Original Paper

Contrastive Research on Attitudinal Resources in English Translation of Li Bai's Poems Based on Appraisal Theory

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Abstract

In order to promote the translation of Chinese poetry, this paper studies the differences of attitudinal resources between Li Bai's eight poems and the English translation poems of both Xu Yuanchong and Lowell based on Appraisal Theory, and it finds out that the quality of the translation poems can be improved by adjusting appraisal strategies.

Keywords

attitude system, attitudinal resource, appraisal strategies

1. Introduction

Li Bai is an outstanding romantic poet in the Tang dynasty of ancient China, and enjoys the reputation of "Immortal Poet". His poems are bold and unconstrained in writing style, fresh and refined in word selection, which has influenced generations of Chinese people's infatuation and belief in poetry. Driven by "Cultural Globalization" and the "Belt and Road" initiative, Li Bai's poems have attracted increasing translators' interests at home and abroad, so the research on his poems can promote the translation of Tang poetry and accelerate its influence abroad. So far, translators who have engaged in the translation of Li Bai's poems abroad are Authur Cooper, Amy Lowell, Arthur Waley, David Hinton, et al., among which Amy Lowell's *Fir-Flower Tablets: Poems Translated from the Chinese* is popular with readers, and 83 poems of Li Bai are included in this book. Lowell's translation theory is to reproduce the meaning of the original poem to the target language reader, as she says in her preface, "The translation poems will try its best to fully reproduce the deep meaning of the original poem" (Lowell, 1921). Translators at home are Xu Yuanchong, Yang Xianyi, Dai Naidie, et al., among which Xu Yuanchong attained greatness in poetry translation and he is regarded as the only translator who has translated Chinese poetry into English and French. *Selected Poems of Li Bai*, translated by Xu

Yuanchong, contains 100 poems of Li Bai, and Xu's translation theory can be summed up as "translators should pursue the beauty of art, and has innovation capability". He regards translation as a competition with the original writer.

From the perspective of Appraisal Theory, this paper conducts a quantitative contrastive research on attitudinal resources of Li Bai's eight poems and the corresponding English translations of Xu Yuanchong and Amy Lowell, research perspectives and research methods have been explored and innovated. The combination of Appraisal Theory and poetry translation provides a new perspective for the study of poetry translation.

2. Appraisal System & Attitude System

The core of Appraisal system is "evaluate", and language is the means of this system. By analyzing and evaluating language, we can understand the standpoint and attitude of the speaker towards the specific things, viz., Appraisal Theory not only evaluates the superficial meaning of language, but also analyzes the value orientation, attitude and emotion contained in the deep meaning of language. Therefore, Appraisal system has the ability to elucidate and interpret language. According to Martin's classification, there are three subsystems in Appraisal system: Attitude system, Engagement system and Graduation system. Each subsystem contains its own subsystem: Attitude system is subdivided into Affect, Judgment and Appreciation; Engagement system is subdivided into Monogloss and Heterogloss; Graduation system contains Force and Focus (Martin, 2005).

Attitude system is subdivided into Affect, Judgment and Appreciation. Attitude refers to the judgment and appreciation of the speaker towards human behavior, text/process, and phenomena. Attitude could be Positive or Negative, Direct or Indirect. Affect system belongs to the emotional system that explains the emotional responses of language speakers to human behavior, texts/processes and phenomena. According to different ways of expression of affective content, Affect can be divided into Quality, Process and Comment. Judgment system pertains to the ethical category, which is used to explain the judgments made by speakers about people's character and behavior in accordance with ethics and morality (rules and regulations). It can be divided into Social Esteem (whether it conforms to code of conduct, whether it is tenacious, etc.) and Social Sanction (whether it conforms to ethics, whether it is reliable, etc.). Appreciation system belongs to the aesthetic category, which is used to explain language users' evaluation of artificial things and natural phenomena by language users. It comprises Reaction (whether it attracts people's attention or whether people like it), Composition (Whether it is balanced or complex) and Valuation (whether it is significant, or innovative, or useful, etc.) (Hu, 2005).

3. Quantitative Statistics of Attitudinal Resources in Li Bai's Original Poems and Two English Translation Poems

Systemic Functional Linguistics believes that translation equivalence should not only seek textual equivalence, but also pay attention to the equivalence of the two languages' discourse in expressing the attitude, motivation, judgment, role and other interpersonal meanings of the speaker (Hu, 1989). As the standard of translation, Appraisal system focuses on whether the attitudes, emotions and values of the original author are reproduced in the translation (Qiu, 2011); thereby the target language readers can get roughly the same information with the source language readers, which is also an important criterion to evaluate the quality of the translation.

