

中文摘要

作为一位享誉世界的中国作家，老舍是二十世纪中国现代文学的杰出代表。幽默的讽刺、生动的描写和浓郁的地方色彩使老舍作品脍炙人口，并被翻译成 24 种语言，仅《骆驼祥子》一书便有 16 种语言的译本。由于老舍在中国文学史上的特殊地位，对其人和作品的研究方兴未艾；相对而言，对其作品译作的研究则略显薄弱。本文以奈达的翻译理论为依据，对《骆驼祥子》的施晓菁译本进行了评析。一方面，用奈达译论对施译本进行比较全面的评析，从而分析译者的翻译策略；另一方面，也通过施译本对奈达译论的有效性进行一定程度的检验。希望籍此在老舍作品译作的研究领域尽一份薄力，并为翻译具有浓郁地方色彩的文学作品提供借鉴。

奈达的翻译理论总体而言可以分为语言学相关理论和文化相关理论。本文从奈达对翻译的两个定义出发，分别从语言学和文化两个角度对《骆驼祥子》施译本进行评析。论文共分为五章：

第一章从翻译的过程引出奈达从语言学角度和文化角度对翻译所作的两个定义。通过这两个定义，分别概述了奈达在语言学方面和文化方面进行的翻译研究。

第二章对老舍的生平、作品及其英译进行了简要的介绍，并总体概括了《骆驼祥子》施译本的翻译策略与得失。

第三章从语言学角度出发对《骆驼祥子》施译本进行评析。在语言研究中，意义具有最重要的地位；离开了意义，翻译也就不能称之为翻译。而意义又大致可分为指示意义和联想意义，对这两种意义应采取不同的翻译策略。其次，风格是语言不可分割的一部分。由于语言的差异性，译作的风格不可能与原作完全对等，但应在最大程度上追求对等。施译本在意义和风格的传递方面与奈达理论不谋而合。

第四章从文化角度对译本进行评析。由于汉英两种文化的极大差异，文化成分的翻译是汉译英的最大难点，过载翻译、欠额翻译和误译往往在这个环节产生。施译本正是由于对文化成分的把握有所欠缺，才出现了一些问题。

第五章为结论部分。首先运用奈达理论对施译本的优缺点进行了总结，对其翻译策略进行了概括，指出不同的翻译策略适用于不同的情况，只有具体情况具体分析才能产生好的译文。其次对奈达译论在翻译具有浓郁地方色彩的文学作品时的适用性进行了分析，指出奈达译论的优点及其存在的不足之处，特别是在“读者反应”方面的欠缺。

通过分析，本文得出如下结论：1、施晓菁译《骆驼祥子》是一个比较成功的译本。从语言角度讲，译本采用了意义第一、风格第二的翻译策略，从而比较忠实地传递了原文中的意义和风格。从文化角度讲，译本在强调可读性的同时尽可能保留原文中的文化因素，对传播中华民族文化和丰富世界文化遗产作出了贡献。2、奈达理论尽管有其不足之处，但其从语言和文化两个角度对翻译的界定对于翻译具有浓郁地方色彩的文学作品具有相当大的指导作用。但奈达理论并不是万能的，它所提供的应该说是指导原则；在涉及具体翻译策略时，可以兼收并蓄，借鉴霍恩比提出的“综合法”思路进行具体操作。

关键词：《骆驼祥子》，翻译，奈达译论

Abstract

As an indigenous writer of world fame, Lao She is an outstanding representative of modern Chinese literature in the 20th century. His works are best known for the humor and satire in them, and his writing style wins universal praise for its vivid description and strong local color. Altogether, Lao She's works have been translated into twenty-four languages, with *Luotuo Xiangzi* into sixteen. Due to the special status of Lao She in Chinese literature, researches on him and his works have been on the rise ever since China's reform and opening up. Regrettably, researches on the translations of his works are comparatively rare. Based on such a situation, this thesis is to analyze Shi Xiaojing's translation of *Luotuo Xiangzi* by employing Nida's translation theories as its theoretical basis. On one hand, a comprehensive analysis of Shi's translation is to be made and the strategies that the translator resorts to will be reviewed. On the other hand, the applicability of Nida's translation theories to literary works with local flavor would also be evaluated in particular.

Eugene Nida expounds his translation theories from two aspects, namely, the linguistic aspect and the cultural aspect. This thesis analyzes Shi's translation from both aspects in five chapters.

The first chapter introduces two definitions of translation given by Nida, through which his translation theories on the linguistic aspect and the cultural aspect are discussed.

The second chapter gives a brief introduction to Lao She's life experience, works, and their translations. A general survey of the features in Shi's version is also previewed in this chapter.

Chapter 3 discusses Shi's translation from the aspect of linguistics. In the first place, meaning holds a fundamental role in any translation. Any translation can not be regarded as

being adequate without the support of meaning. According to Nida, meaning can be roughly divided into denotative meaning and associative meaning, and different translation strategies should be applied in translating different meanings. In the second place, style is an indispensable factor to be considered in translation. Due to the divergence between languages, the style of the translated version could never be absolutely equivalent to the original. Therefore, equivalence to the largest extent should be pursued. Examined from the aspect of meaning and style transfer, Shi's translation coincides with Nida's translation theories.

The fourth chapter discusses Shi's translation from the cultural aspect. Owing largely to the huge gap between Chinese and English cultures, the translation of cultural elements can never be easy to handle in Chinese-English translation. Overtranslation, undertranslation and mistranslation are most likely to occur in this very process. Some misunderstandings towards cultural elements lead to the problems identified in Shi's version.

The fifth chapter offers a conclusion. First, merits and demerits of Shi's version are discussed and the translation strategies are subsequently summarized. Due to the complexity of translation, a good translation can only be produced through a detailed analysis of "concrete" conditions. Second, the applicability of Nida's translation theories to literary works with strong local "flavor" is also evaluated, concluding that Nida's theories have been helpful but imperfect. Particularly, the effect of "reader's response" can hardly be achieved in real practice.

Through the research, some conclusions can be drawn. On one hand, Shi's *Camel Xiangzi* should be valued as a successful version. Linguistically, meaning takes precedence over style and thus the original meaning and style are faithfully transferred in Shi's version. Culturally, the cultural elements in the original text are retained to a large extent while readability is specially emphasized. Shi's translation thus contributes much to the transmission of Chinese culture and

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Preface

As a translation theorist enjoying worldwide reputation, Eugene Nida has been a figure of great significance in the development of translation studies. His translation theories cover almost every aspect of translation and have been proved effective in practice. Generally, Nida is best known for proposing the idea of “dynamic equivalence” or “functional equivalence”, which is essentially of the linguistic aspect of translation. According to Jin Di, it puts an end to the long-lasting debate between literal translation and free translation (Jin Di, 1998: 5). Because of the great influence of the functional equivalence theory, some other important ideas in Nida’s translation theories are somehow underestimated or even neglected. By a thorough examination of Nida’s theories, it is not difficult to find that Nida has been studying translation from both the linguistic and cultural aspects.

Lao She, one of China’s most prolific modern writers, is a pioneer of the “new literature” of the 20th century and is renowned globally among readers both in China and abroad. In addition to the household satire and frequent humor evident in his works, Lao She also impresses his readers with skillful writing characterized by three distinct features: conciseness, vivid description and local “flavor”.

Many of Lao She’s works have been translated into other languages. Thanks to those translations, Lao She’s works live on through time and extend their influence, which brought worldwide reputation to Lao She. In all of Lao She’s works, the novel *Luotuo Xiangzi* is probably his best known as it has been translated into sixteen languages (namely, English, German, Russian, French, Japanese, Polish, Kazakh, Korean, Czech, Latvian, Swedish, Thai,

Ukrainian, Hungarian, Rabbinic and Esperanto). There are currently three English versions of *Luotuo Xiangzi*, translated respectively by Evan King, M. James and Shi Xiaojing, each with its own unique advantages and disadvantages.

Among the three translators, Shi is of much difference to the other two. Being an interpreter to the United Nations, Shi has been frequently involved in the translation of the two languages. Being of mixed-blood, Shi has lived in both China and the USA for a considerable time, which enables her to understand the two cultures from her unique perspective. Viewed from every aspect, Shi has much more qualifications to become the translator of *Luotuo Xiangzi*. As is translated from a conspicuous work and by an outstanding translator, Shi's version of *Luotuo Xiangzi* inevitably attracts more interest and attention.

In the Chinese literature circle, much effort has been made to study Lao She and his works. However, still little research has been done on the translations of Lao She's works. In this respect, this thesis is to strengthen this "weak link" by analyzing Shi Xiaojing's translation of *Luotuo Xiangzi*, namely, *Camel Xiangzi* as its English title. During the process of this analysis, Nida's translation theories will be employed as its theoretical standing point.

The evaluation will be performed from both the linguistic aspect and the cultural one, as Nida's translation theories can be roughly divided into these two categories. On one hand, Shi's translation strategies will be analyzed with Nida's theories as theoretical basis. On the other hand, the applicability of Nida's theories to literary translation with strong local "flavor" will also be critically evaluated during the analyzing process.

Chapter One An Introduction to Nida's Translation Theories

Good theory is based on information gained from practice. Good practice is based on a carefully worked-out theory, and the two are interdependent (Larson, 1991:1).

1.1 Nida's Definition of Translation

What is translation? Translation theorists give various answers to this fundamental question from different research angles. In modern translation theories, the followings are generally acknowledged as mainstream ones and typically represent the ideas of different translation schools.

Catford defines translation from the linguistic angle as “the replacement of textual material in one language by equivalent textual material in another language” (Catford, 1965: 20).

An inter-semiotic definition of translation is offered by Jakobson. He sees translation in semiotic terms as “an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems”. The translation process, in his opinion, represents a substitution of “messages in one language not for separate code-units but for entire messages in some other language” (Jakobson, 1959: 66).

An interpretive definition of translation is raised by Seleskovitch and Lederer of the Paris School in their interpretive approach to translation. The theory is based on the distinction between linguistic meaning and non-verbal sense, where non-verbal sense is defined in relation to a translating process which consists of three stages: interpretation or exegesis of discourse, de-verbalization and reformulation. The interpretive approach is based on text linguistics and

discourse analysis, particularly when applied to written translation. They believe that translation is an art of re-expression based on writing techniques and a knowledge of two languages (Seleskovitch & Lederer, 1989: 106).

Wilss, one founder of the Skopos theory, views translation from the aspect of informatics as an interlingual communication, taking into account all linguistic and extra-linguistic factors (Wilss, 2001: 49).

In China, Lv Jun and Hou Xiangqun emphasize the communicative essence of translation by asserting that translation is a cross-cultural communication which involves information communion and exchange (Lv Jun & Hou Xiangqun, 2001: 2).

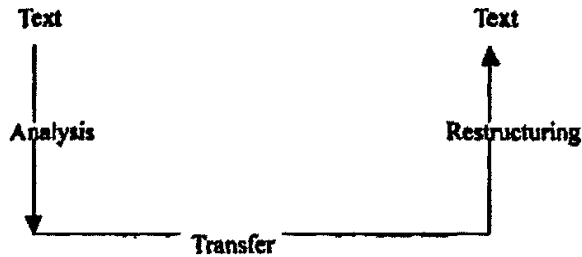
These definitions tell that it is virtually impossible to assign translation a fixed definition since “it is probably the most complex type of event in the history of the cosmos” (Richards, 1953: 247). Therefore, it is perhaps more appropriate to regard the existing ones as descriptions from different perspectives rather than as definitions.

Judged by the ideas of descriptive translation studies, it is the inborn nature, not an invariable definition that really counts in translation activities (Toury, 1995: 141). To fully understand the nature of translation, it is necessary to take a look at the process of translation first because the complexity of translation, to some extent, is determined by the process of translation.

According to Nida, the process of translation consists essentially of four steps: 1) analysis of the source text, 2) transfer from the source to the target language, 3) restructuring in the target language, and 4) testing of the translated text with persons who represent the intended audience (Nida, 1982: 23). The following chart gives a direct view to his opinion:

SOURCE LANGUAGE

RECEPTOR LANGUAGE



The first step is analysis, in which the surface structure (i.e. the message as given in source language) is analyzed in terms of the grammatical relationships and the meanings of words and combinations of words. That is to say, the analysis of the source text means a detailed comprehension of both the denotative and associative meanings of lexemes, syntax, and discourse structures. Since a majority of failures in translating seemingly result from an inadequate understanding of the text in the source language (Nida, 2001: preface), a full understanding of the source text is essentially the prerequisite of the whole translation process. Only with a full understanding of the source text can a translator fulfill the translation task successfully.

