

**THE TRANSLATABILITY OF PUNS IN
SELECTED SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS INTO
CHINESE: FROM THE TRANSLATORS'
PERSPECTIVES**

by

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CAM	Componential Analysis of Meaning		
CML	Cao Minglun	M4	Meaning 4
CT	Chinese Translation	M5	Meaning 5
F	Form	PT	Partially translatable
F+M	Form plus meaning	RS	Ruan Shen
GL:	Gloss	SL	Source language
GZK	Gu Zhengkun	ST	Source text
IPA	International Phonetic Alphabet	TA	Tu An
JFS	Jin Fashen	TL	Target language
LSQ	Liang Shiqiu	TR	Transliteration
LZD	Liang Zongdai	TT	Target text
M	Meaning	UT	Untranslatable
M1	Meaning 1	WT	Wholly translatable
M2	Meaning 2	YEC	Yu Erchang
M3	Meaning 3	YXL	Yang Xiling

KEBOLEHTERJEMAHAN PUN DALAM SONET SHAKESPEARE TERPILIH KE DALAM BAHASA CINA: DARIPADA PERSPEKTIF PENTERJEMAH

ABSTRAK

Kebolehterjemahan *pun* belum pernah diselesaikan dalam kajian lepas. Kajian tentang strategi terjemahan *pun* masih perlu terus diterokai. Objektif kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji kebolehterjemahan *pun* dan strategi penterjemahan yang digunakan untuk menterjemahkan *pun* serta meneliti faktor yang mempengaruhi strategi penterjemahan *pun*. Teks sumber *pun* diambil daripada sonet Shakespeare (SS) edisi Ingram dan Redpath (1978). Teks sasarannya pula ialah terjemahan dalam bahasa Cina yang diambil daripada sembilan versi yang sepadan. Persampelan bertujuan (*Purposeful sampling*) dan persampelan sistematik (*systematic sampling*) dimanfaatkan. Dalam kajian ini juga, kaedah wawancara digunakan untuk mewawancara penterjemah bagi mengkaji faktor yang mempengaruhi strategi penterjemahan *pun*. NVivo 10 dimanfaatkan dalam proses analisis skrip wawancara. Definisi *pun* yang dikemukakan oleh Larudee (1973) digunakan untuk mengenal pasti *pun*. Berdasarkan definisi Larudee dan versi *Shakespeare Sonnets* Booth (1977) serta Ingram dan Redpath (1978), sebanyak 121 *pun* dikenal pasti. Pengelasan *pun* oleh Wurth (1963) digunakan untuk mengklasifikasikan *pun*. Dengan merujuk kepada definisi oleh Larudee dan definisi kebolehterjemahan oleh Shuttleworth & Cowie (2004), kebolehterjemahan *pun* dibahagikan kepada tiga aspek, iaitu kebolehterjemahan bentuk, kebolehterjemahan makna, dan kebolehterjemahan bentuk dan makna. IPA digunakan untuk mengenal pasti bentuk asal *pun*. Pinyin Cina dimanfaatkan untuk membincangkan bentuk terjemahan *pun*. Analisis

Komponen Makna oleh Nida (1973) digunakan untuk menganalisis makna *pun*. Pendekatan terjemahan lebih/kurang oleh Newmark (2001) dimanfaatkan untuk menilai terjemahan *pun*. Strategi penterjemahan *pun* oleh Delabastita (1993) dimanfaatkan untuk mengenal pasti strategi penterjemahan *pun*. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa semua *pun* bersifat boleh terjemah separa dari segi bentuk dan makna kerana kedua-dua aspek ini merupakan aspek yang sama-sama penting dalam *pun* manakala boleh terjemah sepenuhnya dalam bentuk dan makna tidak boleh wujud bersama dalam satu masa. Hasil kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa strategi penterjemahan *pun* oleh Delabastita tidak memadai untuk penterjemahan *pun* daripada bahasa Inggeris kepada bahasa Cina kerana hanya empat daripada strategi Delabastita dikenal pasti, dan terdapat beberapa kekurangan dalam strategi beliau. Oleh itu, satu set strategi terjemahan *pun* yang baharu dicadangkan. Hasil kajian juga membuktikan bahawa terdapatnya 20 faktor yang mempengaruhi strategi penterjemahan *pun* yang digunakan oleh penterjemah.

THE TRANSLATABILITY OF PUNS IN SELECTED SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS INTO CHINESE: FROM THE TRANSLATORS' PERSPECTIVES

ABSTRACT

The translatability of puns has never been solved in previous studies. Translation strategies of puns can be further explored. The objectives of this study are to examine the translatability of puns, translation strategies of puns, and to investigate the factors that influence the translation strategies of puns. The source texts of these puns are taken from Ingram & Redpath's (1978) edition of *Shakespeare Sonnets*. The target texts of these puns are taken from the nine corresponding Chinese versions. Purposeful sampling and systematic sampling are used. The research also interviews the translators to investigate the influence factors of the puns' translation strategies. NVivo 10 is used in analyzing the interview scripts. Larudee's (1973) definition of puns is used to identify the puns. By referring to his definition and Booth's (1977) and Ingram & Redpath's (1978) editions of *Shakespeare Sonnets*, 121 puns are identified. Wurth's (1963) classification of puns is used to categorize the puns. By referring to Larudee's definition of puns and the definition of translatability by Shuttleworth & Cowie's (2004), the translatability of puns is divided into three aspects: translatability of form, meaning, and form plus meaning. IPA is used to identify the original form of puns. Chinese Pinyin is used to discuss the translation of puns' form. Nida's Componential Analysis of Meaning is used to analyze the meanings of puns. Newmark's (2001) approach of under/over-translation is used to evaluate the translation of puns. Delabastita's (1993) translation strategies of puns are used to identify the translation strategies of the puns. The findings suggest that all puns are partially translatable in form plus meaning, because form and meaning are equally significant

for puns whereas wholly translatable in form and wholly translatable in meaning cannot coexist in one case. The findings also show that Delabastita's strategies are insufficient for English-Chinese translation of puns, because only four out of Delabastita's nine strategies have been identified, and there are some weaknesses in his strategies as well. Thus a new set of pun's translation strategies are proposed. The findings also reveal that 20 factors could influence pun's translation strategies used by translators.