In translation practice, it is difficult for translators to grasp the overall attitude of the source text and reproduce the attitude of the source text in the target text. In virtue of Appraisal Theory, we can analyze the whole and partial attitude of the source text by annotation, and the translation quality can also be evaluated by analyzing different distribution of attitudinal resources between the source text and the target text. This paper randomly selected eight Li Bai's poems and its corresponding English translations by Xu Yuanchong and Lowell (see Table 1), then the eight original poems and the translated poems were annotated with attitudinal resources (including Affect resources, Judgment resources and Appreciation resources). In addition, the distribution of Affect, Judgment and Appreciation resources and their sub-types are calculated, so as to make a contrastive analysis of the characteristics of appraisal strategies between the two English versions.

Table 1. Li Bai's Poems and Its Two English Translations

Poetry number	Original poetry	English translation of Xu	English translation of Lowell
1	塞下曲（其一）	Frontier Song	Songs of the Marches
2	黄鹤楼送孟浩然之广陵	Seeing Meng Haoran Off at Yellow Crane Tower	At The Yellow Crank Tower, Taking Leave of Meng Hao Jan on His Departure to Kuang Ling
3	闻王昌龄左迁龙标遥有此寄	To Wang Changling Banished to the West	Poem Sent on Hearing That Wang Ch'ang-Ling Had Been Exiled to Lung Piao
4	赠汪伦	To Wang Lun Who Comes to Bid Me Farewell	A Parting Gift to Wang Lun
5	登金陵凤凰台	On Phoenix Terrace at Jinling	Feng Huang T'ai
6	将进酒	Invitation to Wine	Drinking Song
7	静夜思	Thoughts on a Silent Night	Night Thoughts
8	怨情	Waiting in Vain	Passionate Grief

Eight original poems of Li Bai in Table 1 are selected from *Three hundred Poems of the Tang Dynasty*; English translation of Xu are selected from *Selected Poems of Li Bai* (translated into English by Xu Yuanchong); English translation of Lowell are selected from *Fir-Flower Tablets: Poems Translated from the Chinese*. The differences of attitudinal resources between the two translated poems and the original poems are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 shows that:

(1) Compared with the original poem, both English translation poems have added some attitudinal resources. (2) In terms of Affect, resources of Lowell's translation are almost the same as those of the original poem, while Affect resources of Xu's translation are more than those of the original poems, and Affect resources as process accounts for the largest proportion of the Affect resources. (3) In terms of Judgment, resources in both translations are increased compared with the original poems, however, social esteem resources in both translations account for a large proportion of the Judgment resources, which is the same in the original poems. (4) In terms of Appreciation, resources in both translations increased somewhat compared with the original poems and the proportion of Appreciation resources of the original poems and the two translations in whole attitudinal resources are the largest.

Table 2. Attitudinal Resources Frequency of Li Bai's Poems and Its Two English Translations

Original poetry			English translation of Xu			English translation of Lowell		
total	number/rate	subsystem components number/rate	total	number/rate	subsystem components number/rate	total	number/rate	subsystem components number/rate
Attitudinal resources 53	Affect 10/19%	Affect as quality 3/30% Affect as process 4/40% Affect as comment 3/30%	Attitudinal resources 64	Affect 17/27%	Affect as quality 3/18% Affect as process 11/64% Affect as comment 3/18%	Attitudinal resources 73	Affect 9/12%	Affect as quality 1/11% Affect as process 6/67% Affect as comment 2/22%
	Judgment 10/19%	Social esteem 8/80% Social sanction 2/20%		Judgment 11/17%	Social esteem 10/91% Social sanction 1/9%		Judgment 15/21%	Social esteem 9/60% Social sanction 6/40%
	Appreciation 33/62%	Reaction 32/97% Composition 0/0% Valuation 1/3%		Appreciation 36/55%	Reaction 33/91% Composition 1/3% Valuation 2/6%		Appreciation 49/67%	Reaction 43/88% Composition 3/6% Valuation 3/6%

4. Contrastive Analysis of Attitudinal Resources Translation in Li Bai's Poems and Its Two English Translations

In the last section, the paper will make a quantitative study on the attitudinal resource frequency of Li Bai's poems and its two English translations. In this section, Affect resources, Judgment resources and Appreciation resources of the original poems and the two translated poems will be analyzed, so as to ascertain the different translation appraisal strategies of the two translators and to what degree that the translated poems are faithful to the original poems.

The combination of Appraisal Theory and translation help us to investigate how translators can combine the choice of language resources with the appraisal significance of attitudinal resources, and to build an interaction between the translators and the target readers, so as to realize interpersonal meaning (Chen & Wen, 2013). Table 2 reveals the translated poems have the following characteristics:

1) The attitudinal resources of the two translated poems are increased compared with the original poems.