The second is transfer, in which the analyzed material is transferred into the mind of the translator from the source language to the target language. Nida points out that “after having completed the process of analysis...the transfer itself is the crucial and focal point of the translation process” (Nida, 1982: 99). In order to achieve “the closest equivalent” in the target language, semantic and structural adjustments should be made in the process of transfer. This step serves as an intermediate between the source language and the target language, and it also involves some personal qualities inherent in any specific translator.

The third one is restructuring, in which the transferred material is rebuilt in order to make the final message fully acceptable in the receptor language. Considering the objectives it involves, this step of restructuring seems somewhat similar to the first step of analysis. Nevertheless, the main difference is that restructuring refers to the organization of the lexical, syntactic and discourse features of the transferred text in the target language, so as to provide maximal comprehension and appreciation on the part of the intended audience (Nida, 1993: 147). Nida also argues that it is essential for translators to consider the problems in restructuring from three perspectives: (1) the varieties of language or of styles which may be desirable, (2) the essential components and characteristics of the various styles, and (3) the techniques which may be employed in producing the type of style desired.

The last one is testing. The testing of a translation is apparently different from the other three steps, but it is an essential procedure in that it exposes so quickly any problems which may exist in a translation. The most helpful diagnostic tests include the following: (1) oral reading by different persons, (2) close analysis of facial gestures of readers, (3) hearing a text and telling the contents to people who have not heard the text read, and (4) the cloze technique (Nida, 1993: 148).

Based on his analysis of the translation process, Nida proposed two descriptions of translation, with the first one definitely from the linguistic aspect:

“Translation consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalence of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style” (Nida, 1982: 12).

And the other one is of cultural nature: “it is a translation in which the content of the message is changed to conform to the receptor culture in some way, and/or in which information

is introduced which is not linguistically implicit in the original.” (Nida, 1982: 205)

Nida’s two descriptions of translation enlighten us that translation is intended not only for transferring the linguistic meaning of the source text, but also for representing the cultural elements of the source text. In the process of translation, we transfer not only the informational content, but also the culture elements contained in the source language. Either the meaning or the cultural implication of the original should be re-expressed in forms that are consistent with the language habits of the intended readers.

As is discussed, an ideal translation should take into consideration both the linguistic meaning and the cultural implication of the original text. The purpose of emphasizing both aspects is to realize the effect that an intended reader who is completely unfamiliar with the source text will readily understand the target text.

1.2 Functional Equivalence

The functional equivalence theory is considered to be the greatest contribution by Nida in the field of translation studies. Strictly speaking, it is not a single person’s achievement as it is concluded from the linguistic translation theories proposed and developed by several other scholars. The concept of equivalence is first raised by Fedorov, a USSR scholar. The *Essentials of Translation Theories* of his concerning equivalent translation, published in 1953, proposes two basic principles of translation. First, translation is a process during which the translator tries to transfer exactly all the information of the source text to the readers who do not know the source language. Therefore, fidelity to the source text is the most basic requirement. Second, translation is to exactly and completely express both content and form of the source text in the target language. Moreover, the translation must be natural and the language used must tally with the

target language criteria. That is to say, the language and style of the target text should be equivalent to that of the source text. It means that the translation must be accepted by the receptor; otherwise, the translation can not be deemed to be a successful one (quoted in Shen Suru, 1998: 124). Likewise, Catford, Wilss and some other scholars have also expressed their opinions towards the principle of “equivalence” in translation.

Based on these discussions, Nida goes a step further in the field of equivalent translation. He is the first individual who proposes the notion of “dynamic equivalence”. Firstly, he initiates a new concept of translating in which he points out that the new focus in translating “has shifted from the form of the message to the response of the receptor, which must be then compared with the way in which the original receptors presumably reacted to the message when it was given in its original setting” (Nida, 1982: 1). Secondly, he argues that “the relation of target language receptors to the target language text should be roughly equivalent to the relationship between the original receptors and the original text. It is this that provides the basis for the dynamic equivalence” (Jin Di & Nida, 1984: 85).

In dynamic equivalent translation, the translator focuses on the original content and style rather than the linguistic structure of the source text. According to Nida’s definition, dynamic equivalent translation differs from “free translation” in that the translator must try his best to reproduce the style of the source text in various linguistic structures instead of recreating the target text without any limitation as what the translator does in free translation. This theoretical innovation helps liberate translators from the barrier of the original form by shifting the focus of translation studies to the process and results of translating.

Later, the term “dynamic equivalence” is replaced by “functional equivalence” to avoid misunderstanding, but the two are essentially the same. In his *Language, Culture and Translating*,

Nida restated his understanding of functional equivalence, “translating means communicating, and this process depends on what is received by persons hearing or reading a translation. Judging the validity of a translation can not stop with a comparison of corresponding lexical meanings, grammatical classes, and rhetorical devices. What is important is the extent to which receptors correctly understand and appreciate the translated text. Accordingly, it is essential that functional equivalence be stated primarily in terms of a comparison of the way in which the original receptors understood and appreciated the text and the way in which receptors of the translated text understand and appreciate the translated text” (Nida, 1993: 116).

As can be seen from the above statements, Nida’s functional equivalence theory lays much emphasis on “lexical meanings, grammatical classes, and rhetorical devices”, which all belong to the linguistic scope.

1.3 Nida’s Views on Translating Culture

Culture is a complex concept and an enormous subject. So far scholars and experts in different fields have provided more than two hundred different kinds of definitions of culture, among which the followings are generally recognized as some mainstream ones.

In his *Primitive Culture*, the founder of cultural anthropology, the British scholar Edward B. Tylor puts forward the first important anthropological definition of culture: Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. (Tylor, 1978: 1)

In *A Textbook of Translation*, Peter Newmark defines culture as “the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression” (Newmark, 1988: 94).

In China, Deng Yanchang and Liu Runqing hold the view that “culture refers to the entire way of life of a society”, that is, “the total pattern of beliefs, customs, institutions, objects, and techniques that characterize the life of human community” (Deng & Liu, 1989: 3).

In Nida’s opinion, culture can be defined succinctly as “the totality of beliefs and practices of a society” (Nida, 2001: 78). According to him, culture makes constant use of language to perform its crucial functions of: (1) providing information about the processes and the values of a culture (education is mastering the information regarded as essential for being a part of a society); (2) directing the activity of a culture (traditionally described as the imperative function); (3) establishing and maintaining a positive emotional state for the participants within a culture (the emotive function); (4) ritual alteration in the status of participants in a culture, for example, marriage vows, sentencing of criminals, religious ritual, internment of the dead (the performative function); (5) interpersonal relations (who speaks to whom about what and in what manner); (6) cognitive activity (the most common use of language is in thinking, although some thoughts are not necessarily expressed in words); (7) recreative (the use of language in games, for example, scrabble, crossword puzzle, word-guessing games on television, verbal challenges involving poetry and song); and (8) aesthetics, the use of language for aesthetic expression, especially in poetry and elegant prose (Nida, 2001: 152).

Since culture performs multiple functions in language, the translation concerning culture has never been an easy task for a translator. As Nida once points out, it is more important for a truly successful translator to get familiar with the two cultures than to master the two languages, because a word makes sense only in the cultural background in which it functions.

Nida holds that cultural factors should never be neglected in translation, or the consequence would be disastrous in that “differences between cultures may cause more severe complications

for the translator than do differences in language structure” (Nida, 1993: 130).

From these statements, we can infer that cultural translation also serves as an indispensable part in Nida’s translation theories. In his concept of translation, the importance of cultural elements is no less than that of the meaning and style of the source language.

Chapter Two *Luotuo Xiangzi* and Its English Versions

2.1 About Lao She

Lao She (February 3, 1899 – October 14, 1966), the pseudonym of Shu Qingchun, also known as Shu Sheyu, was born to a poor family belonging to the Red Banner¹ clan group in Beijing. A novelist and dramatist, he was one of the most significant figures of the 20th century Chinese literature. During his writing career, he tried his hand at different forms of literature, including novel, short story, play, poetry and essay. He is perhaps best known for his vivid portrayal of characters, as well as his lively use of language. He enjoys great prestige in China and was named a “People’s Artist” and a “Great Master of Language”. Translated into a total of twenty-four languages, his works are warmly acclaimed by readers throughout the world.

The Philosophy of Old Zhang, Lao She’s first published novel, was written in 1926 when he was living in London serving as a lecturer in the Chinese language department of the Oriental Institute at the University of London from 1924 to 1929. Later, after a short stay in Singapore, he returned to China in the spring of 1930 through 1937 and taught at several universities, including Cheeloo University and Shandong University. During this period, his first important novel *Luotuo Xiangzi* (widely known in the West as *Camel Xiangzi*, *Rickshaw Boy* or *Rickshaw*) was written. His other important works include *Si Shi Tong Tang* (*Four Generations under One Roof* 1944 – 1950), a novel describing the life of the Chinese people during the Japanese Occupation; *Cat Country* a satire which is sometimes seen as the first important Chinese science fiction novel and *Cha Guan* (*Teahouse*), a play written in 1957.

¹ One of the eight military-administrative organizations of the Manchu nationality before and during Qing Dynasty

Like thousands of other intellectuals in China, Lao She experienced persecution in the Cultural Revolution of the mid-1960s. Greatly humiliated both mentally and physically, he committed suicide by drowning himself in a Beijing lake in 1966.

2.2 The Characteristics of *Luotuo Xiangzi*

The novel of *Luotuo Xiangzi* has been translated into altogether sixteen languages and is generally acknowledged as one of Lao She's best works. It marks the peak of Lao She's career as a professional writer and registers a new approach to the representation of China in its turbulent moments in time. It shows Lao She at his best, a mature writer who excels in his mastery of narrative techniques and reveals his prophetic vision of the future of China. It can be read as an "epic" of modern China.

The story recounts the life of a young man in old Beijing who made a living by pulling a rickshaw at a time when the city was torn apart by dueling warlords in the 1920s. He worked hard to earn enough money and realize his life-long dream of owning a rickshaw. The owner of a rickshaw shop's daughter, for whom he worked for, fell in love with him and married him by trapping him. However, his savings never met the cost for a rickshaw. After his wife's death in childbirth, he spent all his savings for the funeral. When he grew old, he lost his strength as well as his job. Suffering from the pain induced by an archaic society, he fell at the mercy of his environment.

In this masterpiece, Lao She reveals his prophetic vision for the future of China. The novel depicts the life of Xiangzi, a young rickshaw puller in Beijing, who fails to improve his life no matter how hard he works. The novel proceeds to demonstrate that when innocent people's hopes are destroyed, they are awakened to the truth that they are but pawns of fate, which is a Chinese

concept for the unnamable in life's absurdities. It demonstrates the techniques of bitter humor Lao She employs in his portrayal of characters, who are caught in the endless social turmoil characteristic of the 1930's. The novel's socio-historical dimensions have made it a widely-used text for the cultural analysis of modern China.

Thanks to his uncommon family background and unusual life experience, Lao She is regarded as an exceptional one that is clearly different from most other Chinese writers. Like Lao She's other works, the language employed in *Luotuo Xiangzi* is considered as unique and brings the novel its individualistic charm. Generally, the linguistic characteristics can be concluded as the following: (1) instead of euphuism, unadorned language adopted to express deep feelings; (2) lively and interesting conversations between characters to demonstrate their respective personalities; (3) lots of Beijing dialect used to indicate the background of the story; (4) a large amount of black humor included to show the author's deep sympathy towards the characters; (5) much colloquialism employed to draw the story close to life; (6) brevity in language.