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.0 Introduction

In this chapter, *Shakespeare Sonnets*, and its Chinese translation are introduced first. Then the statement of problem is presented. The remaining part of this chapter enumerates the research objectives, research questions, theoretical framework, methodology, the scope of the study and the significance of the research. Finally the organization of the study is presented at the end.

1.1 Background of the Research

This section briefly presents the background knowledge of *Shakespeare Sonnets*, and reviews puns in the Sonnets, and its Chinese translation.

1.1.1 Shakespeare Sonnets

Shakespeare Sonnets is selected for this study to highlight the translatability of puns. Ayto (2005, p. 468) defines sonnet as “etymologically a ‘little sound’. The word comes, via French sonnet and Italian sonetto, from Provençal sonet, a diminutive form of son ‘song’. This in turn is descended from Latin sonus ‘sound’”. It is acknowledged that sonnet is a type of poetry, usually of 14 lines in rhymed iambic pentameter, with 11 syllables each line in Italian poetry, generally 12 syllables in French poetry, and 10 syllables in English poetry. There are mainly two types of sonnets: the Italian, or Petrarchan sonnet and the English or Shakespearean sonnet. *Shakespeare Sonnets* obviously belongs to the latter category.

From 1591 to 1594, William Shakespeare composed 154 sonnets, which was first published in 1609, better known as the 1609 Quarto. It is acknowledged that each of Shakespeare's sonnets has 14 lines, except Sonnet 99, which has 15 lines, and Sonnet 126, which has 12 lines. The rhyme pattern is "abab cdcd efef gg", and the rhythmic pattern is the iambic pentameter. Take the following sonnet as an example:

Sonnet 1

From fairest creatures we desire increase,
That thereby beauty's rose might never die,
But as the ripper should by time decease,
His tender heir might bear his memory:
But thou, contracted to thine own bright eyes,
Feed'st thy light'st flame with self-substantial fuel,
Making a famine where abundance lies,
Thyself thy foe, to thy sweet self too cruel.
Thou that art now the world's fresh ornament
And only herald to the gaudy spring,
Within thine own bud buriest thy content
And, tender churl, makest waste in niggarding.
Pity the world, or else this glutton be,
To eat the world's due, by the grave and thee (Ingram & Redpath, 1978, p. 1).

The above example shows that the sonnet has 14 lines, with line 1-4 as the 1st quatrain, line 5-8 as the 2nd, line 9-12 as the 3rd, and finally the last two lines as the concluding couplet. In each line an unstressed syllable is followed by a stressed syllable (thus it is iambic). Each line has five feet (so it is called pentameter) with 10 syllables. It can thus be concluded that Shakespeare's sonnets have a fairly strict form.

It is noted that the theme of *Shakespeare Sonnets* is largely about love. "The first 126 sonnets are concerned with the poet's relationship with a young man" (Ridden, 1982, p. 18). It is acknowledged that these sonnets either encourage the young man to get married so as to preserve his beauty through his descendants, or simply express the poet's love for the young

man. From sonnet 127 to 152, the central character is Dark Lady, whom the poet loves, hates and lusts. The rest two sonnets are thought to be separate from the other sonnets.

In literary aspect, *Shakespeare Sonnets* is greatly beautiful, charming and complicated, including the puns. It is agreeable that *Shakespeare Sonnets* is the only autobiographical work of Shakespeare. Walters (1899, p. 6) argues that it is a key to Shakespeare's heart. Shakespeare unlocks his heart with this key. Hudson (1971, p. 29) points out, "The interior life of the poet, what he thought and felt as a man, is here laid open to our view." Their point of view is agreeable. Shakespeare reveals in his sonnets a wide range of emotional and intellectual experiences, from light conceits, praising his loves and their physical beauty, to motive influences upon the poet's personal life and etc. Shakespeare presents in these sonnets his passions, his everyday thoughts, his shy courtship and emotional crisis, and intellectual experiences which reach beyond the individual to the general, and the eternal. None of Shakespeare's other works give us such an intimate glimpse into his life. The study is significant because it will examine the Chinese translation of *Shakespeare Sonnets*.

Rowse (1973, p. 6) believes that *Shakespeare Sonnets* is among the most famous and beautiful poetry in the world. It is true that the beauty and glamour of *Shakespeare Sonnets* is shared and recognized by world readers through translation. The researcher intends to conduct a research on *Shakespeare Sonnets*, because Shakespeare is a great writer in the world of literature, and that his sonnets have been identified to be the only work that reveals Shakespeare's heart. As *Shakespeare Sonnets* is rich in puns (cf. 1.1.2:4-5), it could offer substantial research data to this study. It has been identified that puns are complex in meaning, because a pun may convey two or more meanings, and it is often quite implicit to

identify puns. Thus translators would experience difficulties in translating them. Therefore, the strategies to translate puns in *Shakespeare Sonnets* are chosen to be the research topic for the study, and this study will explore deeper into the process of translating puns.

