

A Comparative Study of Translations of Traditional Chinese Medicine Culture in *Hong Lou Meng*

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Abstract

As an all-encompassing literary masterpiece, *Hong Lou Meng* covers a wild range of traditional Chinese culture, especially the traditional Chinese medicine culture which runs through the whole book. The traditional Chinese medicine culture in the book reflects Cao Xueqin's extensive medical knowledge, showing readers the rich cultural connotation and practical efficacy of traditional Chinese medicine. Chapter Ten *Dr. Zhang Discusses the Root Cause of Qin's Disease* describes the whole process of Dr. Zhang's medical treatment of Qin Keqing in detail. Taking Qin Keqing medical case as an example, this paper compares and analyzes the similarities and differences between the translation by Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang (abbr. the Yangs' translation) and the translation by David Hawkes and John Minford of traditional Chinese medicine culture. And the paper explores the efforts made by the translators in preserving the traditional culture of the source language and the cultural connotation of traditional Chinese medicine and taking into account the acceptance of the target readers, aiming to enrich the translation studies of the these two English versions of *Hong Lou Meng* and promote the spread of traditional Chinese medicine culture at home and abroad. The comparative study on the two English versions finds out that the Yangs tend to use foreignization to preserve the traditional Chinese medicine culture, while Hawkes is inclined to adopt domestication to better fit the culture of the target language and help the target readers understand the source text well.

Keywords

Hong Lou Meng, Translation of Traditional Chinese Medicine Culture, The Yangs' Translation, The English Version by David Hawkes and John Minford

1. Introduction

As one of the four great masterpieces of Chinese literature, *Hong Lou Meng*, written by Cao Xueqin in the Qing Dynasty, covers a wide range of fields such as poetry, garden architecture, clothing and food, demonstrating a vivid Chinese feudal society. It is a book with profound ideological content and outstanding artistic achievements. The traditional Chinese medicine culture runs through the whole book, containing much Chinese cultural connotation and being a great challenge in the process of translating and spreading the Chinese culture to the western countries. There are more than 290 descriptions of medical and health knowledge, 161 medical terms, 114 cases, 13 medical records, 45 prescriptions and 125 kinds of Chinese medicinal in the book (Hu, Hu, & Sun, 2006). Chapter Ten *Dr. Zhang Discusses the Root Cause of Qin's Disease* narrates that Dr. Zhang is invited to diagnose Qin Keqing. He performs a pulse palpation on Qin Keqing, points out the etiology and pathogenesis of her disease, analyzes the symptoms and formulates the prescription and prognosis. Qin Keqing medical case is the first complete and specific medical case mentioned in the book, which has certain value in traditional Chinese medicine research and translation research. In addition, Dr. Zhang's analysis of Qin's disease also reveals Qin's character, psychological activities and fate.

Since Chapter Ten in the English version by David Hawkes and John Minford is rendered by Hawkes, the paper uses "Hawkes' translation" for short to refer to this part. The paper takes Qin's medical case as an example, comparing and analyzing the similarities and differences between the Yangs' translation and Hawkes' translation of traditional Chinese medicine culture from four aspects: diagnosis, etiology and pathogenesis, symptoms as well as prescription and prognosis.

2. Foreignization and Domestication

Influenced by the theory of German philosopher Schleiermacher, Lawrence Venuti proposes foreignization and domestication. According to *Dictionary of Translation Studies* (Shuttleworth & Cowie, 2014), foreignization refers to the type of translation in which a target text is produced which deliberately breaks target conventions by retaining something of the foreignness of the original and domestication means a transparent, fluent style is adopted in order to minimize the strangeness of the foreign text for target text readers. Foreignization and domestication are about culture transformation in the process of translating, and foreignization is source language culture oriented while domestication is target language culture oriented (Xu & Zhang, 2002).

Under the foreignization strategy, the translation should try to adapt to the culture of the source language and the writing style of the original author. The translator introduces the language structures and expressions of the source language into the target language, enriches the expressions of the target language, helps the target language readers to enjoy the exotic customs and promotes the cultural exchanges among different nations. However, the translation under the

guidance of foreignization may be stiff, affecting the reading flow and acceptance of the source text by the target language readers. The domestication strategy advocates that the translation should adapt to the culture of the target language as much as possible and strive to remove the language and cultural barriers for the target readers, taking into account the acceptance of the target readers. The disadvantage of domestication lies in the loss of the cultural connotation of the source language and the lack of opportunities for target readers to understand and learn different languages and cultures, which is not conducive to cultural communication.

