A Comparative Study of Translation in Japanese Version of Camel Xiangzi: Take the Eighteen chapter of Furong Feng's and Syousuke Tatsuma's Japanese versions as an example

Ying Zou¹,a

¹School of Foreign Language, Guangdong University of Technology, Guangzhou, MA 510006, China;

a 1210155271@qq.com

Abstract. Camel Xiangzi, an excellent realistic novel, is a masterpiece in the history of modern Chinese literature. With vivid and simple language and a clear and rigorous narrative structure, the author Lao She depicts the story of an ignorant and kind-hearted peasant who gradually degenerates into a "man-eating culture" by focusing on the "three ups and three downs" of the main character Xiangzi. The book has been translated into more than 20 languages and circulated worldwide. Therefore, this study focuses on its Japanese translation by conducting a comparative study.

Keywords: Japanese-Chinese Translation, Translation Strategies, Comparative Study, Camel Xiangzi.

1. Introduction

According to Zhang Nan [3], "How do different translators deal with those cultural elements unique to China in the translation process? This is a topic worth exploring." In this paper, Chinese scholars Furong Feng, as well as Japanese translator Syousuke Tatsuma Japanese translations, are selected as examples to compare their translations in terms of translation styles, translation strategies, and Diction.

2. Translation styles

A sentence from one of the two translations can be drawn as an example.

处处干燥，处处烫手，处处憋闷。

Everywhere it's dry, everywhere it's hot, everywhere it's suffocating.

冯：この町はいたるところは乾燥じきっており、いたるところに手にやけどをするほど暑く、いたるところは暑苦しい。

Feng: The city is dry everywhere, hot enough to burn your hands everywhere, and hot enough to make you feel like you're in the sun.

立间：あらゆるものが乾ききり、あらゆるものが燃え、あらゆるものが熱気を吐き

Tatsuma: All things dry up, and all things burn, all things exhale heat.

It is easy to see that Feng's translation adopts a style close to "direct translation," word by word, sentence by sentence, without missing a single word, and it perfectly matches the original meaning of the Chinese text. The word "everywhere" is translated as "いたるところ," and "烫手" is also translated as "手にやけどをする..." However, the Japanese translator, Tatsuma, has a tendency to use "conversion(meaning translation)," skillfully converting "everywhere......" to "all," and "hot" is changed to "burn," which is also vivid. From the difference in translation styles, it can be seen that Feng is more inclined to express the "original" meaning of Chinese in translating their works, but Tatsuma, as a foreigner, after he understands the original work, he carries out a certain degree of
3. Translation strategies

Even for the same original text, different translators will use different translation strategies, either replacing the subject (theme) or changing the order of the language to give the translation various effects.

3.1 Complex sentences and relating word

Complex sentences are made up of simple sentences, and different simple sentences have to be connected relying on other connectives, the most common form of which is to connect them with a relating word, for example:

拉车的人们，明知不活动便没有饭吃，也懒得去张罗买卖。

The people pulling the carts are too lazy to make a living, even knowing that they can't make ends meet if they don't move.

冯杜：车夫たちは、働かなければ食ってはいないと知っていながらも、あえてお客様を獲得しようとしない。

Feng: The wheelwrights know that if they don't work, they can't make ends meet, but they don't dare try to win customers.

立间：車引きたちは、働かなければならないと知っていながらも、どうにも働く気にならず。

Tatsuma: The car pullers know they must work to make a living, but they are still unwilling to work.

The main structure of the sentence in Chinese is that: the people pulling the cart [even know {If it doesn't do... there would be no ...} , still{ be lazy to do something }...] In the big frame, "even know......still", both translators used "ながらも " which very accurately to express it, and in the small frame, "If it doesn't do... there would be no ...", both translators used "なければならない", although there is a little bit difference in the sentence constructions of "be lazy to do something" used by the two translators, both of them succeeded in using the relating word to express the meaning of the original text, on the whole, it is very chic that Tatsuma's sentence is translated by a more concise strategy of conversion and a more Japanese style of linguistic idioms.

3.2 The modification of the word order

There is also a difference between Chinese and Japanese in the way they are expressed. The same scene will also occur when translating:

凉风，即使是一点点，给了人们许多希望。

A cool breeze, even if it's just a little bit, gives people a lot of hope.

冯杜：ほんの少しの涼しい風でも、人々に多くの希望を持たらしてくれた。

Feng: Even a slight cool breeze brought a lot of hope to the people.

立间：たとえわずかであっても、涼しい風は人々に明るい希望を与えてくれたのである。

Tatsuma: Even if it is slight, the cool breeze gives people much hope.