Luotuo Xiangzi is undoubtedly a novel embedded in Chinese culture, particularly Beijing culture. Viewed from this perspective, the uniqueness of *Luotuo Xiangzi* lies mainly in two aspects. On one hand, the novel contains elements of both traditional and modern cultures. The story happened in the time when the Chinese culture was undergoing transition from the traditional to the modern. The historical background endows the novel with a combination of Chinese traditional and modern cultures. On the other hand, the novel integrates western culture with Chinese culture. Lao She's life experience abroad enables him to borrow from the western way of psychoanalysis by describing mental activities, which gives the novel a somehow exotic flavor. Thanks to Lao She's skillful writing, the local flavor and the exotic one are incorporated together in the novel despite the great divergence between them. In conclusion, the cultural

features of the novel can be generalized as: (1) inheritance of traditional novels in zhanghui style² to describe the ordinary life; (2) much description of Beijing customs; (3) bitter satire to the semi-feudal society; and (4) delicate descriptions of the characters' mental activities.

2.3 The Translation of *Luotuo Xiangzi* into English

2.3.1 Three English Versions of *Luotuo Xiangzi*

Nine years after the complete original novel *Luotuo Xiangzi* appeared, the first English version was published by the Reynal & Hitchcock Company in New York in 1945. This version, named *Rickshaw Boy*, was translated by Evan King and became a US bestseller of that year. An unauthorized version, the translation was quite controversial as it added a somewhat false happy ending to the story. On one hand, this version is regarded as a good translation for its approximate style to the original one. On the other hand, the translator failed to apprehend some parts of typical Chinese local color. Nevertheless, viewed as a whole, it is a laudable translation as it helps to widen the circulation of this great Chinese novel.

In 1970, Jean M. James retranslated the novel with its name as *Rickshaw: The Novel Lo-T'o Hsiang Tzu*. Unlike Evan King's version, this version, published by University of Hawaii Press, is a more faithful translation of the original. However, while James tried to convey most parts of the novel, he failed to interpret some key dialects and idioms, which became regrettably a blemish in an otherwise perfect translation.

In 1981, Shi Xiaojing's version of *Luotuo Xiangzi*, named *Camel Xiangzi*, was published by Foreign Language Press in Beijing as discussed in the following part of this thesis paper.

² a type of traditional Chinese novel divided into several chapters, with much colloquialism used in such novels

2.3.2 A General Survey of Shi's Version

Shi Xiaojing's version of *Luotuo Xiangzi* was published by Foreign Language Press in Beijing in 1981 with the English title as *Camel Xiangzi*. A general survey of this version can be performed from two aspects.

Linguistically, this version is faithful to the original to a very high degree. The translator well interprets the meaning of the original and makes full use of the expressive capacity of English to achieve successful translation. The meaning of the translated version is absolutely faithful to the original, with the style, to a large extent, reflecting Lao She's writing style.

Culturally, the translator employs the strategy of domestication by trying to reduce the original local color to increase the intelligibility for the English readers. Many expressions with unique Chinese characteristics are rendered with additional explanations to make them easier to be understood. As a result, some cultural elements are inevitably lost in the translated version.

Chapter Three Linguistic Aspects of Shi's Version

According to Nida, translation consists in reproducing in the receptor language to the closest natural equivalence of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style (Nida, 1982: 12). It gives the message that meaning and style are two decisive factors influencing the overall linguistic quality of translation. Therefore, a linguistic analysis of the translation could be performed from these two facets.

3.1 Translation of Meaning

One of Nida's significant contributions to the translation theories is that meaning should take precedence over style. He points out in *The Theory and Practice of Translation* "as has already been indicated in the definition of translating, meaning must be given priority, for it is the content of the message which is of prime importance for translating" (Nida, 1982: 13). Meaning serves as the base for translation into another language. No translation can be considered as adequate if it is not closely equal to the original at the level of meaning.

English and Chinese belong to different language systems. When translating English into Chinese, meaning, style, and cultural elements should all be taken into consideration. However, it should not be especially noticeable that meaning is the carrier of style and cultural elements. That is, the latter two only exist in the context of the source language. If the source text does not make sense, style and cultural elements will not have a starting point to discuss.

Generally speaking, words and phrases normally have more than one meaning, and in different languages, the semantic areas of corresponding words are not always identical. Therefore, translators should not always translate one word in the source language into a

corresponding word in the receptor language. Instead, the choice of the right word in the target language is much more determined by the context.

In the broad sense, the meaning of the words or linguistic units can be classified into two main categories: denotative meaning and associative meaning. The former is defined as the meaning suggested by a word when it is used on its own and the latter refers to the meaning given by a word when it is associated with other words. The context plays a decisive role in distinguishing the two meanings.

3.1.1 Denotative Meaning

Denotative meaning refers to the meaning of a word or phrase that relates it to phenomena in the real world or in a fictitious world. It serves as the kernel of communication and an essential ingredient of a language. The translatability between two languages is largely due to the equivalence of denotative meanings. Denotative meaning includes logical, cognitive or denotative content, which is based on the reference observed outside. The denotative meanings of lexemes represent referents in the practical or linguistic world. As the core of communication and the essential ingredient of languages, it deals with the relationship between words and this non-linguistic world of experience through the medium of human beings' mind. Compared with associative meaning, denotative meaning is easier to be handled due to its concreteness and objectivity.

It is a common phenomenon in language that one word may possess several denotative meanings in different contexts. According to Chen Hongwei, the most important thing in translating denotative meaning is to fully comprehend the original meaning in context and find the closest equivalent in the target language as the original denotative meaning is usually stable

in certain context. (Chen Hongwei, 2004: 70) That is to say, it is unnecessary to consider too much about the style of the original in translating denotative meaning. For a translator like Shi, the translation of denotative meaning is well handled without much effort. The following examples from *Camel Xiangzi* illustrate Shi's translation of denotative meaning.

EX.1(a) 看着那高等的车夫，他计划着怎样杀进他的腰去，好更显出他的铁扇面似的胸，与直硬的腰…… (p12)

Watching those high-class pullers, he planned how to tighten his belt to show off his sturdy chest and straight back to better advantage. (p13)

The word “杀”, in its original meaning, can generally be translated as “kill”. As we can see from another example:

EX.1(b) 辞事，让工钱，在祥子看就差不多等于自杀。 (p154)

In his eyes, giving up his job and forfeiting his wages amounted practically to suicide. (p155)

In example 1(b), “杀” is of its original meaning. With the collocation of “自杀”, it is normally translated as “suicide”, which is the equivalent of “killing oneself”. However, in example 1(a), it is obvious that “杀进他的腰去” can not be translated as “kill into his waist”, although the two phrases are equivalent in form. Actually, the word “杀” is collocated with the word “腰”. It can not be treated as an isolated linguistic unit in this sentence. Therefore, “杀腰” is adequately translated as to “tighten his belt”.

This example well explains how functional equivalence works in translating the denotative

meaning of words. As Tan Zaixi points out, “the so-called denotative meaning refers to the specific meaning when a word refers to some objective things or objective ideas. That is to say, denotative meaning is “outside language, human body and is caused by social circumstance” (Tan Zaixi, 1999: 154).

Besides the monosyllables, the translator is also fully aware of the denotative meanings of other linguistic units in *Camel Xiangzi*. For example:

EX.3(a) 因为拉着洋人，他们可以不穿号坎，而一律的是长袖小白褂，白的或黑的裤子，裤筒特别肥，脚腕上系着细带；脚上是宽双脸千层底青布鞋；干净，利落，神气。(p6)

Because they serve foreigners, they do not have to wear the numbered jacket compulsory for other rickshaw pullers. Instead they all wear long-sleeved white shirts, baggy black cloth-soled shoes with a rib sewn up the middle. They are clean, smart and alert. (p7)

EX.3(b) 脊背微俯，双手松松拢住车把，他活动，利落，准确；看不出急促而跑得很快，快而没有危险。(p16)

Back slightly bent, hands loosely holding the shafts, he was lithe, smooth and precise, and though he never looked hurried he ran fast and sure-footedly. (p17)

EX.3(c) 是的，世界上还有许多比阴丹士林蓝更体面的东西，可是祥子知道自己混到那么干净利落已经是怎样的不容易。(p36)

Of course in this world there are many things smarter than indigo blue cloth, but Xiangzi knew how difficult it had been for him to reach even that level of cleanliness and spruceness. (p37)

EX.3(d) 逃回城里之后，他并没等病好利落了就把车拉起来，虽然一点不服软，可是他时常觉出疲乏。(p98)

After his return to the city, he hadn't waited to recover completely before starting work once

more. (p99)

EX.3(e)把屋子也收拾利落了，二太太把个刚到一周岁的小泥鬼交给了他。(p104)

The rooms cleaned up, the No. 2 wife thrust a muddy brat barely one year old into his arms.
(p105)

EX.3(f) “不……”样子想说“不用打一巴掌揉三揉”，可是没有想齐全；对北平的俏皮话儿，他知道不少，只是说不利落；别人说，他懂得，他自己说不上来。(p190)

“Don’t...” Xiangzi wanted to say ‘don’t slap me once only to pat me three times’, but he couldn’t think of the whole saying. He knew quite a few humorous Beijingping expressions but could not use them fluently though he understood when other people used them. (p191)

EX.3(g) 到屋中，他先数了数那几张票子；数了两三遍，手心的汗把票子攥得发粘，总数不利落。(p198)

Back in his room, the first thing he did was to count the bills. He counted them two or three times and his sweaty palms made them sticky. Each time the total was different. (p199)

The word “利落” in these examples are all translated differently according to the respective denotative meanings.

Source texts	Target texts
干净， <u>利落</u> ，神气	<i>smart</i>
他活动， <u>利落</u> ，准确	<i>smooth</i>
混到那么干净 <u>利落</u>	<i>spruceness</i>
没等病好 <u>利落</u> 了	<i>completely</i>

收拾利落了	<i>up</i>
只是说不利落	<i>fluently</i>
总数不利落	<i>null</i>

According to Nida's opinion, the meanings of these words and phrases are not determined by their own linguistic features, but by the relationship between words and our non-linguistic world of experience through the medium of human beings' thoughts. Shi's translation conforms with the spirit of Nida's theory and does a nearly perfect job.

3.1.2 Associative Meaning

Although denotative meaning serves as the basis of language, it is the associative meaning that is more frequently involved in translating. The associative meaning of a word refers to the total of all the meanings that a person thinks of when he hears the word. They are derived primarily from the contexts (both cultural and linguistic) in which such lexemes habitually occur. The associative meanings of lexemes represent the values and attitudes resulting from the use of lexemes in discourses.

According to Nida, "The primary sources of associative meanings are: (1) the persons who use such lexemes, (2) the setting in which such lexemes are generally employed, (3) the occurrence of such lexemes in prior text (intertextuality), (4) contamination from linguistic collocations, (5) contamination from homophones, and, (6) cultural value associated with the referents of the lexemes" (Nida, 2000: 40-41).

Different from the denotative meanings of words, which represent referents in the practical or linguistic world, the associative meanings represent the value and attitudes resulting from the

use of lexemes in discourses. According to Nida, the associative meanings are often far more difficult for translators since they tend to be so subtle and elusive (Nida, 1993:40).

Associative meaning is a general term including the following six kinds of meanings: connotative meaning, social meaning, affective meaning, collocative meaning, reflected meaning, and thematic meaning. In this thesis, the first three are discussed with consideration as to their importance.

3.1.2.1 Connotative Meaning

Nida defines connotative meaning as the following, “we not only understand the reference of words. We also react to them emotionally, sometimes strongly, sometimes weakly, sometimes negatively, sometimes affirmatively. This aspect of the meaning which deals with our emotional reactions to words is called connotative meaning” (Nida, 1982: 91).

It is inferable from its definition that connotative meaning is indirectly related to the non-linguistic world of experience. More importantly, it connected closely with the inter-linguistic scope. It refers to the additional meanings that a word or phrase has beyond its central meaning^{ref} (denotation). These meanings show people’s emotions and attitudes towards what the word or phrase refers to. Some connotations may be shared by a group of people of the same cultural or social background, sex or age; others may be restricted to one or several individuals. Any feature of the referential object, recognized subjectively or objectively, more or less affects the connotative meaning.

When translating an expression containing connotative meanings, the translator must analyze the exact implied meanings in the original text before expressing them properly in the receptor language. The following examples are taken from *Camel Xiangzi*.