Xiong Bing (2003) states that “the translator is not only responsible for conveying linguistic information, but also the cultural information. Translation should not only be regarded as the conversion of different languages, but also as the communication among different cultures.” The translation of traditional Chinese medicine culture involves both Chinese culture and western culture. It is necessary to take into account the retention of the original information in the source text and the acceptance of traditional Chinese medicine culture by the target readers. The proper use of foreignization and domestication in translation can help the target readers understand the original text and spread the traditional Chinese medicine culture to the world.

3. A Comparative Study on the Translations of Qin Keqing Medical Case

Qin Keqing medical case mainly consists of four parts, namely, diagnosis, etiology and pathogenesis of disease, symptoms, and prescription and prognosis. This chapter conducts a comparative study on the translation of Qin Keqing medical case from these four aspects respectively.

3.1. Comparative Study on the Translation of Diagnosis

The four diagnostic methods in traditional Chinese medicine are “inspection” (World Health Organization, 2022: p. 50), “auscultation and olfaction” (ibid: 66), “inquiry” (WHO, 2022: p. 68) and “palpation” (ibid: 83). The inspection is mainly to observe the patient’s face, expression, tongue coating and so on. Auscultation refers to listening to the patient’s voice, coughing, breathing and so on. Olfaction is smelling the patient’s body odour and the room, including the smell of the patient’s halitosis, body odor, excrement odor, etc. Inquiry refers to the doctor asking patients about the occurrence and development of the disease, current symptoms, treatment process. Palpation mainly refers to pulse diagnosis. Doctors can diagnose disease through the pulse manifestation of patients.

According to the source text, Dr. Zhang enters Qin’s bedroom and sees her, indicating that the inspection is done. As for the auscultation and olfaction, it is obvious that Dr. Zhang can listen to Qin’s voice and smell the odor of her body and her room. However, there is no description of this part of the diagnosis, so the paper does not analyze the auscultation and olfaction. Jia Rong wants to tell

Dr. Zhang the development of his wife's illness before diagnosis, but is politely refused by Dr. Zhang, who proposes to take pulse diagnosis first, and then combines the results of pulse diagnosis with the condition to formulate a prescription for Qin Keqing. It can be seen that Dr. Zhang mainly uses the method of pulse diagnosis, taking inquiry as the method to verify his pulse diagnosis results. Therefore, concerning diagnostics of Chinese medicine, the original author Cao Xueqin mainly describes the process of palpation, namely, pulse diagnosis.

Example 1:

ST: 左寸沉数, 左关沉伏; 右寸细而无力, 右关虚而无神。(Cao & Gao, 2005: p. 147)

Yangs' version: "Your honourable wife's left distal pulse is deep and agitated, the median pulse deep and faint," replied the doctor. "The right distal pulse is faint and feeble, the median pulse slight and lacking in energy." (Cao & Gao, 1994: p. 200)

Hawkes' version: "Well, the lower left distal pulse is rapid and the lower left median pulse is strong and full," said the doctor. "On the right side, the distal pulse is thin and lacks strength and the median pulse is faint and lacks vitality." (Cao, 1973: p. 181)

The distal pulse is located at the distal end of the lower part of the upper limb, and the median pulse is located between the distal end and the proximal end. According to the location of the "寸脉" (*cun mai*) and "关脉" (*guan mai*) from the perspective of anatomy, the Yangs and Hawkes both use domestication and translate "寸脉" (*cun mai*) and "关脉" (*guan mai*) as "distal pulse" and "median pulse", which can help the target readers know the specific locations of these two pulses. The difference lies in the translation of "左寸" (*zuo cun*) and "左关" (*zuo guan*). Hawkes' versions are "lower left distal pulse" and "lower left median pulse". However, he does not use "lower" when translating "右寸" (*you cun*) and "右关" (*you guan*). Actually, the locations of the distal pulse and the median pulse in the left hand and the right hand are symmetrical.

With the spread of the traditional Chinese medicine culture overseas, many traditional Chinese medicine terms have conventional expressions which are widely accepted by foreign readers. "沉" (*chen*), "数" (*shu*), "伏" (*fu*), "细" (*xi*), "虚" (*xu*) are names of the pulse condition. According to WHO (2022), these pulses are rendered as "deep pulse", "rapid pulse", "hidden pulse", "thin pulse" and "deficient pulse" respectively.