1.1.2 Shakespeare is a Great Punster

Shakespeare uses puns in his works most frequently, as Drabble (2000, p. 825) conveys that Shakespeare is “greatly given to punning, both in comic and in serious contexts”. Mahood (1968, p. 9) asserts that Shakespeare is famous for puns because “Wordplay was a game the Elizabethans played seriously”. Li Xinhua (2000, p. 198) conveys that “Shakespeare was a great master of creating puns. According to incomplete statistics, Shakespeare had created more than 3,000 puns in his works”. Mahood’s (1968, p. 164) reports in her study that *Romeo and Juliet* has at least 175 puns; *Macbeth*, 114 puns; *Lover’s Labour’s Lost*, over 200; the *Henry IV* plays, 150 apiece; *Much Ado* and *All’s Well*, more than a hundred each. The average number of puns in Shakespeare’s plays is about 78 pieces. It can be concluded that Shakespeare is a great punster.

Ingram and Redpath (1978, p. 362) asserts that they identify 35 pun words in *Shakespeare Sonnets*. It is noted that most of these puns are used at least twice in *Shakespeare Sonnets*. However, it can be asserted that these are not all the pun words that Shakespeare uses in the sonnets, since the editors add that “there are in addition frequent plays on other words which, being so utilized only once, are not listed here but discussed in the relevant notes.” For example, “lie” in Sonnet 138,

Therefore I lie with her, and she with me,
And in our faults by lies we flatter’d be (Ingram & Redpath, 1978, p. 319).

Therefore, it can be asserted that *Shakespeare Sonnets* is rich in wordplay, which makes its translation extremely challenging. However, it would be inconclusive to determine the exact number of puns that Shakespeare uses, or how many times Shakespeare puns in the sonnets, because “every reading (and even more every performance) is a recreation, a fresh attempt to interpret Shakespeare’s intention” (Mahood, 1968, p. 164). According to the researcher’s observation, Shakespeare uses at least 39 pun words, and he puns on them for at least 121 times. It is observed that Sonnet 29 is a sonnet of state, since Shakespeare plays on “state” three times; sonnet 43 is a poem of shadow, because Shakespeare plays on “shadow” three times. Sonnet 132 is a sonnet of “mourning”, since Shakespeare puns on “morn or mourning” three times. Sonnet 151 is a sonnet of “conscience”, since Shakespeare puns on “conscience” three times. Needless to mention the famous Sonnet 135 and 136, sonnets of “will”, in which Shakespeare puns on “will” 13 times and seven times respectively. In Sonnet 33, Shakespeare puns on three different words, namely “base, son-sun, steal”. These evidences prove Shakespeare is indeed a great punster. He uses so many puns so that translators of *Shakespeare Sonnets* could not ignore the existence of puns in translation.

1.1.3 Puns’ Functions in Shakespeare Sonnets

Shoaf (2005, p. 45) argues that puns are powerful devices. It is true that puns serve as a device for questioning motivation in poetic discourse. The pun is also viewed as a hole, which makes the whole of the discourse possible. It is especially true in *Shakespeare Sonnets*, where puns are frequently used rhetoric devices. Bonn (2010, p. 3) asserts that “Shakespeare ... use puns extensively, for serious and comic purposes.” It is true that puns

could make both serious and comic effects. However, it is also observed that puns have been identified to have some other important functions. In several sonnets, puns are so significant that they become the essence of the poetry, while sometimes puns appear to cluster different images, and enrich the imagery of the poem. In certain cases, puns may reveal the real intention of the poet.

It is noted that the crafty work of puns can be identified as part of the poetry itself. Being a great punster, Shakespeare likes to use puns to create excellence, because “his imagination as a poet works through puns” (Mahood, 1968, p. 20). Sonnet 135 serves as a good example to illustrate how puns function as the essence of the poem itself.

Sonnet 135

Whoever hath her wish, thou hast thy Will,
And Will to boot, and Will in overplus;
More than enough am I that vex thee still,
To thy sweet will making addition thus.
Wilt thou, whose will is large and spacious,
Not once vouchsafe to hide my will in thine?
Shall will in others seem right gracious,
And in my will no fair acceptance shine?
The sea all water, yet receives rain still
And in abundance addeth to his store;
So thou, being rich in Will, add to thy Will
One will of mine, to make thy large Will more.
Let no unkind, no fair beseechers kill;
Think all but one, and me in that one Will (Ingram & Redpath, 1978, p. 313).

It can be observed in this poem that the word, will, has been identified to be a good example of Shakespeare’s punning art. Vendler (1997, p. 32) asserts that this poem is perplexing, and even maddening. It is true because the pun on *will* is used 13 times; and it is maddening, because the puns on *will* is even used 13 times. It can be concluded that Sonnet 135 best demonstrates Shakespeare’s talent of creating puns. It is “festivals of verbal ingenuity in which much of the fun derives from the grotesque length the speaker goes to for a maximum

number and concentration of puns on will”(Booth, 1977, p. 33). It is also noted that Shakespeare creatively creates puns on *will* 13 times in 14 lines, making a pun in almost every line. In this sonnet, the word, will, conveys at least six meanings, which can be summarized below: (M1) one’s will, what one wishes to have or to do; (M2) the auxiliary verb; (M3) sexual lust; (M4) the male sex organ; (M5) the female sex organ; (M6) William (ibid, pp.466-467). Undoubtedly, *will* is the key to the theme of the sonnet. In addition to this, it is also noted that the first and third quatrain uses the same rhyme, i.e., “will, still” and “still, will”, while the couplet rhymes with “kill, will”. The rhyming *will* not only offers a clue for understanding the sonnet, but also contributes for the music of the poem. It can be concluded that the sonnet will lose its poetic rhetoric devices and comic effects without *will*, and become tasteless, thus any translation which neglects the essential existence of *will* will be doomed to be a failure.