EX.1 “地道窝窝头脑袋！你先坐下，咬不着你！”她说完，笑了笑，露出一对虎牙。(p134)

“You really are a block-head! Sit down, I shan't bite you!” She laughed, showing her canine teeth. (p135)

“窝窝头” refers to steamed bread of coarse grain or corn bun eaten in northern China. However, the connotative meaning used in this example is clearly different from its original meaning. It would be ridiculous to translate “窝窝头脑袋” into “a head stuffed with bread or bun” according to its denotative meaning. When translating this word, we should not neglect the fact that “窝窝头” is the staple food for people of lower social status who are likely to be considered as “stupid” because of their illiteracy by the powerful in feudal China. Thus, “窝窝头” becomes a synonym of “stupid people” and “窝窝头脑袋” refers to stupid people’s heads. In Shi’s translation, the implicit connotative meaning is adequately expressed as “a block head”.

EX.2 刘四晓得不晓得他女儿是个破货呢？(p126)

Did he know that his daughter was a tart? (p127)

As far as the single sentence is considered, “破货” in this sentence is an unstable word in meaning and can be rendered into many English expressions. It can refer to something that is worthless, or someone morally inferior, or even in quarrelling, any married woman. To find the precise meaning of this word, the particular setting must be taken into consideration. On one hand, Xiangzi found that Tigress was in fact not a virgin and even might have sex with any other man. On the other hand, he hated Tigress for destroying the decency he had brought with him from the countryside and making him an abductor of women. In that feudal society, a woman

who is considered to be sexually promiscuous was called as “破货”, which is exactly equivalent to Shi’s translation of “tart”.

EX.3 小福子的“人”是个军官。(p382)

Her “man” had been an army officer... (p383)

Here, “人” does not actually refer to any specific person. The meaning of this word in this example is far more complicated than its usual meaning. The understanding of this word falls into two parts. In one respect, it refers to Joy’s actual husband and should be rendered as “husband”. In the other, Joy was sold, not married to the army officer. It is improper to regard the army officer as Joy’s husband. Joy was not his wife, but merely a concubine. “人” in colloquialism often serves as an address to one’s consort. Therefore, the translator uses the quoted “man” instead of “husband”.

EX.4 ……很少能到二十岁以后改变成漂亮的车夫的, 因为在幼年受了伤, 很难健壮起来。
(p4)

...rarely become crack pullers later on, because as boys they have over-taxed their strength. (p5)

“漂亮的” in Chinese is generally equivalent to the English words like “beautiful”, “pretty”, “splendid” or “smart”. However, when it is used to describe a rickshaw puller who can not care too much about his appearance, it apparently can not be rendered in the usual way. In the original sentence, the author is to explain that one who was hurt in childhood can not become a good rickshaw puller after his entry into adulthood. We can infer that “漂亮的” has its specific

implication restricted in the circle of rickshaw pullers. Hence, “crack”, which means “good” or “specialized”, is a good choice.

EX.5 陈二奶奶带着她的“童儿”——四十来岁的一个黄脸大汉——快到掌灯的时候才来到。
(p428)

It was nearly lamp-lighting time when the old woman finally arrived with her “acolyte”—a great strapping sallow-faced fellow of about forty.

In Chinese, “童儿” usually refers to children under sixteen years old. When used to refer to a man of over forty, it is likely to be regarded as a kind of humiliation. While in this sentence, the old woman is a necromancer and the man serves as her assistant, so “童儿” is a special usage in superstitious activities. To express the meaning of assistant in a religious term, “acolyte” is the most appropriate choice.

EX.6 没我，你想想，你的钱要不都填给野娘们才怪，咱们凭良心吧！（p320）

Remember, if it hadn't been for me, you'd have spent it all on prostitutes. Let's be fair, after all!

To fully comprehend the meaning of “野娘们”, Fourth Master Liu's life experience should be taken into consideration. According to the author's description, Liu Si in his youth had run gambling dens, dealt in the slave traffic, lent out money at the devil's own rate and abducted women of good families. To sum it up, Liu Si, in his nature, is a scoundrel. Tigress knew exactly what kind of a person her father was and where he would spend money. Undoubtedly, he would only spend the money on prostitutes.

EX.7……以她的模样年纪说，实在不易再得个这样的宝贝。(p358)

...At her age and with her looks, it wouldn't be easy to find another such treasure. (p359)

Usually, “宝贝” finds its equivalent “honey” in English, which is used to call one’s lover. In the Xiangzi and Tigress case, the situation is quite different. Although Xiangzi is Tigress’ husband, it is hard to say if there exists real love between them. In her eye, Xiangzi is merely something that she buys and she treats him as her treasure rather than as lover. Therefore, the translation of “treasure” is a better choice as it reasonably points out the relationship between Xiangzi and Tigress.

EX.8……是福不是祸，今儿个就今儿个啦！(p34)

If your luck is out it's out, this is it!

“是福不是祸” comes from the Chinese saying “是福不是祸，是祸躲不过”，meaning “what will be will be” in English. When the other puller is saying this, the emphasis is laid on the latter part of this peculiar saying rather than the former part. The implication is that their destiny is at God’s will and they may not escape from bad luck. Thus, Shi’s translation of “if your luck is out it’s out” well interprets the implied meaning.

3.1.2.2 Social Meaning

Social meaning, which is communicated through the social circumstances of language, tells the geographical conditions and the social environment in which the speaker lives. By the right interpretation of social meanings, the relations between the speaker and listener can also be

perceived.

In *Luotuo Xiangzi*, many of the expressions are of much social meaning. When translating these expressions, the translator needs to have a clear understanding to the general social environment and the respective social status of the characters.

EX.1 样子立起来: “睡觉去。送给你老人家一包洋火!” (p88)

Xiangzi stood up. "I'm turning in now. Here's a box of matches for you." (p89)

According to the literal meaning, “洋火” means “matches imported from foreign countries”. At that semi-colonial China, lots of commodities depended on importation and because of that, almost everything was called “洋 X”, such as “洋车” (imported rickshaw), “洋油” (imported kerosene) and “洋布” (imported cloth). The box of matches that Xiangzi gives Liu Si is not necessarily imported from the abroad, so it is adequately translated as “a box of matches”.

EX.2 他想把这个宝贝去交给张妈——一个江北的大脚婆子。 (p104)

He decided to give this treasure to Nanny Zhang, a woman with unbound feet from northern Jiangsu. (p105)

In this example, “大脚婆子” does not simply refer to a woman with extraordinarily big feet as its literal meaning implies. In feudal China, women are required to bind their feet and thus their freedom will be restricted. Another choice here could be “a woman with oversized feet”. Comparatively speaking, it would be better to render it as “a woman with unbound feet” for “a woman with unbound feet” in the traditional sense implies that the woman is uncultivated and

perhaps even vulgar.

EX.3……文的中，虽然有在大学堂教书的先生，也有在衙门里当好差事的，字当然认识不少了，可是没遇到一个讲理的。(p142)

As for the literary ones, although among them there had been university lecturers and officials with comfortable jobs in a magistrate's office, all of whom naturally had considerable book-learning, he had never yet met one who was reasonable. (p143)

The Chinese word “衙门” finds its equivalence in English as “yamun”, and also it can be translated as “government office”. However, both of the two translations are rather general terms. Shi's rendering of “a magistrate's office” is more accurate since the word “magistrate” implies the meaning of “literary official”.

EX.4 “刘四爷，看看我的车！”样子把新车拉到人和厂去。(p80)

“Fourth Master, look at my rickshaw!” Xiangzi had pulled his new vehicle into the yard. (p81)

Judging from the literal meaning, “爷” is rendered as “grandpa”. During the period of the Republic of China, “爷” is a honorific title for powerful people. Xiangzi's address to Liu Si as “四爷” does not emphasize Liu Si's age. Instead, he wants to show his respect to Liu Si. Therefore, “master” is a proper choice to render “爷”.

EX.5 到底是哥儿们哪！拉座儿，给他卖多大的力气，临完多要一个子儿都怪难的！(p218)

We really are mates, aren't we? You can pull a fare with all your might, yet how hard it is to get

one single copper extra out of him! (p219)

Xiangzi buys some steamed patties for the old puller who has been starved to a faint. The old puller is grateful to Xiangzi and calls him “哥儿们”, which means in its literal meaning “brother”. At that time, Xiangzi is merely a young boy about 20 years old, while the old puller is over fifty. It is not natural to translate it into “brothers”. As both of them take rickshaw pulling as their job, it is better to translate it as “mates” to show the intimate relationship between them.

3.1.2.3 Affective Meaning

Affective meaning is communicated through the emotions and attitudes of the author. According to the theory of functional equivalence, an effective translation should be one that can evoke the same emotive response as the source text does. Therefore, the affective meaning should be transferred faithfully with this goal in mind.

EX.1 这些人，生命最鲜壮的时期已经卖掉，现在再把窝窝头变成的血汗滴在马路上。(p4)

These men have already sold the best years of their lives, and now the maize muffins on which they subsist are transformed into blood and sweat which drip on to the road. (p5)

In the author’s opinion, pulling rickshaw equals to selling one’s life. The rickshaw pullers have to sell their lives to buy maize muffins to support their family. For one thing, the word “卖掉” indicates the author’s deep sympathy towards people in this trade. For another, it also reflects the author’s indignant accusation of the evil society. It is definitely a wise choice to translate it with literal translation to reproduce the affective meanings.

EX.2 假若他的环境好一些, 或多受着点教育, 他一定不会落在“胶皮团”里…… (p8)

If his situation had been a little better, or if he had had a bit more education he would certainly not have fallen among the “Tyre Brigade”. (p9)

In this example, “落” is a word containing affective meaning. The meaning that the author wants to express here is actually “engage”. However, the term “engage” can not properly manifest the author’s feelings as the original sentence actually implies that pulling rickshaw is a humiliated trade. The translator therefore interprets the author’s meaning and translates it as “fall” instead.

EX.3 站起来, 他觉出他又象个人了。 (p74)

When he stood up, he felt like a man again. (p75)

According to the context, it is also natural to use “是” (was) instead of “象” here. By using the latter, the author’s deep sympathy towards Xiangzi is exposed as the word indicates that Xiangzi has never actually lived like a real man. The torture that he has experienced does not let himself feel that he is a real man. Even after escaping from the army, he is still a rickshaw puller, and a rickshaw puller can not be regarded as a man. Therefore, it is rendered as “feels like” to achieve the equivalent effect.

EX.4 一进来, 摸住条板凳便坐下了……(p212)

As soon as he got in, he groped for a bench and sat down. (p213)

The word “摸” in this sentence is a selected word in order to show the deteriorating physical condition of the old puller. Although it is generally translated into “seek after” in English, Shi’s choice of “grope” is a better word to manifest the author’s intention.

EX.5 样子本不吸烟，这次好似不能拒绝，拿了支烟放在唇间吧唧着。(p260)

Xiangzi didn't smoke, but this time he felt he couldn't refuse. He took a cigarette and started to puff. (p261)

The word “吧唧” is seldom used to describe the action of smoking in Chinese. By using this word, the author is to show Xiangzi’s clumsiness since at that time he has never learned how to smoke. To Xiangzi, smoking is rather money-consuming and he is quite clumsy in enjoying such luxury. The translator uses “puff” instead of “smoke” to preserve the affective meaning of the original word.

3.2 Translation of Style

Although the transfer of meaning is regarded as the most important part in translating, the transfer of style is also highly valued in Nida’s theories. According to him, “Style, however, is not the frosting on the cake, but an integral part of the process of interlingual communication.” (Nida, 2001: preface)

Expatriating on the translation of style, Nida points out, “In trying to reproduce the style of the original one must beware of producing something which is not functionally equivalent” (Nida, 1982:14). He emphasizes that the equivalence of style is so important that it should be pursued on every level. This means that reproducing style, even on a formal level, may not result

in an equivalence, and it is functional equivalence which is required, whether on the level of content or on the level of style (Nida, 1982:14).

Concerning the translation of literary works, Nida says, “With highly creative literary works, stylistic features are often a decisive factor in the acceptance of a translation. In fact, stylistic qualities are often more important in this respect even than faithfulness in content”.

