreignising does not work alone; it involves domesticating movement (Venuti, 1995, p.29). It is our view that a hybrid method is needed for the complexities of translation.

The hybrid method and its theoretical underpinnings developed in training students in translating literary works has, in turn, implications for translation training programs. It provides a general model for dealing with translation tasks that takes a hybrid approach as default rather than the dualism of foreignising or domesticating. Following this model, a translator would first locate the task on the Foreignising-Domesticating continuum (discussed in section 2.2) to determine the various degrees of foreignising and domesticating in different aspects and layers of a text according to the genre of the text, the purpose of the translation and its intended audience. Students would thus be able to approach different translation tasks, whether of a functional or literary orientation, more flexibly and, despite disparities in individual bilingual and bicultural competence as well as creativity, produce more appropriate translations.

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