It is also noted that puns cluster together certain images which makes the poem more compact through wordplay. Several studies discover that puns do not exist alone as Mahood (1968, p. 22) emphasizes that “A double meaning acts as the quickly turned surfaces of an oarblade to move the poet’s mind along the current of his thought from one image to another.”

It is true that, besides puns’ ability to link different images, and to move from one image to another quietly, it also demonstrates the poet’s wit. Sonnet 2 further illustrates how a pun links different images.

Sonnet 2

When forty winters shall besiege thy brow,
And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field,
Thy youth's proud livery, so gazed on now,
Will be a tatter'd weed, of small worth held (Ingram & Redpath, 1978, p. 9).

It is suggested that the pun, *field*, has been identified to include three senses: (M1) a battle field, which is related with the image of “besiege” in line one, trenches in the second line; (M2) an agricultural field, which corresponds with the image of “weed” in the fourth line; (M3) the physical beauty, which links the image of “thy brow” in the first line and “thy youth” in the third line. It is agreeable that the word, field, conveys several different images of beauty’s field (face), battle field, and agricultural field. Readers could understand that the word, field, might refer to either beauty’s field, battle field or agricultural field. It can be concluded that the word, field, enriches the imagery of the sonnet. This study believes translators cannot thus possibly well translate the sonnet while neglecting the pun, due to the complexity of pun’s meaning. Thus this study will investigate the translatability of puns in *Shakespeare Sonnets*.

It is understood that puns, or double entendre, have more than one meaning, thus they are a perfect device to reveal the writer’s real intention and mind. Sonnet 138 serves as an example:

Sonnet 138

When my love swears that she is made of truth

I do believe her, though I know she lies,

.....

Therefore I lie with her and she with me,

And in our faults by lies we flatter’d be (Ingram & Redpath, 1978, p. 319).

It is suggested that the word, lie, conveys double meanings, (M1) to tell a lie; (M2) to lie with some man. It is not easy to tell which meaning is primary, which is secondary, or which is intended, which is unintended. However, Shakespeare must intend one of the two, or both. Thus, it can be concluded that the pun reveals the real intent of the poet. One advantage of the pun is that it will not cause the awkwardness that a direct expression would cause. It is

agreeable that it is very difficult, in many instances, to conclude which is the intended meaning. Thus, one cannot simply neglect the puns in translating the sonnets. By neglecting the puns, or translating only one of the pun's multiple meanings, one is in fact taking the risk of sacrificing the intended meaning, while preserving a superficial one. One may miss the chance to translate the true Shakespeare, thus miss the opportunity to approach the inner side of Shakespeare. It can be concluded that to preserve the puns in translation is to preserve for the target readers the right of understanding the original and appreciating the original as the original readers do. Therefore, this study is significant because it will examine the translation of puns in *Shakespeare Sonnets*.

It is undeniable that puns are important in *Shakespeare Sonnets*, since they are so frequently used, and they have great functions in sonnets. However, little attention has been given to focus on the Chinese translators' perspectives. Therefore, this study aims to examine the puns' translation, translation strategies in Chinese translation of *Shakespeare Sonnets*.

1.1.4 Chinese Translation of Shakespeare Sonnets

Huang (2012) identifies that Shakespeare is the most widely translated secular author in the past centuries. It is observed that his works have been rendered into Chinese, German, French, Spanish, Russian, Italian and etc. An exact number of languages, into which his works have been translated, remains unknown. Nevertheless, *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, as the researcher observes, has been translated into Chinese since 1928. It is noted that *Shakespeare Sonnets* was first introduced into China in 1928 by a young poet Zhu Xiang (1904-1933). In 1928, when Zhu Xiang was still a student at University of Chicago, he had translated four of

Shakespeare's sonnets, and compiled them into a book entitled *A Collection Of Guava*. Here is one example of his translation.

Sonnet 18

CT(Chinese Translation):我来比你作夏天，好不好？

TR(Transliteration):*wo lai bi ni zuo xia tian, hao bu hao*

GL(Gloss):[I] [come] [compare] [you] [as] [summer], [good] [not] [good]

CT:不，你比它更可爱，更温和：

TR:*bu, ni bi ta geng ke ai, geng wen he:*

GL:[No], [you] [compare] [it] [more] [lovely], [more] [gentle] :

CT:暮春的娇花有暴风侵扰，

TR:*mu chun de jiao hua you bao feng qin rao,*

GL:[Late spring] [tender flower] [have] [storm] [invade and harass] ,

CT:夏主在人间的时日不多 (Zhu Xiang, 1986, pp. 71-72).

TR:*xia zhu zai ren jian de shi ri bu duo:*

GL:[Summer host] [in] [human world] [days] [not many]:

...