In spite of the fact that stylistic message may be lost to some extent in the course of translating, it is generally believed that style is translatable. In other words, the effect of a close equivalence in style can be accomplished in translation. It means the translator must try his best to reproduce the work by pursuing the author’s style with the result that the readers of a translated text should be able to understand and appreciate the author’s writing style and have the similar response to the target text.

It should also be fully realized that equivalence on the level of style is not easy to reach. It can never be worked out by sticking to rigid and inflexible ways. On the contrary, the translator should try his best to find the equivalent style in target language by adopting a close approximation to the meaning of the passage which conveys the intention of the text.

3.2.1 Brevity

One of the distinct characteristics of Lao She’s writing is brevity in language. As an example, many clauses and sentences in his works consist of only six to seven words. When translating *Luotuo Xiangzi*, this characteristic must be carefully handled as Chinese differs much from English in that the former is featured with parataxis and the latter with hypotaxis. In translating Chinese into English, the structure of the original sentences must be altered to match the expressive way of English sentences. In this process, the translator must do much work related to

adding, deleting, splitting and merging sentences. Shi's *Camel Xiangzi* does a very good job in translating the short sentences. Here are some examples.

EX.1 他们的车破，跑得慢，所以得多走路，少要钱。(p4)

Their broken-down vehicles and lack of speed mean they must make longer trips for lower payment. (p5)

The original Chinese sentence is composed of four clauses, with the longest one consisting of only seven words. The four are linked with three commas. In the translated version, all the four clauses are connected by conjunctives and the commas are omitted. The original sentence totals 17 words and the translated version contains only 16 words. Apparently, the translator tries to shorten the translation to match the original style.

EX.2 自己的车，自己的生活，都在自己手里，高等车夫。(p8)

Belonging to the category of those who owned their vehicles, he was master of his own fate, a high-class puller. (p9)

Since Chinese is primarily a language featured with parataxis and English a language with hypotaxis, some omitted elements in Chinese must be supplemented in English. Compared with the first example above, this sentence is rather difficult to manage. In this example, the subject of the original sentence is omitted and yet, the meaning is still clear to readers. In the translated version, the translator has to supplement the omitted parts. Even though, we can see that the translated sentence is still a refined one.

EX.3 山在西，城在东，他晓得这个。(p54)

He knew that the mountains were to the west, the city to the east. (p55)

According to the structure, the original sentence should be translated as “The mountains were to the west, the city to the east. He knew that.” Such a sentence would undoubtedly be too complex for English readers. The original Chinese sentence is neatly written, using two short clauses containing only three words, which gives readers an impression of brevity. The English sentence does some adjustments of reversing the sentence order and keeps the original flavor.

EX.4 他推开门，她正在床上斜着呢，穿着平常的衣裤，赤着脚。(p134)

He pushed open the door. She was sprawled out barefooted on the bed, wearing her everyday clothes. (p135)

Chinese sentences are comparatively loose in structure. In the grammatical sense, “赤着脚” is a subject complement modifying “她”, while it is far away in position from the subject. To make the translated version clearer, the translator uses only one word “barefooted” to preserve the brevity with the effect of achieving functional equivalence.

3.2.2 Dialect

As it is known, the notion of dialect is multi-dimensional. It takes into account variations resulting from discrepancies among different users, namely, the space, the temporal factor and the social distance.

Thanks to its skillful employment of Beijing dialect, *Luotuo Xaingzi* enjoys almost equal

popularity among Chinese readers with Mark Twain's *The Adventure of Huckleberry Finn* among American readers. In this novel, the characters are endowed with dialectical features, the consideration of which is helpful for the translator to have an excellent grasp of the original meanings.

Nida specifies two ways in translating dialect. The first one is to employ the major dialect (the one which occupies a dominant position in national culture), and the most neutral one in language form, to replace other dialects. The other way is to select one dialect, which is not necessarily the dominant one within a nation, as the major language of the target text, and meanwhile the reasonable expressions in other dialects can also be used in the target text (Tan Zaixi: 1999: 226-227).

Shi's translation of Beijing dialect generally applies the first method proposed by Nida, namely, translating Beijing dialect to Standard American English.

EX.1 老头子看了车一眼，点了点头：“不离！” (p80)

The old man eyed it and nodded. “Not bad.” (p81)

“不离” serves as a word here in Beijing dialect rather than a phrase as in Putonghua. Generally, it can be explained as a combined phrase as “not leaving” or “no divorce”, etc. in Putonghua. In Beijing dialect, “不离” is clearly derived from the saying “八九不离十”, meaning “not far away from the required standard”. Shi's translation of “not bad” is equivalent to the original.

EX.2 “我可还得在这儿住，多咱我拉上包月，才去住宅门！”样子颇自傲的说。(p80)

"I shall be staying here until I find a job by the month, then I'll move out to where I'm hired."
(p81)

There is no such an expression of “多咱” in modern Chinese. In Beijing dialect it refers to an infinite time, meaning “when” or “while”. In this sentence, it is collocated with “才” (just). In Shi's version, the flavor of Beijing dialect is sacrificed to preserve the meaning of the word. Such a kind of treatment conforms to Nida's proposal of “firstly in meaning and secondly in style”.

EX.3 “买车也得悠停着来，当是你是铁作的哪！你应当好好的歇三天！”看祥子听不进去这个：“好吧，你有你的老主意，死了可别怨我！” (p98)

"Even so, you must take your time. Think you're made of steel? You ought to rest for three days."
Seeing that he was unwilling, she would add, "All right, have your own way. Don't blame me if you drop dead!" (p99)

“悠停着来”^{уѣ} is another expression typically of Beijing dialect, which can hardly be understood by southerners in China. In the phrase, “悠” in modern Chinese stands for “慢慢来” (take your time), which is almost the same meaning to the whole phrase. In Shi's translation, the style once again makes way for meaning. Regrettably enough, the English readers can not perceive the Beijing flavor by reading “take your time”.

EX.4 你上哪儿我也找得着！我还是不论秧子！ (p188)

I don't care who you are, wherever you go I'll find you! So don't think you can get away! (p189)

“不论秧子” is quite characteristic of Beijing color since it has never been used in Putonghua. Its meaning can be rendered into different English expressions according to the specific contexts. Here, Tigress warns Xiangzi about not trying to escape away from her as she could find him anyway. According to the context, the implied meaning is that “whoever you are and wherever you go, I will stick to you.” Although some Beijing flavor is unavoidably lost, Shi’s translation is comparatively the most appropriate choice as it is impossible to find a complete equivalence in English.

EX.5……不定是三两个月，还是十天八天，吹了！ (p18)

...sometimes after two or three months, sometimes after only a week or ten days, he had to look around for a new job. (p19)

“吹了” in mandarin has three meanings, respectively translated into “blow”, “boast” and “puff” in English. However, it is evident that none of them is suitable according to the context. The exact meaning of “吹了” here only exists in Beijing dialect. In the previous sentences, it is said that although Xiangzi was very cautious in working, his jobs were still unstable or short-term. Therefore, “吹了” in Beijing dialect means that Xiangzi could not keep stable jobs. That is to say, as it is translated, Xiangzi “had to look around for a new job”.

There are still many other examples of Beijing dialect used in *Luotuo Xiangzi*, which sufficiently highlight Lao She’s writing style of dialect adoption. Shi’s translations of these dialects, to some extent, strive to preserve the original style. While in most cases, the transfer is incomplete due to the huge divergence between the two languages. The chart shown below outlines some additional translations of Beijing dialect.

你是了味啦	<i>You got what you wanted</i>
我跟太太横打了鼻梁	<i>I swore to the mistress</i>
而专为耍个飘儿	<i>make himself look tough</i>
一个人能有什么蹦儿	<i>What future does a lone man have</i>
这多么现在	<i>It's all there for the taking</i>
招呼吧，伙计	<i>Let's go, buddy</i>

3.2.3 Rhetoric

“Seldom do translators realize that various aspects of rhetoric influence significantly the impact and appeal which a translation may have.” (Jin Di & Nida, 1984: 75)

Rhetoric is an indispensable part of literary works, and it contributes greatly to the stylistic feature of the text. Discussing the significance of rhetoric, Jin Di and Nida believe, “aesthetic enhancement of a passage does a great deal to make people favorably impressed with the content. Rhythmic phrases, balanced lines, condensed aphorisms, cleverly contrived double meanings, all serve indirectly to affect receptor’s emotive reactions to the content of a text” (Jin Di & Nida, 1984: 43).

In order to enhance the impact and the appeal of a text, an author or a speaker may employ a number of rhetorical features or processes, both formal and semantic. The principal formal features involve ordering, repetition, measurement (e.g. poetic lines), embedding, deletion/condensation, transition, reference, and nongrammaticality. The primary semantic features involve figurative language, parallelism/inversion, plays on words, ambiguity/obscurity, polar contrasts (paradox, irony), overstatement/understatement, euphemisms, shifts in

grammatical function, indirection, specific for generic language, and semotactic anomalies (Nida, 2001: 62).

Nida highlights three situations in which figurative expressions are involved in the transferring process: (1) shifts from figurative to nonfigurative usage; (2) shifts from one type of figurative expression to another; (3) nonfigurative expressions changed to figurative ones (Nida, 1982: 107).

3.2.3.1 Figurative to Nonfigurative

Elaborating the situation of transferring figurative expressions to nonfigurative ones, Nida gives three examples. The first one is that “possess the gate” could be changed to “possess the city”. As is known, the gate of a city is regarded as the entrance to a city. Once someone possesses the gate of a city, he possesses the city as well. The second one manifests itself in that “my flesh” could be translated into “my race” because the word “flesh” contains the connotation of “kinship”. The last one is that “taste death” could become “die”. In these examples, it is clear that such ways of handling are adopted primarily to avoid misunderstanding in the target language. Shi complies with the three principles in translating *Luotuo Xiangzi*.

EX.1 象他那个岁数的小伙子们, 即使有人管着, 哪个不偷偷的跑“白房子”? (p126)

Practically all young fellows his age, even those with someone to keep an eye on them, stealthily frequented brothels. (p127)

The meaning of “白房子” in the original sentence is somehow vague even to modern Chinese readers, not to mention to English readers. In this sentence, metonymy is used because it

is based on some type of association, e.g. part for the whole as the color of “妓院” and “白房子” were of the same at that time. Another point that we should notice is that “白房子” can be translated as “white house” according to its literal meaning. If so, English readers can not understand the implied meaning and it is somewhat likely for readers to mix it with the government building of the United States. Due to these reasons, the translator shifts it from figurative to non-figurative usage and just translates it as “brothels”.

EX. 2 第二天的生意不错, 可是躺了两天, 他的脚脖子肿得象两条瓠子似的, 再也抬不起来。

(p14)

The second, business was quite good. But then he was flat out on his back for two days because his ankles had swollen so badly. (p15)

As in this case, “象两条瓠子似的” is apparently a simile meaning Xiangzi’s ankles had swollen like a bottle gourd. This expression could be easily accepted by Chinese readers as bottle gourd was a household dish at that time. For English readers, the situation is rather different since many of them may not quite familiar with such biological terms like bottle gourd. Therefore, the figurative expression is changed to a nonfigurative one as is simply rendered into “his ankles had swollen so badly”.

3.2.3.2 One Type of Figurative to Another

In this part, Nida employs the word “heart” as an example. According to him, “heart” could be rendered as “liver” as liver stands for the center of a human body in a number of African languages. Another example given by Nida is that “praise the Lord with the tongue” could be

changed into “praise the Lord with the lips”, which is quite similar to the first example. In Shi’s translation, some figurative expressions are also shifted to other ones.

EX. 1 饿了三天，火气降下去，身上软得像皮糖似的。(p68)

After fasting for three days, the fever abated and he felt as limp as taffy. (p69)

“皮糖” in Chinese actually can not find its equivalent in the English language, whereas it is similar to “taffy” with the only difference that the former is made of sugar and the latter of honey. Therefore, one type of figurative expression is changed into another in Shi’s translation in order to preserve the rhetoric device in the target language.

EX.2 “你醒明白了？我的东西就是这些，我没拿曹家一草一木？”

“Are you wide-awake? This is all I’ve got. I haven’t taken a needle from the Caos!”(p269)

It is clear that metonymy is used in this original sentence. “一草一木” here does not mean in its literal meaning as “a piece of grass or wood”, but as “any even the most unvalued things”. In the translated version, the original metonymy, which is familiar to most Chinese readers, is shifted to “a needle”, which is familiar to most English readers. By such a handling, the translator completes the transfer from one type of figurative expression to another.