As to the description of "沉数", the Yangs' rendition is "deep and agitated" and Hawkes' rendition is "rapid". These two translations help the target readers understand the characteristics of these pulses. As for "沉伏", the Yangs use foreignization and translate this word as "deep and faint", conveying the original meaning of these two pulses. Hawkes adopts domestication and render this pulse as "strong and full" to help the target readers better understand the source text.

"细脉" means that the pulse is thin as a thread but is clear and "虚脉" means that the pulse is vacuous when pressed (Wang, 2012). The Yangs and Hawkes

use domestication to translate these two pulses, showing the characteristics of them to help the English readers get the meaning of the original text. “无神” means that the strength of the pulse and the pulse rate are not normal. Here “神” does not refer to “vitality” or “energy” simply. The Yangs and Hawkes adopt domestication and translate “无神” as “slight and lacking energy” and “faint and lacks vitality” respectively, helping the target readers comprehend the abstract concept “神” in traditional Chinese medicine culture.

Example 2:

ST: 其左寸沉数者，乃心气虚而生火；左关沉伏者，乃肝家气滞血亏。右寸细而无力者，乃肺经气分太虚；右关濡而无神者，乃脾土被肝木克制。(Cao & Gao, 2005: p. 147)

Yangs' version: A deep and agitated left distal pulse indicates a febrile condition arising from the weak action of the heart; the deep and faint median pulse is due to anemia caused by a sluggish liver. A faint and feeble distal pulse on the right wrist comes of debility of the lungs; a slight and listless median pulse indicates a wood element in the liver too strong for the earth element in the spleen. (Cao & Gao, 1994: p. 200)

Hawkes' version: Now, a rapid lower left-hand distal pulse means that a malfunction of the controlling humour of the heart is causing it to generate too much fire; and the strong lower median pulse means that the liver's humour is blocked, giving rise to a deficiency of blood. A thin, weak distal pulse on the right side indicates a gross deficiency of humour in the lungs; and a faint right median pulse lacking in vitality shows that the earth of the spleen is being subdued by the woody element of the liver. (Cao, 1973: p. 181)

The difficult point in translating the source text is how to render “气” (*qi*), “虚” (*xu*), “滞” (*zhi*) and “亏” (*kui*) these key words. “气” (*qi*) has a conventional translation “*qi*” which can be understood by the English readers. “虚” (*xu*) and “亏” (*kui*) means “deficiency”, and “滞” (*zhi*) refers to “stagnation” in traditional Chinese medicine. Thus, “心气虚” can be rendered as “heart *qi* deficiency”, “肝家气滞血亏” can be understood as “liver *qi* stagnation and liver blood deficiency” and “肺经气分太虚” can be translated as “lung *qi* deficiency”.

Hawkes translates “气” (*qi*) as “humour”. “Humour” refers to the liquid in a person's body. Humorism comes from ancient Greek medical theory. According to the humorism, the human body is made up of four humours, namely, blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile. “*Qi*” is the core concept in traditional Chinese medicine originating from Taoism. As the application of Taoist *qi* concept in medical field, *qi* refers to the subtle substances that constitute human bodies and maintain human life activities (Wang & Ye, 2014). Hawkes tries to use domestication and help the target readers comprehend “气” (*qi*) well, but “humour” and “*qi*” are not completely the same concept. Therefore, Hawkes' translation may well be accepted by the English readers but contains little traditional Chinese medicine culture.

As for “虚” (*xu*), the Yangs render it as “weak action” and “debility” and

Hawkes renders it as “malfunction” and “deficiency”. The Yangs understand “虚” by its literal meaning. Actually, the meaning of “虚” (*xu*) in “心气虚” and “肺经气分太虚” is “deficiency”. “Malfunction” means a failure to function normally, which is not in line with the meaning of “虚” (*xu*). The Yangs and Hawkes use domestication and tend to render this concept of the traditional Chinese medicine culture with easy-to-understand words. “Anemia” refers to “a deficiency of red blood cells”. This word is usually used in Western medicine and its meaning is not well in line with “血亏”, which means “a deficiency of blood” and is usually used in traditional Chinese medicine. The Yangs adopt domestication and try to explain the meaning of “血亏” by using the word that is more familiar to the target readers, causing the loss of the cultural connotation of traditional Chinese medicine.