The total attitudinal resources of the original poem are 53, the attitudinal resources of Xu's translated poems and Lowell's translated poems are increased to 64 and 73 respectively. The increase of the attitudinal resources reflects a feature of the translation of Chinese classic poetry: translators often choose to add some attitudinal resources to meet the needs of the Times and the reading expectations of target language readers, and to help Chinese classic poetry "going global".

In corpus 6, "古来圣贤 (JU: +capacity) 皆寂寞, 惟有饮者留其名 (JU: +normality)", "圣贤" refers to a man with morality and wisdom; "留其名" means the name of the drinker will be passed on from generation to generation. Xu's translation is "How many great men (JU: +propriety) were forgotten through the ages? But great drinkers (JU: +propriety) are more famous (JU: +normality) than sober sages (JU: +normality)", two Judgment resources are added to help the target language readers get a better understanding of the word "sage"; Lowell's translation also adds a Judgment resource "worthies" to explain the original poem. Lowell's translation is "The sages (JU: +capacity) and worthies (JU: +normality) of old times have left not a sound, Only those who drank have achieved lasting fame (JU: +normality)".

Another example in corpus 6, "陈王昔时宴 (AF: +process) 平乐，斗酒十千恣欢谑 (AF: +process)", the poet uses two Affect resources to depict the banquet scene of Chen Wang (also named Cao Zhi, who is a famous poet in the late Han Dynasty) indulging himself in wine. Xu's translation is "The Prince of Posts feast'd (AF: +process) in his palace at will (JU: +capacity), Drank wine at ten thousand a cask and laughed (AF: +process) his fill", a Judgment resource is added to show the poet's admiration for Cao Zhi. Lowell's translation is "The King of Ch'en, long ago, caroused (AF: +process) in the Hall of Peaceful Content. They drank wine paid at a full ten thousand a gallon; They surpassed themselves in mirth (AF: +comment), and the telling of obscene (AP: -reaction) stories", a negative Appreciation resource is added to show Chen Wang's extravagant and profligate life. Due to different cultural

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background and different understanding of the original poem, the two translators choose to add different attitudinal resources: Xu believes that the original poem shows the poet's recognition and yearning for the banquet; while Lowell, insists that the poet is disapproved and disparaged Chen Wang's behavior. It can be seen from the above example, in order to retain the linguistic form of the original poem, to accurately restore the meaning of the original poem, and to meet the reading expectation of the target language readers, the two translators adopt the appraisal strategy of adding some attitudinal resources.

2) The Appreciation resources of the original poems and the two translated poems account for the largest proportion in the whole Attitude system.

Poetry generally focuses on chanting things, and it is a convenient way for poets to express their feelings and aspirations through the description of landscape. Therefore, landscape description is very common in poetry, and it explains why the Appreciation resources account for the largest proportion in the attitudinal system of poetry. In corpus 1, "五月天山 (AP: + reaction) 雪 (AP: +reaction) 无花 (AP: -reaction) 只有寒 (AP: -reaction)", the two Appreciation resources "雪" and "寒" shows that the Tian Shan mountain is still covered with snow in May. Xu's translation is "In summer sky-high mountains (AP: +reaction) white with snow (AP: +reaction). In bitter cold (AP: -reaction) no fragrant flowers (AP: -reaction) blow", it accurately restored the four Appreciation resources of the original poetry. Lowell's translation is "It is the Fifth Month, But still the Heaven-high hills (AP: +reaction) shine with snow (AP: +reaction). There are no flowers (AP: -reaction), for the heart of the earth is yet too chilly (AP: -reaction)", it also accurately translated Appreciation resources of the original poetry.

In corpus 5, "晋代衣冠 (JU: +normality) 成古丘", means no matter how glorious the dignitaries in Jin dynasty, they are now buried in the desolate paths. "衣冠" refers to the dignitaries in ancient China, it is a Judgment resource. Xu's translation is "The ancient sages (JU: +capacity) in caps (AP: +reaction) and gowns (AP: +reaction) all lie in graves", two Appreciation resources are added to retain the language form of the original poem. Lowell's translation is "passed the generations of the Chin, with their robes (AP: +reaction) and head-dresses (AP: +reaction)". Lowell replace the Judgment resource of the original poem with two Appreciation resources without displaying the original poem's attitude to the ancestors to the target language readers, the reason is that the translator lack relevant cultural background knowledge. The above examples show that poets prefer to express their feelings indirectly through the description of scenery. Therefore, the proportion of Appreciation resources of poetry is the largest.

3) The increase attitudinal resources of Xu's translated poems are mainly the Affect and Appreciation resources.