Wen Yiduo (1986, p. 128), a scholar of poetry translation, points out that “the power of poetry shall include the beauty of music (syllables), beauty of painting (wording), and beauty of structure as well (structure of stanzas and sentences)”. Under Wen Yiduo’s influence, Zhu Xiang’s sonnet translation stresses the beauty of structure. In his translation, it can be observed that each line has 10 Chinese characters, resembling the 10 syllables in each line of the original sonnet. Although it is ironized as *dried bean curd* (doufougan), this method is quite influential, since it is adopted later by Liang Zongdai (12 Chinese characters each line) and Ruan Shen (10 Chinese characters each line) in their sonnet translation. The contemporary translator, Huang Gaoxin proposes a sonnet translation strategy of replacing foot with *dun* (顿, *dun*, pause or stop, is a rhythm unit in Chinese poetry, cf. 2.5.1:49-51) while limiting the number of characters in each line, which combines the advantages of both character for syllable and *dun* for foot. This method aims to preserve the original rhythm, yet it has little to do with the translation of puns.

In 1943, another scholar, Liang Zongdai, published a paper entitled *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, where he gives a brief introduction of Shakespeare's Sonnets, and presents 30 sonnet translations. From then on, many scholars have done the translation of *Shakespeare Sonnets*, including Bian Zhilin, Sun Dayu, Feng Huazhan, Dai Liuling and so on. Among them Bian and Sun have been identified to be the translators who make great contributions in inventing the translation method of replacing foot with dun. However, these scholars pay more attention to the translation of rhythm instead of puns presented in *Shakespeare Sonnets*.

In early 1950s, Bian Zhilin translated seven Shakespeare's sonnets, namely Sonnet 32, 65, 73, 79, 82, 103, and 106, with the method of replacing foot with dun. The following is his translation of Sonnet 106.

Sonnet 106

CT:过往世代的记载里常常见到,

TR:*guo wang shi dai de ji zai li chang chang jian dao,*

GL:[past] [generations] [records] [often] [see],

CT:前人把最後俏人物描摹尽致,

TR:*qian ren ba zui jun qiao ren wu miao mo jin zhi,*

GL:[forefathers] [the most handsome] [figures] [describe] [to the most],

CT:美貌如何使古老的诗句也美妙,

TR:*mei mao ru he shi gu lao de shi ju ye mei miao,*

GL:[beauty] [how] [make] [ancient] [lines] [also] [beautiful],

CT:配得上歌颂美女和风流骑士 (Bian Zhilin, 1996, p. 11).

TR:*pei de shang ge song mei nv he feng liu qi shi,*

GL:[match] [praise] [beauties] [and] [charming] [knights].

...

It can be observed that Bian's translation uses five dun each line that represents the five feet in the original line, which was quite creative during that time, when Chinese new poetry was yet not established, and translators were still exploring appropriate methods for poetry translation. Bian's translation exerts great influence for later poetry translators. It is

acknowledged that his translation contributes largely to the exactness of rhythm in the translating the sonnets. However, it is also noted that he fails to pay close attention to the multiple meanings of puns in *Shakespeare Sonnets*.

The first complete Chinese version appeared in 1950, when Tu An published his translation of *Shakespeare Sonnets*. Within a few years, Yu Erchang and Liang Shiqiu each published their own full translation in Taiwan. Up till now, there are about nine complete translated versions, as shown in the following table:

Table 1. 1 Nine Chinese versions of Shakespeare's Sonnets

Translator	Publishing house	Year
Tu An	Shanghai Translation Publishing House (Shanghai)	1950/1981
Yu Erchang	World Book Publishing House (Taipei)	1961/2002
Liang Shiqiu	The Far East Book Company (Taipei)	1968/2002
Yang Xiling	Inner Mongolia People's Publishing House (Hohhot)	1980
Liang Zongdai	Sichuan People's Publishing House (Chengdu)	1983
Cao Minglun	Lijiang Publishing House (Guilin)	1995
Gu Zhengkun	Peking University Press (Beijing)	1998
Ruan Shen	Hubei Education Press (Wuhan)	2001
Jin Fashen	Guangxi Normal University Press (Guilin)	2004

Because *Shakespeare Sonnets* is so frequently translated, and so many translators participate in the translation, plus there are so many versions, and that the translation history of *Shakespeare Sonnets* is so long, it can guarantee a reliable research data and a systematic research. The nine complete Chinese versions are thus chosen as the corpus of the study. It is acknowledged that the translators of *Shakespeare Sonnets* make great efforts to preserve the rhythm of the original. They even invented a method for preserving the rhythm to imitate the original sonnets. However, it is also noted that the importance of puns is not given enough attention (cf. 1.1.5:13-16), thus this study is unique, because it will focus on the translation

of puns as presented in the nine Chinese versions of *Shakespeare Sonnets*.