The basic principles of traditional Chinese medicine are mainly based on the *yin-yang* theory, five phase theory and essential *qi* theory (Wu, 1995). Based on the characteristics of wood, fire, earth, metal and water and their laws of movement and change, the five phase theory is a worldview and methodology to understand and explain the world (Yang, 2014). According to the five phase theory, *wood* corresponds to the liver, *fire* corresponds to the heart, *earth* corresponds to the spleen, *metal* corresponds to the lung and *water* corresponds to the kidney. The five phase theory is deeply related to the Chinese philosophy and traditional Chinese medicine, causing cultural barriers in the process of translation. The Yangs render “脾土” as “the earth element in the spleen” and Hawkes translates it as “the earth of the spleen”. “肝木” is rendered as “the wood element in the liver” by the Yangs and “the woody element of the liver” by Hawkes. The Yangs and Hawkes both use foreignization and strive to show the cultural connotation of the traditional Chinese medicine to the target readers. But for the target language readers who are not familiar with the five phase theory and the correspondence between the five substances and the five organs of human, it is difficult to understand the meaning of the source text.

3.2. Comparative Study on the Translation of the Etiology and Pathogenesis of the Disease

Etiology refers to the cause of a disease, and pathogenesis refers to the origination and development of a disease. From the perspective of traditional Chinese medicine culture, pathogenesis is the mechanism based on the *yin-yang* theory, five phase theory, *qi*, blood, fluid and humor and etiology, and discusses the occurrence, development, change and result of diseases, including the cause, nature location and tendency of a disease. Traditional Chinese medicine culture classifies the cause of disease into three categories, namely, internal etiological factors, external etiological factors and neither internal nor external etiological factors. Generally, the internal damage, in other words, the seven emotions are the internal etiological factors. Seven emotions refer to joy, anger, anxiety, thought, sorrow, fear, fright. In cases where the seven emotions are too exces-

sive, persistent, or out of balance, they can cause dysfunction of the *qi* and blood in the viscera and bowels and then lead to illness.

3.2.1. Comparative Study on the Translation of the Etiology of the Disease

After the pulse diagnosis, Dr. Zhang points out that the etiology of Qin's disease is excessive thinking.

Example 3:

ST: 大奶奶是个心性高强聪明不过的人；聪明忒过，则不如意事常有；不如意事常有，则思虑太过。(Cao & Gao, 2005: p. 148)

Yangs' version: Judging by her pulse, your lady is highly strung and unusually intelligent. Because of this she is easily upset and prone to worry... (Cao & Gao, 1994: p. 201)

Hawkes' version: From my reading of her pulse, I should expect your mistress to be a very highly strung, sensitive young woman. Sometimes, when people are over-sensitive, they find a good deal that is upsetting in what goes on around them; and of course, if things are upsetting them, they will tend to worry a lot. (Cao, 1973: p. 182)

Qin's disease is related to her personality to a certain extent. According to Cao's narrations, we know that Qin Keqing is gentle, kind, sincere in her treatment of others and calm in her behavior, thus being praised by the Lady Dowager, Madam You and Jia Zhen. After her death, the seniors, the juniors and servants in the Ning Mansion and the Rong Mansion are immersed in deep sorrow. However, the novel also shows the defects of Qin Keqing's character through some plots and dialogues: she is not broad-minded and prone to think too much (Luo, 2023). Dr. Zhang points out that the cause of Qin's disease is overthinking and excessive anxiety.

The Yangs' rendition is relatively short and concise than Hawkes'. The Yangs and Hawkes both render “心性高强” as “strung”. According to *English-Chinese Dictionary* by Lu Gusun, “strung” means nervous and excitable. “心性高强” means that Qin Keqing is ambitious and she strives to be considerate and excellent in dealing with others. The meaning of “strung” does not equal to the original meaning and the target readers will misunderstand the personality of Qin Keqing and then can not comprehend the etiology of her disease well.