EX.3 以杨先生的海式咒骂的毒辣，以杨太太的天津口的雄壮，以二太太的苏州调的流利，他们素来是所向无敌的；及至遇到张妈的蛮悍，他们开始感到一种礼尚往来，英雄遇上了好汉的意味，所以颇能赏识她，把她收作了亲军。(p106)

The combination of Mr. Yang's cutting Shanghai sarcasms, the No.1 wife's Tianjin invectives and the No.2 wife's fluent Suzhou abuse had been unbeatable until they came up against Nanny Zhang, a termagant who could give as good as she got. Like heroes encountering an amazon, they appreciated her worth and kept her on as their lieutenant. (p107)

In the original sentence, “英雄遇上了好汉的意味” can either be regarded as a metaphor or an irony. In the English version, “like heroes encountering an amazon” apparently belongs to another category of figurative expression: simile. The most difficult point in translating this expression lies in that “英雄” and “好汉” in Chinese are of the same expression “hero” in English. The skillful replacement of “amazon³” with “hero” avoids redundancy in the target language.

3.2.3.3 Nonfigurative to Figurative

In addition to the above-discussed situations, there is a third situation mentioned by Nida, which is called by him as “shifting from nonfigurative expressions to figurative ones”. In his discussion, Nida argues that “to trust” could be rendered as “to lean on”. This kind of handling can also be found in Shi's translation.

EX.1 不过，以他们比较另一些四十上下岁的车夫，他们还似乎没有苦到了家。(p4)

However, compared to another group of over-forties, they seem not to have reached rock-bottom yet. (p5)

³ Here refers to a member of a nation of women warriors reputed to have lived in Scythia in Greek Mythology

In the original sentence, “苦到了家” is just an ordinary statement and none of figurative expression is used in this expression. According to the literal meaning, it can be translated as “extremely suffering”. While in the translated version, the metaphor of “rock-bottom” shifts the nonfigurative original to a figurative one, referring to the cold and cruel future waiting for the rickshaw pullers.

EX.2 脸上永远红扑扑的，特别亮的是颧骨与右耳之间一块不小的疤——小时候在树下睡觉，被驴啃了一口。(p12)

In those days he had a ruddy complexion, and running from his cheekbone to his right ear was a large, bright, shiny scar—legacy of a donkey bite received while napping under a tree in his childhood. (p13)

The word “legacy” in the translated version actually could not be found in the original sentence. Metaphor is again used by the translator to add to the translated sentence vividness, which in essence conforms to Lao She’s writing style. In addition, the expression is easier for the English readers to accept in that it is humorous.

Chapter Four Cultural Aspects of Shi's Version

“The role of language within a culture and the influence of the culture on the meanings of words and idioms are so pervasive that scarcely any text can be adequately understood without careful consideration of its cultural background. (Nida, 2001: preface)” It goes without saying that culture plays an essential role in translation.

In his *Language, Culture, and Translating*, Nida puts forward that:

“For truly successful translating, biculturalism is even more important than bilingualism, since words only have meanings in terms of the cultures in which they function” (Nida, 1993:110).

The relationship between translation and culture has been receiving increasing attention in the worldwide translation circle. Sharing the same view with their contemporary theorists, Andre Lefevere and Susan Bassnett have realized the importance of context in matters of translation:

“One context is, of course, that of history. The other context is that of culture. The questions that now dominate the field are able to dominate it because research has taken a “cultural turn”, because people in the field began to realize, some time ago, that translations are never produced in a vacuum and that they are also never received in vacuum (Lefevere & Bassnett, 1998:3)”.

From the perspective of cultural translation, the original features embedded in the source culture should be transferred to the fullest extent. In order to realize that purpose, four points should be recognized.

Firstly, the translator is supposed to understand the original text and its cultural background. If not, mis-interpretation will inevitably occur, which may lead to an incorrect translation, not to

mention the mis-representation of the cultural connotation.

Secondly, the translator should try to retain the original images to preserve the cultural message to the maximum extent possible to prevent the cultural color from dimming. To be true to the original content, a translator must be faithful to the original images, that is, to represent them as much as possible.

Thirdly, the original images must not go beyond the limit of the reader's acceptance. If the implied meanings of the original images fail to express themselves in the target culture, the target text is likely to be misunderstood by the reader with the original images retained.

Finally, in the process of cultural translation, translators must be alert of missing the original information, or adding unnecessary message to the target text.

4.1 Cultural Barriers and Its Translatability

Gregory Rabassa puts it that "a translation can never equal the original; it can approach it, and its quality can only be judged as to accuracy by how close it gets" (Rabassa, 1989: 7). Because language and culture are so inextricably linked, words and expressions carry different nuances of meanings for the people of a certain culture and are unique to them. That means we have to overcome cultural barriers and try to "track our brains" for the closest natural equivalents to make up the semantic zero.

Culture is obviously another thing besides language that the translator should transfer during the process of translation. As George Steiner puts it, "Translation of any kind is meanwhile a kind of cultural communication. This communication can be either vertical or plane, but one point is positive, that is, what the communication is about must be cultural denotation." (Steiner, 2001: 45).

The awareness of the cultural discrepancies between Chinese and English is of great significance in working out a perfect translation. As a bridge of culture, translation embraces more than transformation of two languages. An accomplished translator has to probe into deep structure and cultural connotation instead of only concentrating on the actual language. Most of the translation mistakes are not caused by linguistic misinterpretation, but rather, the cultural misunderstanding. Even if a translator has sufficient linguistic competence in the relevant languages, he or she is still at a dilemma as to whether or not able to preserve culturally-loaded expressions in the target language.

For Nida, cultural adjustments must be made to achieve the effect of equal response. According to Nida, the response of the receptor must be consistent with the way in which the original receptors presumably reacted to the message when it was given in its original setting. (Nida, 1982: 1) Therefore, three ways are proposed by Nida: (1) Cultural adjustments can be done only when the literal translation is not effective or impractical; (2) Only minor cultural information can be adjusted to the target language; and 3) The major cultural information must be preserved like it was (Nida & Taber, 1982: 110). To illustrate his point, he gives three examples. The first example concerns about the translation of “love with my heart” into “用我的心爱你” in Chinese culture. While in some other cultures “love with my liver”, “love with my stomach” or even “love with my throat” would be more appropriate since they treat liver, stomach or even throat as the origin of emotion. Therefore, it is better to translate “用我的心爱你” as “love you truly”. The second example “as white as snow” can be replaced with such equivalent idioms as “as white as egret feathers” or “as white as snow” in the receptor language on condition that “snow as an object is not crucial to the target language message, that is to say, it is a minor cultural message to the target language” (Nida & Taber, 1982: 4). As to the third

example, “the lamb of God” and other important Biblical terms must be retained in translation, for these terms are “deeply imbedded in the very thought structure of the message”. (Nida, 2004:167)

Literary works, as the mirror of social life, are not merely the artistic creation of language. More significantly, they are the most direct approach to a specific culture whose aspects of diversity will be reflected in languages. John Lyons, an English linguist, asserts in his *Semantics*, “Language is a part of culture. Differences on the language usage will expose the features of the social culture in terms of the substances, customs and other activities.” (Lyons, 1968: 30) Nida shares this opinion by declaring that “differences in culture mean differences in language” (Nida, 2001: 153).

As an indigenous writer, Lao She is especially acknowledged for writing works embedded with the unique Chinese culture. Subsequently, in dealing with his *Luotuo Xiangzi*, a novel rooted in a specific culture, the translation of cultural elements becomes a knot to be untied. According to Nida’s theories, the cultural meanings in *Luotuo Xiangzi* should be retained as much as possible; not only so, the response of the receptor must be consistent with the way in which the original receptors presumably reacted to the message when it was given in its original setting (Nida, 1982: 1). However, we must not blink the fact that some cultural elements have hardly been translated due to the great divergence between the two cultures. Because of that, the effect of equal response, which is advocated by Nida, has hardly been achieved either. Take two examples from *Camel Xiangzi*:

EX.1 他不识字，他可是记得头一个字是什么样子：像两根棍儿联在一起，既不是个叉子，也没作成个三角，那么个简单而奇怪的字。由声音找字，那大概就是“人”。这个“人”

就改了样，变成了“仁”——比“人”更奇怪的一个字。(p364)

Though illiterate, he remembered very well what the first characters had looked like: two sticks joined together, neither cross nor triangle, the strange yet simple character 人. Judging by the sound, that meant “man”. Now it had changed into a stranger character 仁. (p365)

The translated version of this sentence contains two Chinese characters. When Chinese readers see these two characters, they readily know the pronunciation, shape and meaning of them. The pronunciation of character “仁” is just the same as that of “人”, and such a change would be natural to the Chinese readers. However, the response of English readers would be quite different as they do not know the pronunciation of “仁”, and consequently, they may wonder while “人” is changed to “仁”.

EX.2 老程又钻进被窝中去，指着破皮袄说：“祥子抽烟吧，兜儿里有，别野的。”别墅牌的烟自从一出世就被车夫们改为“别野”的。

.. *Old Cheng crawled back under his quilt, pointed to his tattered leather jacket and said, “Have a smoke, Xiangzi. There are some in the pocket.”*

Discussing the discrepancies between Chinese and English writing systems, Ye Zinan once points out, “If the author wants to deliver information by using some features of writing system, the translator is likely to face a great trouble.” (Ye Zinan, 2001: 19) This example is a proper explanation to Ye’s assertion. According to the literal meaning, “别墅” finds its equivalent in English as “villa”, while “别野” can hardly be translated into any existing words or phrases in English. The author’s intention here is apparently to show the illiteracy of Old Cheng or even the

whole class of rickshaw puller since they had no chance of receiving education at that time.

As known to all, Chinese differs from English in that the former is a typical example of analytical language while the latter belongs to inflectional languages. Due to the great gap between Chinese and English writing systems, it is almost impossible for the translator to overcome this barrier and achieve equivalent effect. As can be noticed in Shi's version, the translator just omitted this part in the target language.

4.2 Translation of Culturally-loaded Elements

4.2.1 Rendering of Characters' Names

The spelling of people's name in Chinese is quite different from that in English. In Chinese, the family name is put ahead of the first name, while in English the first name is listed first, followed by the family name. After 1979, the translation of people's names has adopted the system of Pinyin (Chinese alphabet). The spelling must follow the appropriate order, family name and then first name.

In essence, names are merely symbols. It does not matter if the main character is called "Happiness" or "Sadness" as long as the readers know who is who. While in literary translation, caution is needed in translating names, because names are usually endowed with specific meanings by the author.

There are lots of characters in *Luotuo Xiangzi*, some of them having names, some anonymous, and still some being nicknamed. Besides the characters, there are also some names of historical figures. That requires the translator to adopt different methods to translate them.

骆驼样子	<i>Camel Xiangzi</i>
虎妞	<i>Tigress</i>
刘四爷	<i>Fourth Master Liu</i>
小马儿	<i>Little Horse</i>
小福子	<i>Joy</i>
黄天霸	<i>Huang the Tyrant</i>
孔圣人	<i>Confucius</i>
张妈	<i>Nanny Zhang</i>
高妈	<i>Gao Ma</i>

Roughly, the translation strategies Shi employs in this respect can be divided into four categories: (1) translating the Chinese names directly into its English equivalence, e.g. Tigress, Joy and Confucius; (2) translating part of the name into English while preserving the other part of Chinese, e.g. Camel Xiangzi, Fourth Master Liu and Nanny Zhang; (3) translating the Chinese names according to pinyin, e.g. Gao Ma; and (4) translating according to pinyin while adding a note to it, e.g. Huang the Tyrant.