1.1.5 Chinese Translation of Puns in Shakespeare Sonnets

In the researcher's previous study, it has been identified that Shakespeare uses 121 puns in 154 sonnets. Puns are extremely difficult to translate. Inevitably, the translators must face the puns, and solve the difficulties posed by them in the translation process, which shall be reflected in the preface, introduction, or the notes, if the translator does make some efforts in rendering the puns. Tu An's version explains the themes and his translation method by providing the postscript. Yu Erchang explains in the introduction the publication and themes of the sonnets. Liang Shiqiu reviews the publication of the sonnets, and introduces the identities of Mr. W. H., the Dark Lady, the date, sequence, and tradition of the sonnets in his preface. Yang Xiling, Cao Minglun, and Jin Fashen introduce the themes of the sonnets in the preface respectively. Liang Zongdai's version has no preface at all. Gu Zhengkun, in his preface, first introduces the themes, and then discusses the rhyming patterns that appear in the sonnet translation. Seven of the translators above do not mention the translation of puns, which the researcher believes to be one of the most difficult parts in the translation of *Shakespeare Sonnets*. One exception is Ruan Shen's version. In his seven-page preface, he spends more than six pages in discussing the date, sequence, characters and themes of the sonnets. In the remaining last page, he devotes only one paragraph to introduce his translation method, replacing foot with dun, and the pun's translation, in which he mentions two puns in the sonnets and acknowledges his inability in translating them into Chinese. The other translator, Liang Shiqiu (2002, p. 1), mentions that in translating the sonnets "There are

many puns in *Shakespeare's Sonnets*. When it is impossible to render, I make notes". However, among 126 notes in his version, only 5 are related to puns. It is only marginal comparing to the great number of puns in *Shakespeare Sonnets*. In fact, this shows that only a small portion of the total number of puns are given proper attention. In the preface, introduction or postscript of the nine versions, only two mention the puns. This suggests that the translators do not give enough attention to the puns, which are significant for the sonnets, yet difficult to translate.

Cao Minglun(1997, p. 13) conveys similar difficulties in translating puns. He asserts that "as in his plays, Shakespeare used a lot of puns. Some are too obscure to identify, ... Some are easy to recognize but difficult to render." He (2007, p. 83) also points out that "puns, in Chinese, mean two meanings itself. But in *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, puns may convey more meanings. This increases the difficulty in translating them." It is clear that the translation of puns is a daunting task to be accomplished for translators.

Considering the fact that Shakespeare uses numerous puns in his sonnets, thus puns become significant hurdles for all translators of the sonnets. However, little attention has been given to analyze the translation of puns. Among them, five versions give special attention to the rhythm translation. The translators make great efforts to reproduce the rhythm of the original. Tu An uses the method of *replacing foot with dun* to preserve the original pentameter and to accomplish the first complete version of *Shakespeare Sonnets*. This method was later adopted by Ruan Shen and Jin Fashen in each of their translations. This method aims to preserve the original foot, the basic unit of rhythm in the sonnets, by making use of *dun* (顿, pause) a rhythm unit in classical Chinese poetry. The translators make great efforts to use

five dun to match the original five feet in each line, while the puns are not given enough attention. Liang Zongdai uses a different method to reproduce the original rhythm. In his version, he uses 10 Chinese Characters each line, representing the 10 syllables each line of the original, thus the time of reading the lines are mostly of the same length. But the puns' translation is not given enough attention.

The translation notes serve as an evidence to determine whether the translator is aware of the puns or not. Table 2.1 illustrates the number of notes and pun notes appeared in the nine versions.

Table 1. 2 Notes and pun notes in the nine versions

version	notes	pun notes	pun word	sonnet
Tu An (1950)	154	2	will	135, 136
Yu Erchang (1961)	154	2	will	135, 136
Liang Shiqiu (1968)	126	5	approve	42
			Shadow	43
			Will	135,136
			conscience	151
Yang Xiling (1980)	69	0	----	----
Liang Zongdai (1983)	7	2	will	135, 136
Cao Minglun (1995)	98	4	Engraft	15
			will	135,136
			conscience	151
Gu Zhengkun (1998)	19	4	Will	133,135,136
			conscience	151
Ruan Shen (2001)	0	0	----	----
Jin Fashen (2004)	18	2	will	135,136

As the table shows, Liang Shiqiu makes five notes about puns, which is the highest number of discussion among the nine versions. Compared with the total number of puns in the sonnets, the discussion is quite marginal. Yang Xiling and Ruan Shen do not make even a single note about puns in their versions. Besides them, the other seven translators all analyze and discuss the pun,

will, in sonnet 135 and 136. Three versions make a note on *conscience* in sonnet 151. Altogether, only five pun words, namely *will*, *approve*, *shadow*, *conscience*, and *engraft*, are noted in the footnotes or endnotes in the nine versions, while the total number of pun words identified in the sonnets is 35. In other word, this suggests that only a small portion of the total number of puns earns the translators' attention that their discussion are included in the footnotes and. It can be concluded that the puns are mostly ignored by these translators, and that the significance of puns are neglected.

Several researches have proven that puns are widely-used, and thus function as an important stylistic feature in *Shakespeare Sonnets*. The puns play various functions in *Shakespeare Sonnets*. However, in the Chinese translation of *Shakespeare Sonnets*, puns are not given enough attention. Puns have been identified to be crucial components in the sonnets. It is fairly significant to give them special attention in translation. All translators of the Sonnets shall try their best to preserve, and do not own any right to discard them. It is the translator's responsibility to preserve the stylistic features of the original. As Tytler (1978, p16) points out that "the style and manner of writing should be of the same character with that of the original." Any translation which fails to preserve the puns is unfaithful to the original. Thus, the researcher discovers insufficient studies being done on the translation of puns, and thus feels compelled to conduct a study on pun's translation in the Chinese translation of *Shakespeare Sonnets*.

In addition, Aniswal (2000, pp. 189-192) points out that "punning makes the explicit implicit." She also points out that puns convey two or more meanings. But the translation of

puns tends to make the implicit explicit. Previous translators of *Shakespeare Sonnets* do not give enough attention to the significance of puns. From several previous studies, it can be concluded that translating puns is the biggest challenge for all translators. Shakespeare is a great punster and he uses a great number of puns in his sonnets. Though it is widely acknowledged that puns are difficult to translate, and that *Shakespeare's Sonnets* has been repetitively translated into Chinese by a number of translators, they very often simplify the puns by making the implicit explicit, thus lose the ambiguity of puns as presented in the original text. This study is unique because it will discuss the translatability of the pun, and analyze the translation strategies of the puns.