When analyzing the cause of Qin's disease, Dr. Zhang points out that Qin Keqing “聪明不过”, which does not only mean that she is a very intelligent person. Qin Keqing is praised and loved by the elders, peers and servants in the Ning Mansion and the Rong Mansion though her life is short. The living in the Ning Mansion and the Rong Mansion is not simple, and it is more difficult to win so much admiration and love from the people in these two mansions. Therefore, Qin Keqing has more than just intelligence and “聪明” said by Dr. Zhang indicates that she also has a high emotional quotient or she is too clever and sophisticated.

In general, “聪明” means that a person is good at learning, understanding and

thinking in a logical way, which can be rendered as “intelligent”, “smart”, “clever”. But in Chinese, “聪明” has different meanings in various contexts. In other words, “聪明” does not simply mean that a person is smart in certain context. The Yangs translate “聪明” as “intelligent” and Hawkes translates it as “sensitive”. The Yangs use literal translation and Hawkes adopts free translation, striving to convey the meaning of “聪明” and help the target readers understand the character of Qin keqing.

3.2.2. Comparative Study on the Translation of the Pathogenesis of the Disease

The ancient people believed that excessive thinking not only affects mind, but also affects spleen *qi* (Yin, 1984). Qin keqing thinks too much and causes damage to her liver, spleen and heart, which is the pathogenesis of her disease.

Example 4:

ST: 此病是忧虑伤脾，肝木忒旺，经血所以不能按时而至。(Cao & Gao, 2005: p. 148)

Yangs’ version: Because of this she is easily upset and prone to worry, which has affected her spleen. The element of wood in the liver has produced hot humours which have upset her menstruation. (Cao & Gao, 1994: p. 201)

Hawkes’ version: This illness has been caused by too much worry affecting the spleen and causing an excess of wood in the liver, with the result that the menstrual blood has been prevented from flowing at the proper times. (Cao, 1973: pp. 182-183)

According to the five phase theory, *wood* corresponds to the liver. “肝木忒旺” means the effulgent liver *fire* caused by liver *qi* depression (Shang, 2021). The Yangs and Hawkes adopt foreignization to translate the word “肝木” to preserve the original connotation. The Yangs add the word “element” to help the target readers understand the traditional Chinese medicine culture easier.

3.3. Comparative Study on the Translation of Symptoms

On the basis of Qin’s pulse diagnosis, the etiology and the pathogenesis of her disease, Dr. Zhang analyzes her symptoms in detail. There are two relevant descriptions in the source text.

Example 5:

ST: 心气虚而生火者，应现经期不调，夜间不寐。肝家血亏气滞者，必然肋下疼胀，月信过期，心中发热。肺经气分太虚者，头目不时眩晕，寅卯间必然自汗，如坐舟中。脾土被肝木克制者，必然不思饮食，精神倦怠，四肢酸软。(Cao & Gao, 2005: p. 147)

Yangs’ version: The fire produced by the weak action of the heart results in irregular menses and insomnia. A deficiency of blood and sluggish condition of the liver produce pain in the ribs, delayed menses and heartburn. Debility of the lungs leads to giddiness, perspiration in the early hours of the morning, and a feeling like sea-sickness. And the predominance of the wood element in the liver over the earth element in the spleen causes loss of appetite, general lassitude and

soreness of the limbs. (Cao & Gao, 1994: p. 200)

Hawkes' version: If the heart is generating fire, the symptoms should be irregularity of the menses and insomnia. A deficiency of blood and blockage of humour in the liver would result in pain and congestion under the ribs, delay of the menses beyond their term, and burning sensations in the heart. A deficiency of humour in the lungs would give rise to sudden attacks of giddiness, sweating at five or six in the morning, and a sinking feeling rather like the feeling you get in a pitching boat. And if the earth of the spleen is being subdued by the wood of the liver, she would undoubtedly experience loss of appetite, lassitude, and general enfeeblement of the whole body. (Cao, 1973: pp. 181-182)

“肋下疼胀” is caused by *qi* movement stagnation and is rendered as “pain and congestion under the ribs” by Hawkes. The word “congestion” means “the state of part of the body being blocked with blood or mucus”. By using this word, Hawkes' tries to use domestication translation to explain the meaning of “胀”. “月信过期” means “prolonged menstruation” (Shang, 2021). The Yangs and Hawkes use literal translation and render this word as “delayed menses” and “delay of menses” respectively. According to WHO (2009), “自汗” is rendered as “spontaneous sweating”. The Yangs translate “自汗” as “perspiration” and Hawkes translates it as “sweat”. Their renditions express the meaning of the source text and can be accepted by the target readers.