Undoubtedly, Xiangzi is the most important figure in the novel. Since Xiangzi is nicknamed as “Luotuo Xiangzi”, the two parts of “Luotuo” and “Xiangzi” should be translated separately. As to the first part, it is better to translate “骆驼” as “camel” instead of “Luotuo”. The English readers would readily know what a camel is, while “Luotuo” does not make any sense to them. In the cultural sense, Chinese and English readers hold the same understanding as to the animal of camel. It is often associated with the hardest work and the lowest return, which is exactly a

mirror of Xiangzi. In addition, camel is a means of transport, and Xiangzi, as a rickshaw puller, is also regarded as a tool by the privileged and the powerful. Such a comparison reveals that Xiangzi's tragedy is destined in that society. As to the second part, “祥” means “auspicious, propitious, fortunate, lucky, promising, timely and happy, etc” in Chinese, and “子” is a suffix to a young man's name to show intimacy, which has little to do with the main theme. Lao She's intention of selecting the word “祥” must be taken into consideration before translating it. As “祥” is a commonly used name in China, transliteration is undoubtedly a good strategy to be employed. However, it might be Lao She's irony to put a propitious name on a tragic character. If so, it is also reasonable to translate it into “luck” or “fortune” considering the preservation of irony. However, caution should be taken since the title of “Camel Luck” or “Camel Fortune” is likely to cause misunderstanding among English readers. After all, it's not a story about a camel named Luck or Fortune. To balance the various factors, transliteration is still the best choice that Shi could make.

If “祥子” is the hero, “虎妞” should definitely be the heroine of the novel. According to the plot, the former destiny is greatly influenced by the latter. Shi's translation of “虎妞” as “Tigress” is connected with its referential meaning and the cultural image. In both Chinese and English cultures, the tiger is considered to be a fierce and cruel animal, while the personality of the heroine in this novel is exactly like a tigress. Besides, “tigress” in English also refers to a shrew, which is exactly a suitable depiction of “虎妞”. By such a translation, the personality of “虎妞” is implied and no cultural conflict is caused.

Compared with the hero and the heroine, “刘四爷”, “小马儿” and “小福子” are minor characters in the novel. The translations of these names are of less importance to the theme of the story. “刘四爷” is translated according to its literal meaning as “Fourth Master Liu”, because

“Master” is a respectful address to those powerful people in Beijing dialect. “Little Horse” reveals the two features of the boy: little in age and size; working as a rickshaw puller. “小福子” is translated as “Joy”, which gives the readers an impression of her innocence and silliness.

The two historical names, “黄天霸” and “孔圣人”, are representative of much Chinese cultural color. It is noticeable that the translator treats the two differently. “黄天霸” is translated as “Huang the tyrant” with the explanative “the tyrant” added, while “孔圣人” is just translated as “Confucius” without any modifier. Such treatment reflects the translator’s cultural awareness. Compared with “孔圣人”, most of western readers have no idea about “黄天霸”, although it is also a household name in China. In the novel, Liu Si is compared to “黄天霸” and Mr. Cao to “孔圣人”. Readers can understand the second comparison as they are both so-called perfect persons, but definitely can not perceive the relationship between Liu Si and “Huang”. By adding “the tyrant” to “Huang”, the translator skillfully fills up the much needed cultural gap.

4.2.2 Rendering of Idioms

When discussing the translation of idioms, Nida says:

“Idioms are some of the most obvious candidates semantic adjustment, for the very fact that they are idioms means it is unlikely that the same type of distinctive form will have the same meaning in another language (Nida, 1982: 106).”

In other words, idioms are special collocations of fixed combinations of words, the meaning of which can not be determined from the meaning of the parts. Idioms are somewhat more open to intrusions and modifications than are words, and they usually rather culture specific, that is, they depend very much upon a specific social or ecological setting. Because of their close identification with a particular language and culture, idioms usually carry more

impact than non-idiomatic expressions. Finding satisfactory equivalents for idioms is one of the most difficult aspects of translating. In many instances, idioms can only be satisfactorily rendered by non-idioms in a target language, although in the process much of the psychological impact is lost (Nida, 2001: 28). The Chinese language is abundant with idioms, which contribute to the elegance and succinctness of the Chinese language.

While translating idioms, there are mostly three methods that can be applied to according to different circumstances, i.e., equivalent-loaning translation, literary translation, and free translation. If Chinese and English expressions are exactly of the same in meaning and form, equivalent idioms can be borrowed. If the original idioms can readily be understood in the target language, they can be literally transferred into the target text. However, sometimes the literally translated idioms are unreadable or unacceptable for the readers of the target text due to a large discrepancy between the source language and the target language. In such a case, free translation would be adopted in order to maintain the original meaning.

EX.1 这个事非我自己办不可，我就挑上了你，咱们是先斩后奏；反正我已经有了，咱们俩谁也跑不了啦！（p190）

This is something I have to fix myself. I've picked you and we've done that we've done without asking his opinion. And anyway, I'm pregnant so neither of us can run away! (p191)

“先斩后奏” is a Chinese idiom which originally means “execute the criminal first and report to the emperor afterwards”. This meaning is totally derived from the feudal society and nowadays few Chinese people would consider the old meaning at the sight of this idiom. The cultural implication of this idiom is of no significance for the theme. As it has no equivalence in

English and the literal meaning does not make sense to English readers, thus, the translator adopts free translation.

EX.2 他没话可说，只能立在那里，等个水落石出；至少他得作到这个，才能象个男子汉。
(p322)

The least he could do to show that he was a man was to stand there, even though he had nothing to say, and wait for the situation to sort itself out. (p323)

“水落石出” in this sentence is an example of another four-character idiom. According to the literal meaning, it can be explained as “when the water subsides the rocks emerge”. More frequently, the extended meaning of it is used, meaning “the truth is fully revealed”. While in the original sentence, there is in fact no truth to be revealed. Since the situation of that time is rather disordered, nobody knows what would happen next, it is appropriate to translate it according to the actual meaning as “wait for the situation to sort itself out”.

EX.3 他不想跟她去商议，他得走；想好了主意，给她个不辞而别。(p330)

He didn't feel like talking anything over with her, he had to escape and once he had a plan of action, clear out without a word. (p331)

“不辞而别” in this example means “leave without saying good-bye”. Actually, there is an equivalent phrase of “French leave” in English. When translating this idiom, the translator has to take into consideration Xiangzi's social status. As a rickshaw puller, Xiangzi is not a well-educated person and he certainly would not know much about “French leave”. Shi's

translation of “clear out with a word” apparently has tried to represent the colloquialism of the whole novel, as “clear out” which just means “leave” in colloquialism.

EX.4 我这一宝押错了地方。嫁鸡随鸡，什么也甭说了。(p372)

I made the wrong bet. Now I'm stuck with you, there's no more to be said. (p373)

“嫁鸡随鸡” is an idiom of old usage, meaning “marry a cockerel and follow a cockerel”. Since in the feudal Chinese society women did not have much status and freedom in choosing their marriage, they usually threw in their lots with their husband. When Tigress was saying this, she meant that she would be with Xiangzi whatever bad things happened. Shi's translation well reveals the mentality of Tigress because she knew she had few other choices.

EX.5 这样的钱不能光明正大的花出去。(p530)

This kind of money could not be disposed of in an open and honest way. (p531)

Originally, the idiom of “光明正大” is connected with a plaque used to be hung above in the hall of the government offices in feudal China. It serves as a warning to remind the officers of being just and honest, or, doing things open and above-board. Here, the idiom is used to express Xiangzi's guilt of having sold Ruan Ming out. As the original meaning of this idiom can be readily understood by English readers, Shi employs the strategy of literal translation.

4.2.3 Rendering of Proverbs and Sayings

Proverbs and sayings are set expressions handed down among the masses to reflect profound

truth in simple and popular words. Coming from daily experience, proverbs and sayings embody a distinctive culture flavor. Most proverbs and sayings both in English and in Chinese are made up of the figurative language, so the strategy of literal translation is often adopted in order to reproduce the original images. However, the cultural gap between the two different languages is still distant. Consequently, some of the proverbs and sayings are of strong local flavor, under which circumstances, free translation becomes a better choice to be adopted.

Luotuo Xiangzi is featured with colloquialism, which means that not so many proverbs and sayings are included in this novel. However, Lao She does use some proverbs and sayings in some places.

EX.1 有急等用钱的，有愿意借出去的，周瑜打黄盖，愿打愿挨！(p162)

Some people needed money, and others were willing to lend it to them. The punishment is skillfully given by one side, and gladly accepted by the other. (p163)

“周瑜打黄盖，愿打愿挨” belongs to the category of literary quotation. It comes from *the Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. The two persons mentioned are generals of the Wu kingdom and the quotation is well known as “deceiving the enemy by torturing one’s own man”. A deep analysis of this proverb reveals that one side is powerful and the other comparatively powerless. However, both of the two sides are of the same position. In Shi’s translation, the cultural meaning is obviously sacrificed since it may become a far more difficult job to explain the story to the English readers. By sacrificing the cultural meaning, the implied meaning of this proverb is clearly revealed.

EX.2 看样子没动静，高妈真想俏皮他一顿，可是一想他的直诚劲儿，又不大好意思了：“你真行！‘小胡同赶猪——直来直去’；也好！”(p170)

Seeing Xiangzi refusing to budge, Gao Ma itched to prod him into action. But she felt awkward about attempting anything, because Xiangzi was such an honest person. She just said, “Well, have it your own way. I suppose it’s better to be straightforward about things.”

“小胡同赶猪——直来直去” is an expression of regional color. The saying is used in the northern part of China, with its equivalence in southern China as “弄堂”. Either “胡同” or “弄堂” refers to a narrow alley in which a pig can only move forward or backward. The whole saying is to describe the straight-forwardness and directness of one’s style or character. In this example, Shi uses free translation as most readers may not know that this saying comes from folk wisdom.

EX.3 你可倒好！肉包子打狗，一去不回头啊！(p184)

Well you certainly are a guy! A dog given a bone who doesn’t come back for more! (p185)

In Tigress opinion, Xiangzi had gained benefits and then he never kept contact with her. This is just like a dog being given a bone and never coming back any more. Tigress’s words imply a kind of humiliation to Xiangzi. To preserve the implication of Tigress’ words, Shi adopts the strategy of literal translation. It retains the original image since even English readers can easily understand the original meaning.

EX.4 他必审问我，我给他个“徐庶入曹营——一语不发”。(p192)

He's sure to ask questions but I'll hold my tongue to begin with. (p193)

“徐庶入曹营——一语不发” is another proverb coming from *the Romance of Three Kingdoms*. In translating this kind of literary quotation, it is very difficult for the translator to explain the whole story to readers. Shi's translation discards the image and preserves the deep meaning of this proverb.

EX.5 大家越看越没劲，也越舍不得走开；万一他忽然说出句：“再过二十年又是一条好汉”呢？ (p526)

Everyone was thoroughly disappointed yet still reluctant to leave. What if he suddenly shouted something like, “who's afraid of death, not me!” (p527)

The literal meaning of the underlined part is that “after twenty years I am a hero again”. In translating this saying, the translator uses the strategy of free translation. The cultural connotation is partially retained, as the language employed here are rather informal. However, the cultural image in the original sentence is not included in the translated sentence. The original sentence contains much of heroic color, which can not be sensed in the target text.

The translator's familiarity with the Chinese culture makes the translated version generally a sound one. As can be seen, few mistakes are made in translating the above-discussed cultural elements. However, it would be a hasty decision to say that the translation of cultural elements is successful as some problems do occur in the translation of conventional expressions.

4.2.4 Rendering of Conventional Expressions

As the Chinese culture has a long history of thousands of years, many highly culturally-loaded terms have emerged. Besides aphorism, idioms, proverbs and allegorical sayings, there are also some conventional expressions. These expressions come from the long evolving history of Chinese culture and bring to the Chinese language an unusual charm. Literary translation plays a more important role than free translation in the handling of these expressions.

EX.1 他不希望得三个大宝，只盼望换个百儿八十的，恰好够买一辆车的。(p54)

He did not expect to get a hundred and fifty ounces for three camels, all he hoped for was eighty to a hundred dollars—just enough to buy a rickshaw. (p55)

“大宝” in this example just means “元宝”，which refers to a kind of shoe-shaped silver ingot used as currency in feudal China. There are at least two problems in this translation. Firstly, “大宝” does not essentially equal to “银子”(silver), although it is cast of silver. Secondly, the weight of three “大宝” definitely does not equal to 150 ounces, because at that time few Chinese people understood the term “ounce”.

