

The Analysis of Three Chinese Versions on Robert Burns' A Red, Red Rose Based on the Theory of Aesthetic Psychology of Translation

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Abstract: *A Red, Red Rose* is one of the most famous poems of Robert Burns, this well-known Scottish poet is chiefly remembered for his poems being written in the Scottish language with harmony in phonology, form and connotation. This paper chooses three Chinese Versions of this poem and discusses the sound, word, sentence and text based upon the theory of *Aesthetic Psychology of Translation*, and tries to analysis the clear meaning, explicit quotation, true feeling and vivid image in these three Chinese versions.
Keywords: Clear meaning; Explicit quotation; True feeling; Vivid image

1 Introduction

A Red, Red Rose is one of the masterpieces of the famous Scotland peasant poet Robert Burns, and this poem sung by people all over the world who are yearning for warm love for hundreds of years. Living in the bankruptcy rural areas, the poem and poor peasants were related by flesh and blood, and he was a counter to the British Poetry neoclassical style, absorbing nutrients from the local life and folk literature, which has brought fresh vitality for the poetry creation, forming the basic features of his poetry.

“From the perspective of translation aesthetics, the aesthetic interpretation in translation is the translator’s process for the original aesthetic attributes, aesthetic attributes is presented in the perfect embodiment of meaning, quotation, feeling, image and sound, word, sentence, text” (Yan Linhai, 70:12).

Hereinafter referred to “my love”(Bi Hong) version as TT1, “My Love’s like a red red rose” (Wang Zuoliang) as TT2, and the “Red Rose”(Guo Moruo) as TT3.

The translation aesthetic standards are the criterion of the aesthetic appreciation, reflecting in artistry and the individuality of the translation version. These standards are mainly including appearance standards, which are clear meaning, explicit quotation, true feeling, vivid image, and internal standard refers as pleasant sound, proper word, smooth sentence and cohesive text. (Yan Linhai: 213–214)

2 The analysis of three Chinese versions

This part will discuss the three Chinese versions according to the analysis process of *Aesthetic Psychology of Translation*, trying to compare the meaning, quotation, feeling and image in sound, word, sentence and text in these three versions.

2.1 Pleasant sound

In order to pursuit a certain aesthetic sound in speeches, which are both the aim of the author and the translators. The pleasant sound is mainly reflected in the order of language, rhythm, rhetoric. And according to following analysis, this paper is trying to find out how this three versions meet the requirement of clear meaning, explicit quotation, true feeling and vivid image in Sound.

2.1.1 Explicit quotation

A Red, Red Rose begins with a quatrain containing two similes. Burns compares his love with a springtime blooming rose and then with a sweet melody. These are popular poetic images and this is the stanza most commonly quoted from the poem. So we take these two similes as example to compare these three versions.

In TT1, “rose” and “melody” are translated into “玫瑰” and “乐曲”, but here is not specific enough because “我爱” in Chinese has two meaning: (a) my feelings of love; (b) my loved person. So “我爱如玫瑰” embodies two meanings too, which is ambiguous.

In TT2, “rose” and “melody” are translated into “玫瑰红” and “管弦”, and “玫瑰红” here also could cause misunderstanding for it means the color of rose in literal. “Melody” does not equal to instruments, so “管弦” is not the exact meaning of the author.

In TT3, “rose” and “melody” are translated into “玫瑰” and “曲子”, which are both literally translated and are in accordance with the author’s original intent.

2.1.2 True feeling

In the poem, the poet praises the beauty of the lover and expresses the poet’s fervent emotion and firm determination to love. The flame of love burns strong in the poet’s heart, and the poet longs for good results. Set the last stanza as examples.

In TT1, this stanza is translated into four lines with five-character form, using “离别只暂时，善保千金躯。终当复归来，万

里度若飞” to show the author’s strong feeling are not enough as Chinese classical poetry tends to be more reserved compared to the Scotland style poem.

In TT2, it uses the exclamation sentence as “暂时告别我心肝，请你不要把心耽！纵使相隔十万里，踏穿地皮也要还”， but the feelings in the original poem are spontaneous displayed with simplicity and sincerity, while TT2 are more colloquial and less poetic, making the feelings are expressed in surface.

In TT3, this stanza is translated into “珍重吧，我唯一的爱人，珍重吧，让我们暂时别离，但我定要回来，哪怕千里万里！”， also an exclamation sentence to show the strong feelings, and repeat “珍重吧” twice make the readers more sensitive and touching about the love feelings. “千里万里” is free translation, but in Chinese the word means “far far away”, catering to the intention of the original author, making the language more poetic.

2.2 Proper word

By correctly choosing the words, the translators could interpret the exact meaning of the author. To choose the right words does not only require the correct translation, but also proper in the in terms of meaning and style.

2.2.1 Clear meaning

The correctly chose of the words will decide the keynote of the text, so chose the proper words are quite important for translators. So we set the third stanza as example: Till a’ the seas gang dry, my dear, /And the rocks melt wi’ the sun: /I will love thess till, my dear, /While the sands o’ life shall run.

In TT1, “枯” this adjective corresponds to “dry” is also quite poetic. The modifier of “sun”is “炎”, although this is a increased word, it is also quite emotional.

In TT2, translate the “seas” into “四海”, which is more accurate, because the original word is plural. But the “sands o’ life” translating as “有口气” is too casual.

In TT3, “dry” is translated into “干涸水流尽”, the semantic repeat phrase stresses the word “dry”, and the translation is very powerful.

2.2.2 True feeling

The translation of words need to figure out the emotional color of the original words. Translators need to have the same feelings with the original author. Taking “sweetly” in “That’s sweetly play’d in tune” as example, this is a word filled with poem’s love and admire:

In TT1, a “妙” describes how this “melodie” is, “妙” means beautiful and goodness in Chinese; In TT2, the translator uses “玲珑” that means exquisite and agile in Chinese; In TT3, it uses “甜甜地” which is literally translated, and “甜” in Chinese also means a girl is lovely and beautiful. In this point of view, TT3 is more suitable.

2.2.3 Vivid image

Original Text	TT1	TT2	TT3
newly sprung	红蕾姣	初开韵晓风	迎风初开
play’d in tune	奏声袅袅	悠扬而玲珑	奏得合拍又和谐
bonnie lass	绝世妍	美而殊	美丽的人儿
seas gang dry	海水枯	四海海水枯	大海干涸水流尽

(Table 1)

Most images in these three versions could be faithful to the original text. But some images in TT2 need more discussion, such as “melodie” in TT2 is translated as“管弦”, however these are two different things.

3 Conclusion

They three make no effort to pursue the perfection of representing the original meaning, quotation, feeling and image, there is still some difference among the three masterpieces. Bi Hong’s 《我爱》 almost achieves the beauty in sound with losing the aesthetic effect both in meaning and feeling. The first stanza of Guo Moruo’s 《红玫瑰》 is catchy and beautiful, but last two stanzas full of slang and colloquial, which are not poetic enough and some adaption fails to represent the original meaning. Wang Zuoliang’s 《一朵红红的玫瑰》, an excellent work which obey the rules of faithfulness, achieving the aesthetic effect in meaning, quotation, feeling and image by its sound, word, sentence and text in the three. In this paper’s perspective, a complete perfection of the four-meaning, quotation, feeling and image could be hardly achieved, with great obstacles do exist in poem translation, and it is encouraging that many translators keep hard working to reproduce the original beauty and aesthetic effect in sound, word, sentence and text.

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