Example 6:

ST: 这如今明显出一个水亏木旺的症候来。 (Cao & Gao, 2005: p. 148)

Yangs' version: This is clearly a case of enervation caused by too little water and too much wood. (Cao & Gao, 1994: p. 201)

Hawkes' version: What we have now, I am afraid, is an advanced case of dehydration. (Cao, 1973: p. 183)

According to the five phase theory, *water* corresponds to the kidney and *wood* corresponds to the liver. “水亏木旺” refers to the deficiency of kidney and the effulgent liver *fire* (Feng & Li, 1990). The Yangs adopt the foreignization strategy and literal translation, translating “水亏木旺” as “too much water and too much wood” and tending to preserve the original connotation of the traditional Chinese medicine culture. Hawkes uses domestication and renders this word as “an advanced case of dehydration”, which means “a severe dehydration symptom”. He strives to help the target readers have a better comprehension of the source text by using the concept that they are familiar with, but traditional Chinese medicine and Western medicine are two different systems, in which “水亏木旺” and “dehydration” are two distinct symptoms. Therefore, the target readers can get the meaning of Hawkes' translation, but they may lose the opportunity to know the culture connotation of the source text.

3.4. Comparative Study on the Translations of Prescription and Prognosis

3.4.1. Comparative Study on the Translations of Prescription

For Qin Keqing's disease, Dr. Zhang formulates a prescription called “益气养荣

补脾和肝汤”。The comparative study on the translation of prescription includes two parts: the translation of its name and the translation of two adjuvants.

Example 7:

ST: 益气养荣补脾和肝汤 (Cao & Gao, 2005: p. 149)

Yang's version: DECOCTION TO IMPROVE THE RESPIRATION, FORTIFY THE BLOOD AND TRANQUILIZE THE LIVER (Cao & Gao, 1994: p. 202)

Hawkes version: For a decoction to increase the breath, nourish the heart, fortify the spleen and clam the liver (Cao, 1973: p. 183)

The name of the prescription can be divided into five parts and analyzed respectively. The five parts are “益气”, “养荣”, “补脾”, “和肝” and “汤”. “益气” refers to replenishing the vital essence in traditional Chinese medicine. The Yangs translate this word as “improve the respiration” and Hawkes renders this word as “increase the breath”. They adopt domestication and try to help the target readers have a better understanding of the original text. “养荣” means “tonify *yin* blood”. The Yangs’ translation is “fortify the blood”, which is close to the original meaning. Hawkes’ translation is “nourish the heart”, which is easily accepted by the English readers, but does not convey the underlying meaning of the traditional Chinese medicine culture. “补脾” refers to “strengthen the spleen”. Hawkes renders this word as “fortify the spleen”, which expresses the real meaning of the original text. “和肝” means “nourish *yin* and soothe liver”. The Yangs’ translation is “tranquilize the liver” and Hawkes’ translation is “calm the liver”. They adopt domestication and these two translations are easy for the target readers to understand, but part of the connotation of the traditional Chinese medicine culture is lost. The Yangs and Hawkes render “汤” as “decoction”, which is consistent with the meaning of “汤” in traditional Chinese medicine.

There are two adjuvants in the prescription: “建莲子七粒去心” and “红枣二枚”.

Example 8:

ST: 建莲子七粒去心 (Cao & Gao, 2005: p. 149)

Yang's version: seven Fujian lotus-seeds with the pits extracted (Cao & Gao, 1994: p. 202)

Hawkes' version: excoriate and remove pits from 7 lotus-seeds (Cao, 1973: p. 183)

Lotus seeds without their skins removed are called red lotus seeds, and those with their skins rubbed off are called white lotus seeds, which are also known as “建莲子” because they are mainly produced in Fujian Province. The Yangs’ version indicates the locality of growth of the lotus seeds and offers more information of the medicinal material to the target readers, promoting the spreading of the traditional Chinese medicine culture to the world.

Example 9:

ST: 红枣二枚 (Cao & Gao, 2005: p. 149)

Yang's version: two large red dates (Cao & Gao, 1994: p. 202)

Hawkes' version: Item 2 large jujubes (Cao, 1973: p. 183)

“红枣” is also called “大枣” or “小枣” (Xu & Wang, 2013). Here “大” is a part of the name rather than an adjective. The Yangs and Hawkes add “large” to their translations to help the English readers understand the adjuvant well.