EX.2 样子是立在高兴那一面的，街上的热闹，叫卖的声音，节赏与零钱的希冀，新年的休息，好饭食的想象……都使他像个小孩子似的欢喜，盼望。(p182)

Xiangzi belonged to the happy ones. The bustle in the streets, the calls of the vendors, the hope of bonus money and tips, the New Year holiday and the visions of good food filled him with thrilled

anticipation like a child. (p183)

The word “节赏” can also be called as “节钱”, which refers to the monetary reward given to servants during festivals. It can be hardly admitted that it is equivalent to bonus money. Bonus money can be distributed at any time, while “节赏” will only be given during festivals. It’s better to change the translation into “festival bonus”.

EX.3 御河的水久已冻好，静静的，灰亮的，坦平的，坚固的，托着那禁城的城墙。(p194)

The moat, long since frozen over, stretched silent, silver-grey, flat and solid around the walls of the Forbidden City, as if to hold them up. (p195)

In this example, “御河” is rendered as “the moat”, which refers to a deep, wide ditch, usually filled with water, typically surrounding a fortified medieval town, fortress, or castle as a protection against assault. The English word of “moat” actually equals to “护城河” in Chinese. The word “御” is left out during the process of transfer, which causes the loss of information. “御” in Chinese means somebody or something that is related to the emperor. “御河” may possibly find its equivalence in English as “imperial moat”.

EX.4 门上的春联依然红艳，黄的挂钱却又被风吹碎了的。(p328)

New Year mottoes shoed bright red on the doors, but some the strings of yellow paper ingots had been torn by the wind. (p329)

In China, “春联” is another expression associated with a festival. It refers to strips of red

paper containing auspicious words pasted on the walls in the Spring Festival. Three problems can be found in Shi's translation. Firstly, the translated version of "New Year mottoes" is a rather vague one, as it is likely to be associated with "New Year resolution" by English readers. Secondly, the Spring Festival is typically Chinese and does not actually mean the "New Year" in western countries. Thirdly, the word "motto" in its meaning can not express the celebrating atmosphere, which is in deed implied in "春联". An alternative might be "Spring Festival couplets".

EX.5 她张罗着煮元宵, 包饺子, 白天逛庙, 晚上逛灯。(p346)

She bustled about boiling sugar-filled glutinous rice balls for the festival, as well as dumplings, visited the temple fair in the morning and admired the coloured lanterns on the streets at night.
(p347)

In translating "元宵", the translator tries to give a full description of this China-specific food. However, the translation is still deficient in that "元宵" may not be filled only with sugar. The stuffing part could be either meat or sesame. The readers may be still confused about what the food is really like. Since lots of English readers are familiar with dumpling, it might be better to translate "元宵" as "glutinous rice dumpling" or "dumplings made of glutinous rice flour".

EX.6 没有人送殡, 除了样子, 就是小福子的两个弟弟, 一人手中拿着薄薄的一打儿纸钱, 沿路撒给那拦路鬼。(p434)

Joy and her two brothers were the only other mourners, each holding a thin sheaf of paper money to throw to the spirits who might bar the way. (p435)

“纸钱” is another conventional expression in China. The translator uses the strategy of literal translation. It may be humorous to readers since in modern times money is mostly made of paper. In China, “纸钱” refers to the paper made to resemble money and burned as an offering to the dead. “Paper money” is just a false friend of “纸钱”. The translation is an unrefined one and might cause misunderstandings.

Chapter Five Conclusion

5.1 Merits and Demerits of Shi's Version

Elaborating on his translation theory of functional equivalence, Nida offers the basic requirements of a translation as the following: (1) making sense; (2) having a natural and easy form of expression; (3) conveying the spirit and manner of the original; and (4) producing a similar response (Jin Di, 1998: 5).

The above-mentioned four can be divided into the linguistic requirements and the cultural requirements, with the first two referring to the translation of meaning, the third one relating to the translation of style, and the last one concerning the translation of culture.

As far as the linguistic aspect is concerned, Shi's version conforms to the principle of functional equivalence to some extent. In terms of meaning, Shi's translation is of much accuracy in transferring the meaning of words and phrases as most of the words and phrases that the translator selects are equivalent to the original ones. The faithfulness of the target meanings to the source meanings reaches a very high degree, which demonstrates the translator's superior mastery of the two languages. In terms of style, the equivalent degree is comparatively less than that of meaning. Among the three factors analyzed in this respect, different degrees of equivalence are reached. Firstly, the brevity of the source text is mostly reproduced in the target text. Secondly, in translating the Beijing dialect, much attention is paid to the colloquialism, while the unique Beijing flavor can hardly be sensed in the translated texts. As for the rhetoric, most of them are rendered strictly following the original style, and some are altered because of the different modes of thinking between Chinese and English readers. To sum up Shi's strategy,

meaning takes precedence to style. When conflicts occur between meaning and style, the latter is usually sacrificed for the compensation of the former.

As far as the cultural aspect in Shi's version is concerned, there still exist some problems need to be further discussed. In the part of character's names, "Nanny Zhang" and "Gao Ma" are rendered inconsistently although there is in fact no distinct difference between the two. In the other three parts, the cultural connotation has to frequently make way for the meaning and the style. In some examples, the cultural images are discarded in order to express the exact meaning of the linguistic units. Still in other examples, the cultural connotations are not adequately recreated in hope to preserve the original style, which inevitably leads to undertranslation or mistranslation.

As judged by the four requirements proposed by Nida, *Camel Xiangzi* does an above average job in the first two points, an average one in the second one, and a below average job in the last. Generally, Shi's general translation strategies can be concluded as: (1) Transferring the meaning is the ultimate task in translating, with conveying of the style coming next, and reproduction of cultural connotation coming last. Therefore, the style has to make way for the meaning, and the cultural connotation must be sacrificed for the other two aspects. (2) Different translation strategies should be employed under specific circumstances. The intelligibility of the translated version is treated with most seriousness, and as a result, domestication is more frequently used rather than foreignization.

5.2 Applicability of Nida's Translation Theories

Examined by Shi's translation of *Luotuo Xiangzi*, Nida's translation theories should be valued as significant in translating literary works. From the linguistic aspect, the classification of

meanings and the ideas on the style have been of much applicability to literary translations. From the aspect of culture, Nida's views on cultural translation are also very constructive in translating the literary works.

It does not mean that Nida's theories are golden rules in translating literary works. Newmark points out several defects in Nida's theories. Firstly, equivalent effect is not always possible to achieve. In the following three situations, functional equivalence is impossible: (1) If a non-literary text describes, qualifies or makes use of a peculiarity of the language it is written in, the reader of the translation will have to have it explained to him, unless it is so trivial that it can be omitted. (2) A non-literary text relating to an aspect of the culture familiar to the first reader but not to the target language reader is unlikely to produce equivalent effect: particularly, if originally intended only for the first reader. (3) There is the artistic work with a strong local flavor which may also be rooted in a particular historical period. (Newmark, 2001: 11) Additionally, the "equivalent effect" principle is "an important translation concept which has a degree of application to any type of texts, but not the same degree of importance" (Newmark, 1988: 49). Finally, Nida's dynamic equivalence theory emphasizes too much on reducing information load, which inevitably reduces the information of the source text (Newmark, 2001: 51).

The above-mentioned defects in Nida's theories are reflected in the translation of *Luotuo Xiangzi* to some extent. According to Nida, the response of the receptor must be consistent with the way in which the original receptors presumably reacted to the message when it was given in its original setting (Nida, 1982: 1). However, examined from the cultural aspect of Shi's translation, such kind of equivalent effect can hardly be achieved. The response of the target language receptor is, by no means, supposed to be always equal to the response of the original

receptor.

As the famous French critic Roland Barthes claimed in *Image, Magic, Text*, "...No doubt it has always been that way. As soon as a fact is narrated no longer with a view to acting directly on reality but intransitively, that is to say, finally outside of any function other than that of the very practice of the symbol itself, this disconnection occurs, the voice loses its origin, the author enters into his own death, writing begins..." (Barthes, 2000: 147) Once the translation is worked out, readers will surely have their different understandings towards it since they vary in their educational backgrounds, appreciative levels and concepts of value. Since it's up to readers themselves to judge the author's works or the translation, whether the target text can arouse the equal response of the receptor becomes a less important problem. No matter how hard the translator tries, different readers will surely hold their different opinions towards the same translation. In other words, the translator's more important task is to convey the linguistic and cultural features of the original text.

5.3 Significance of This Study

The purpose of this thesis, in the final analysis, is to evaluate Shi's translation of *Luotuo Xiangzi* from Nida's translation theories and examine the applicability of Nida's translation theories to the translation of such literary works with strong local "flavor" as *Luotuo Xiangzi*. To achieve this purpose, this thesis gives a detailed analysis of the merits and demerits in Shi's translation with Nida's theories as theoretical basis. Through the analysis, some conclusions can be drawn.

As an important works of Lao She, *Luotuo Xiangzi* enjoys very high reputation in Chinese literature. Having been translated into sixteen languages, it is a cultural legacy not only of China,

but also of the world. In such a process of cultural transmission, translation serves as a key step to decide whether this works can be accepted and fully appreciated in other cultures. A successfully translated version helps foreign readers know more about various aspects of China. It is beyond doubt that Shi Xiaojing is a qualified or even ideal translator to accomplish this task. Her life experience and years of translation practice endow her with a superb mastery of the two languages and a cultural consciousness of both cultures.

According to Nida, what clients need and generally demand is first and foremost accuracy. If a translated text can also be easy to read, this is indeed a plus factor, and if it can be culturally appropriate, the translation is obviously a success (Nida, 2001: 129).

Measured by Nida's criteria, Shi's *Camel Xiangzi* is apparently a successful translation. Linguistically, the translated version faithfully conveys the original meaning. At the same time, owing to the attention paid to the translation of style, the readability of the translated text should also be highly valued. Culturally, the cultural elements in the original text are retained to a large extent, which contributes much to enrich the Chinese culture as well as that of the world.

As is clearly evident, translating is a job of precision linguistics, cultural understanding and use of expression. When translating any text, a translator must balance two cultures as well as two languages. Literary translation, as perhaps the most difficult, requires that the translator employ with equal mastery the two languages of Chinese and English and an even greater awareness of both cultures. Likely, the translator is quite at ease in changing the content of the original message to conform to the receptor culture in some way, as Shi does in translating *Luotuo Xiangzi*. More often than not, the choke point of literary translation lies in introducing the information which is not linguistically implicit in the original. To find the information in the original is the first task that the translator has to take, and always he still can not fulfill the

second task, namely, filling the cultural blank in the receptor culture. That is also what need to be improved in Shi's version. Fortunately, these two barriers are becoming increasingly easier to overcome with the accelerating process of worldwide cultural incorporation.

Nida's translation theories have been helpful and effective in translating literary works with strong local flavor. Despite a few defects existing in his theories, Nida has "achieved what few of his predecessors attempted" (Munday, 2001: 43) and his influence in translation studies spans five decades and has left an indelible mark in the field of translation. Since the conflict between the traditional notion of content and form can not always be easily resolved, Nida's functional equivalence has been an effective way in translating literary works with strong local "flavor". In Shi's translation of *Luotuo Xiangzi*, it is surprisingly impressive that most of Shi's translation conforms to Nida's theories, which in turn proves the effectiveness of Nida's theories. Nevertheless, it should be acknowledged that Nida's translation theories are comprehensive but not universal in that they are guiding principles rather than specific strategies.

How to balance linguistic and cultural features in translating literary works still remains a problem. In real practice, the transfer of cultural features is likely to be sacrificed to the conveying of actual meaning and style. Different levels of attention seems to have been paid to meaning, style and cultural elements respectively in that meaning takes precedence while cultural elements rank last. Therefore, how to achieve successful transfer of cultural elements becomes a subject for the translator to explore in translating literary works with strong local "flavor".

Last but not the least, due to the various linguistic and cultural factors involved, it is necessary to adopt every possible translation method in translating literary works with strong local "flavor". As Mary Snell-Hornby proposes, an integrated approach should be adopted in

translating literary works with strong local color (Snell-Hornby, 2001). Since literary works are always labeled as the most difficult in different types of translation, one or several translation methods are always not sufficient to accomplish this uphill task. Taking advantage of the complementarities of different methods would be of vital importance for working out better translations.

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