1.2 Statement of Problem

This study has been initiated by a big gap of puns' translation in *Shakespeare Sonnets*. Bonn (2010, p. 3) points out that "Shakespeare ... use puns extensively, for serious and comic purposes". Mahood (1968, p. 20) believes that "(Shakespeare's) imagination as a poet works through puns". The researcher agrees that Shakespeare is a great punster. He uses, according to the researcher's observation, 39 pun words and punned on them for 121 times in his sonnets. Puns are important in Shakespeare's Sonnets. However, only five pun words, namely *will*, *approve*, *shadow*, *conscience*, and *engraft*, are acknowledged with footnotes, endnotes and the preface as presented in the nine versions. In other words, only about 12% of the total puns are highlighted by the nine translators. Therefore, puns in *Shakespeare Sonnets* do not earn enough attention in the nine Chinese versions of *Shakespeare Sonnets*. This allows room for this study to analyze the translatability of puns and investigate the

translation strategies. Previous researchers assert that puns can be very playful with intricate meanings. It can be suggested that Shakespeare intends to convey two or more meanings through puns in his sonnets. It is important for translators to know what puns may convey and find appropriate expression in TL to convey it, or his translation would deviate from the ST, which would change the original meaning. This suggests that translators experience further difficulties in translating the puns. Therefore, this study examines how the translators of the nine versions deal with the puns, and investigates their strategies and explores the factors that influence their puns' translation strategies as presented by these nine versions.

Furthermore, views on the translatability of puns are varied. Those views can be divided into three groups. The first group believe that puns are untranslatable (Jacobson, 2000; Newmark, 2001; Reiss, 2000; Tytler, 1813; Han Dihou, 1969; Cao Jinghua, 1984). The second group believe that puns are translatable (Mou Li, 2002; Liu Xinfang, 2001). The third group believe that there is neither absolute translatability nor absolute untranslatability (Slote, 1978; Xu Ke, 2005). All these groups, however, do not reject that puns are extremely difficult to translate. This is especially so when translators translate puns in a poem. In spite of these, no in-depth study has been conducted on pun's translatability. Previous researchers merely state their opinion, but none of them attempts to assert their point with a systematic research.

Again, up to date, there has been very few, if any, research that investigates the puns' translation strategies in *Shakespeare Sonnets*, though there has emerged nine Chinese versions (cf. 1.1.4: 12). Previous researchers in puns' translation have never utilized *Shakespeare Sonnets* as the database. The research data of both Xu Ke (2005) and Liu

Xinfang (2001) are from various sources, mainly novels and dramas. Offord (1997) uses Hugo's translation of *Love's Labour's Lost* as his research data. Delabastita's (1993) study uses Dutch, French, and German translations of *Hamlet* as his research data. In addition, translation strategies of puns in previous studies (Delabastita, 1993; Xu Ke, 2005; Liu Xinfang, 2001) tend to be based on superficial analysis of puns translations, rather than focus on the basis of puns' definition and characteristics. Thus, *Shakespeare Sonnets* has been selected to provide a sound database for this research.

Also, there has been only few studies that investigates the translation strategies of puns as presented by nine Chinese translators of *Shakespeare Sonnets*, and the factors that influence their translation strategies of puns as well. Most of the literature focuses on the comparison and analysis of rhythm translation, culture, language, rhyming and rhythm pattern among the versions (cf. 2.5.10:60-62). Very little attention has been given to puns' translation strategies and the factors that influence their translation strategies of puns. Therefore, there is a need to examine, and investigate the puns' translation strategies in the nine versions, and the factors that influence the translation strategies.

Therefore, this study is motivated by the following reasons:

- a. Lack of attention being given to the puns in the Chinese translation of *Shakespeare Sonnets*;
- b. Ambiguity in puns' translatability;
- c. Lack of research that specifically focus on the translatability of puns;
- d. Lack of academic analysis of the translation strategies of puns as presented by the

nine translators and the factors that influence their translation from the translators' point of view.

1.3 Research Questions

The present study tries to answer the following questions:

- a. What is the translatability of puns in *Shakespeare Sonnets* from English into Chinese?
- b. What are the strategies of translating puns in *Shakespeare Sonnets* from English into Chinese?
- c. What are the factors that influence the translation strategies used by the translators?

1.4 Research Objectives

There are three objectives that can be summarized in the following:

- a. To examine the translatability of puns in *Shakespeare Sonnets*;
- b. To investigate the strategies of translating puns in Shakespeare's Sonnets;
- c. To analyze the factors that influence the translation strategies used by the translators.

1.5 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework in the study is elicited mainly from Shuttleworth & Cowie's (2004) definition of translatability, Larudee's definition (1973) of puns, Wurth's (in Ellis, 1963, p12) classification of puns, Componential Analysis of Meaning (CAM) of Nida (1973), Chinese *Pinyin* and IPA, Newmark's (2001) approach of under/over-translation, and Delabastita's (1993) proposal of puns' translation strategies.

On the translatability of puns, the study draws its theoretical framework mainly from Shuttleworth & Cowie's (2004) through his definition of translatability. His definition of translatability conveys the extent to which it is possible to translate the original expression from one language to another.