3.4.2. Comparative Study on the Translation of Prognosis

In the original text, the descriptions of prognosis of Qin’s disease have two parts.

Example 10:

ST: 依在我看来，这病尚有三分治得。吃了我的药看，若是夜里睡的着觉，那时又添了二分拿手了。(Cao & Gao, 2005: p. 148)

Yangs’ version: I would rate her chances of recovery at three out of ten. If she sleeps well tonight after taking my medicine, that will about double her chances. (Cao & Gao, 1994: p. 201)

Hawkes’ version: I would say that with proper treatment she has about a one in three chance of recovery. We shall just have to see how she responds to my medicine. If, after taking it, she can get a good night’s sleep, her chances will be distinctly better: say fifty-fifty. (Cao, 1973: p. 182)

“分” is a word used by the Chinese people to describe chance. The Yangs render “三分” as “three out of ten”, and Hawkes renders this word as “one in three”. These two versions are in line with the original meaning and can be understood by the target readers. If Qin Keqing can fall asleep at nights after taking the medicine, then the chance of recovery will be twenty percent higher, which means fifty percent overall. “又添了二分拿手” is translated as “double her chances” by the Yangs, which means that the chance of recovery of Qin’s disease is sixty percent overall. Hawkes translates “又添了二分拿手” as “fifty-fifty”, namely, about fifty percent, which is in line with the original meaning.

Example 11:

ST: 人病到这个地位，非一朝一夕的症候，吃了这药也要看医缘了。依小弟看来，今年一冬是不相干的。总是过了春分，就可望痊愈了。(Cao & Gao, 2005: p. 149)

Yangs’ version: A man of your intelligence must know that at this stage it is impossible to predict how long the illness may last. We must see how she responds to this treatment. In my humble opinion, there is no danger this winter and if she gets through the spring equinox we may expect a cure. (Cao & Gao, 1994: p. 202)

Hawkes’ version: When an illness has reached this stage, it is not going to be cured in an afternoon. We must see how she responds to medication. As I see it, there is no real danger this winter. I should say that if she can get past the spring equinox, you could look forward to a complete recovery. (Cao, 1973: p. 184)

Like “缘” or “缘分” often said by the Chinese people, “医缘” is a word which contains much Chinese culture and has no equivalent in English, thus the word can not be easily explained in English. From Dr. Zhang’s diagnosis, we know that Qin’s disease is related to her character and emotion. The disease at the physical level can be cured by medication while the recovery of the “disease” at the mental level is dependent on the patient, which is the general meaning of “医

缘” (Wang & Zhai, 2017). The Yangs and Hawkes use free translation and render this word as “how she responds to this treatment” and “how she responds to medication” respectively. These two English versions briefly express the meaning of “医缘” and are easily understood and accepted by the target readers.

4. Conclusion

This paper compares the translation of traditional Chinese medicine culture in Qin Keqing medical case by the Yangs and Hawkes from four aspects of diagnosis, etiology and pathogenesis, symptoms as well as prescription and prognosis. As for the eleven examples in this paper, after analyzing the Yangs’ English version and Hawkes’ English version, the author finds that the Yangs use domestication for eight times and use foreignization for four times. Hawkes adopts domestication for eleven times and adopts foreignization for two times. On the whole, the Yangs tend to adopt foreignization strategy to preserve the cultural connotation of the traditional Chinese medicine, and Hawkes inclines to use domestication strategy to better fit the culture of the target language and help the target readers better understand the source text and the culture of the source language.

With many terms, abstract concepts and Chinese philosophy, traditional Chinese medicine is rich in cultural connotation and constantly enriches and develops itself in practice, causing difficulties and cultural barriers to translators at home and abroad in understanding and translating. The English versions by the Yangs and Hawkes are by far the most influential and widely accepted by readers. These two English versions offer an opportunity for the foreign readers to learn traditional Chinese medicine culture and make great contributions to promoting the spread of the excellent Chinese culture and expanding its influence in the world. In the future, the translation of works related to Chinese medicine should attach great importance in retaining original traditional Chinese medicine culture and conveying the cultural connotation of the source language to the target text readers on the basis of translating the source text accurately. By this way, the traditional Chinese medicine culture with its unique charm will be spread to the entire world and achieve a better development.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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