In this sentence, Feng chose the clause after "cool breeze" in the original text and put it before "cool breeze" as a modifier, which becomes "Even if it is just a little bit of cool breeze..." and the emphasis of "even" focuses on "cool breeze," while Tatsuma is more like switching the order of these two clauses to "even if it is slight, the cool breeze...". ", the focus of "even" is on "slight."
can be seen that the two translators have different emphases because of the different strategies for dealing with the word order.

4. Diction

As a translator, it is also essential to consider that, since Camel Xiangzi is a work written by a Chinese, how to express the meaning of certain Chinese words in Japanese accurately and whether or not certain scenes can be summarized by finding corresponding Japanese words.

4.1 Onomatopoeic words

In her study, Liting Huang [4] suggested that onomatopoeic words in Japanese can increase the vividness of conversation. Lao She also used a lot of authentic Chinese expressions in Camel Xiangzi, which will have an excellent effect when paired with onomatopoeic words that increase the sense of vividness.

……和驴马们同在水槽里灌一大气。 (10)
... drinking desperately in the sink with the horses.

冯杜：ロバたちと口を並べて、同じ水槽でごくごくと飲む。 (11)
Feng: They gulped from the same tank with the donkeys.

立間：ロバ用の桶からがぶがぶとやるのだ。 (12)
Tatsuma: They gulp from a donkey-used tub.

The phrase "灌一大气" is a well-known common saying, which simply means "swallowing sth in one big gulp." In this case, Feng and Tatsuma use two mimetic words, "ごくごく" and "がぶがぶ," respectively. These two words have the same general meaning, but there are subtle differences. According to the results of a Webio dictionary search, "ごくごく" means to gulp down a drink in one gulp, simulating the sound of drinking water with a gurgle. "がぶがぶ" has a similar meaning, but with a sense of "extreme thirst," where you gulp down water because you are thirsty. In this context, the carters were pulling their carts in scorching weather, and when they saw a well, it was like they had seen a "savior," and they even ran to the water trough for the horses and drank from it. "がぶがぶ" would be more vivid and emphasize the desire of the carters for water.

4.2 Vernacular

Familiar phrases refer to commonly used fixed terms, such as "throw caution to the wind," "like a clay idol fording a river," etc., all of which have been used for a long time and are fixed expressions, such as common idioms and common saying. The reason why Camel Xiangzi is down-to-earth is that it has a lot of colloquialisms and vernaculars. Therefore the translator needs to understand the meaning accurately before translating them into something familiar to Japanese people.

“見了座儿”、“好歹的拉到了地方” (13)
Take on passengers, Finally drove to a certain place

冯杜：お客さんを見せて、かろうじてお客さんを目的地まで届けると。 (14)
Feng: Find the customers and deliver them to their destination, barely.

立間：お客さんがあった、ようようの思いで目的地に行き着いた。 (15)
Tatsuma: Picked up a customer and finally brought him to his destination.

The phrase "見了座儿" has a strong Chinese flavor, both in the unique Beijing dialect and in the words itself. It means "pick up a customer," and it is mainly used daily by cab and motorcycle drivers to solicit passengers. According to a famous Japanese corpus—Kotonoha Corpus, show that "客を見つける" is mostly used in the context of "digging for customers" and is mostly used in some business contexts.
In contrast, Tatsuma's translation skillfully avoids this point and adopts a different way of expression, "Picked up a customer," which is more natural compared to Feng's translation.

The word "好歹" is a polysemous word in Chinese, which can mean "good or bad" or "no matter how good or bad it is, it will be." And adding "的" to "好歹" and "好歹的" in the text is also a customary expression in Chinese, which means "by all means, finally." In Feng's translation, "かろうじて" expresses this meaning very well, and "ようよう" adopted by Tatsuma is written as "漸う," which is the variant of "ようやく," which is mostly found in ancient texts. From this point of view, "かろうじて" may be more in line with Lao She's writing background.

5. Summary

Although the original work is the unique Camel Xiangzi, it has a different color in different translators' writing. The translations of the two scholars have their own merits. Through this article, it can be seen that Furong Feng, as a native speaker, can accurately grasp the meaning of Lao She's words and prefers the original "direct translation." In contrast, Syousuke Tatsuma, as a non-native speaker, adopts a more Japanese style of expression through the way of conversion. It can be said that because of their translations, the essence of China's excellent literature can cross borders and be read by people worldwide, thus enhancing our "cultural confidence" and accelerating the realization of the "Chinese Dream."

Acknowledgments

College Students' Innovative Entrepreneurial Training Plan Program (xj2023118450703)

Reference