Larudee's definition (1973) asserts that pun is a play on words, in which two or more meanings are expressed in one form. One unique feature of pun is that it incorporates two or more disparate yet acceptable messages in one form, and the form plays a very important role. Therefore, the essential nature of a pun is its ability to convey two or more meanings in one form. The form refers to the sound. It is noted that the meanings and form are two major constituents of a pun. It is useful to identify the pun in *Shakespeare Sonnets*, analyse the translatability of puns in terms of form (sound), meaning and form plus meaning.

Wurth's (in Ellis, 1963, p.12) classification of puns will be utilized to classify the puns into three categories, namely homonymic puns, semantic puns and mixed puns.

For the purpose of analyzing the translatability of pun, Componential Analysis of Meaning (CAM) of Nida (1973) will be utilised to analyze the translatability meaning, whereas the Chinese *Pinyin* and IPA will be applied to analyze the translatability of form (sound). Newmark's (2001) approach of under/over-translation will be used to evaluate the translation of meaning to determine the occurrence of overtranslation, undertranslation, correct translation and mistranslation.

The focus of translation strategies will be analyzed mainly on Delabastita's (1993)

framework. He proposes nine strategies of puns' translation. His strategies would be applied in identifying the translation strategies of puns in *Shakespeare Sonnets*.

1.6 Methodology

1.6.1 Data Collection

This study is qualitative and descriptive in nature. The data used in this research has been selected to be the puns in *Shakespeare Sonnets*. The ST of these puns is taken from Ingram & Redpath's (1978) edition of *Shakespeare Sonnets*. The TT of these puns is the Chinese translations taken from the nine corresponding Chinese versions:

- Yang Xiling. (1980). *Shakespeare Sonnets*, Inner Mongolia People's Publishing House.
- Tu An. (1981). *Shakespeare Sonnets*, Shanghai Translation Publishing House.
- Liang Zongdai. (1983). *Shakespeare Sonnets*, Sichuan People's Publishing House.
- Cao Minglun. (1995). *Shakespeare Sonnets*. Lijiang Publishing House.
- Gu Zhengkun. (1998). *Shakespeare Sonnets*. Peking University Press.
- Ruan Shen. (2001). *Shakespeare Sonnets*, Hubei Education Press.
- Yu Erchang. (2002). *Shakespeare Sonnets*, World Book Publishing House.
- Liang Shiqiu. (2002). *Shakespeare Sonnets*. The Far East Book Company.
- Jin Fashen. (2004). *Shakespeare Sonnets*. Guangxi Normal University Press.

By using Larudee's definition of puns, and referring to Ingram & Redpath's (1978) list, and the editions of *Shakespeare Sonnets* of Booth's (1977) and Vendler's (1997), 121 puns are identified in *Shakespeare Sonnets* to be examined in this study.

1.6.2 Sampling

Population:

The population of this study is all the puns detected in *Shakespeare Sonnets* and its nine translations, to be exact, all of the 121 puns that have been recognized and their nine Chinese

translations. As the population is too huge for the study, some sampling techniques will be used.

Sampling unit:

There are two sets of sampling units in the study. As there are three stages in the study. The first stage is the analysis of translatability of puns; the second stage is the analysis of translation strategy of puns; the third stage is the analysis of influence factors of pun's translation strategies. Two sampling units are thus designed.

The first sampling unit consists of each original pun and its nine Chinese translations. As there are 121 puns, there will be altogether 121 sampling units. It shall be applied in the first and second stage.

The second sampling unit consists of the original pun and its translation by a certain translator. It shall be applied in the third stage (cf. 5.0:203-204).

Sampling method:

Systematic sampling has been identified to be a statistical method involving the selection of elements from an ordered sampling frame, in which every k^{th} element in the frame is selected. Using this procedure each element in the population has a known and equal probability of selection.

Purposeful sampling is a key qualitative research practice since the "logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth" (Patton, 1990,

p. 169). These “information rich cases are those from which one can learn about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research” (ibid).

1.6.3 Interview

The interview enables the researcher to elicit more information and go deeper into the mind of the respondent and explore what influence their choice of translation strategies when facing the puns. The respondents are the nine translators of *Shakespeare Sonnets*. The translators are chosen because they translated *Shakespeare Sonnets* themselves and they can be considered as experienced translators. Their experience and knowledge are fairly valuable for the research.

The sample unit for the interviews is the original pun and its translation by a certain translator. The samples are determined based on the analysis of translation strategies. Purposeful sampling is used to make sure that all strategies and all types of puns could be covered in the interview. The following are some of the interview questions:

- (1) Could you please tell me why do you translate *Shakespeare Sonnets*?
- (2) How long did you spend in translating *Shakespeare Sonnets*?
- (3) What is the original book of *Shakespeare Sonnets* that you referred to in translation?
- (4) Do you have any other important references while you were translating *Shakespeare Sonnets*?
- (5) In No. X, you render the pun as XXX, which preserves the original pun with a pun. Why do you render it this way?
- (6) In No. X, you render the pun as XXX, which preserves the original meanings with a non-pun phrase. Why do you render it this way?
- (7) In No. X, you render the pun as XXX, which preserves only one of the original meanings and discards the others. Why do you render it this way?
- (8) In No. X, you render the pun as XXX, which preserves none of the original meanings. You just omit the pun. Why do you render it this way?
- (9) In No. X, you render the pun as XXX, which preserves none of the original meanings. You just make a mistranslation. Why do you render it this way?