Affect resources as process, quality and comment in the original poems are evenly distributed, but in Xu's translated poems, Affect resources as process accounts for a large proportion. Drinking song is a typical kind of poetry before Tang dynasty, which mostly involves reciting poetry and drinking. As in

corpus 6, "岑夫子, 丹丘生, 将进酒, 杯莫停", although there is no attitudinal resource, the high spirits of drunkenness is revealed in the lines, the rhythm of the poem is expressed by these short sentences. Xu's translation is "Dear friends of mine, cheer up (AF: +process), cheer up (AF: +process)! I invite you to wine", Xu transforms the implicit Affect attitude of the original poem into the explicit Affect attitude by adding Affect resources as process. The appraisal strategies for increasing Affect resources employed by Xu Yuanchong is accord with his translation strategy, namely, the pursuit of "three beauty" (beauty in sound, beauty in meaning and beauty in form). Xu insists that in pursuit of "three beauty", the translator may conduct "creative translation" or "free translation" appropriately.

In corpus 2, "烟花 (AP: +reaction) 三月下扬州", Yang Zhou is famous for its beautiful scenery, especially in March, flowers and trees flourished as beautiful as a misty wonderland, so "烟花" is used to describe the misty beautiful scenery of Yang Zhou, the word more or less revealed Li Bai's admiration for his friend's trip.

Xu's translation is "For River Town green with willows (AP: +reaction) and red with flowers (AP: +reaction)", by adding Appreciation resources, the translator presents the beautiful scenery of Jiang Nan to the readers, so as to help the target language readers to understand the artistic conception of "烟花".

4) The increase attitudinal resources of Lowell's translated poems are mainly the Judgment and Appreciation resources.

There are 33 Appreciation resources in the original poems, accounting for 62% of the whole Attitude system. The Appreciation resources of Lowell's translated poetry increased to 49, accounting for 67% of the whole Attitude system of the translated poetry. Most of the Appreciation resources of both original and Lowell's translated poetry are composed of reaction Appreciation resources.

In corpus 2, "孤帆 (AP: -reaction) 远影 (AP: -reaction) 碧空尽", it depicts a scene in which the poet seeing his friend's ship off until it disappeared. It does not express the poet's emotion directly, but only describes the objective scene. However, readers can perceive the poet's sad mood of parting and being reluctant to leave his close friend through the two Appreciation resources. Lowell's translation is "The single sail (AP: -reaction) is shining (AP: +reaction) far off (AP: -reaction) — it is extinguished in the jade-coloured (AP: +reaction) distance", these two Appreciation resources correspond to the original poem's two Appreciation resources, and the translator adds another Appreciation resource "shining" to describe the sight of a single sail looming in the distance.

In corpus 6, "古来圣贤 (JU: +capacity) 皆寂寞 (JU: -capacity), 惟有饮者留其名 (JU: +normality)", "圣贤" refers to a man with great virtue. Lowell's translation is "The sages (JU: +capacity) and worthies(JU: + capacity) of old times have left not a sound(JU: -capacity). Only those who drank have achieved lasting fame (JU: +capacity)". The translator adds a Judgment resource "worthies" to make the meaning of "sages" more clearer, which is conform to her translation strategy of trying to reproduce the deep meaning of the original text.

5. Conclusion

Based on Appraisal Theory, this paper conducts a quantitative contrastive research on attitudinal resources of Li Bai's eight poems and the corresponding English translations of Xu Yuanchong and Amy Lowell from the number, type and distribution of Appreciation, Judgment and Affect resources. It finds out that in order to break the shackles of poetic language form and the times, to help the translated poems meet the reading expectations of the target language readers and widely welcomed in target language countries, translators always add Judgment and Appreciation resources to convey the artistic conception, ambition and affect attitude of the original poem. Xu Yuanchong adds Affect and Appreciation resources in his translated poems to help the target language readers achieve a better understanding of the original poem, and this is a result of the translator's pursuit of a certain degree of "creative translation". The amount of Judgment resources of Xu's translated poems is basically the same as that of the original poems, which indicates that Xu is more accurate in understanding and reproducing Judgment resources of the original poem. Lowell's translated poems add Judgment and Appreciation resources, and the appraisal information and artistic conception expressed in the original poem are presented to readers more clearly, which indicates that the translator are striving to reproduce the deep meaning of the original poems. The amount of Affect resources of Lowell's translated poems is basically consistent with that of the original poems, indicating that Lowell is more accurate in analyzing and restoring Affect resources of the original poem.

The Appraisal Theory helps the translator grasp the attitude of the original author; the translator can adjust the translation to keep the consistency of Appraisal resources of the translation and the original text in all aspects by adopting appropriate translation strategy, so as to improve the quality of the translation, and to help Chinese classic poetry "going global".

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