

Translation of Traditional Chinese Medicine: Gains vs. Losses

Pinfan Zhu 

Professor of English, English Dept., Texas State University, San Marcos, Texas 78666, United States of America

✉ **Corresponding Author:** Pinfan Zhu, **E-mail:** pz10@txstate.edu

ARTICLE INFORMATION

Received: July 08, 2021

Accepted: August 14, 2021

Volume: 4

Issue: 8

DOI: 10.32996/ijllt.2021.4.8.1

KEYWORDS

Translation gains and losses, translation criteria, Traditional Chinese Medicine, textual analysis

ABSTRACT

Translation criteria have always been a controversial topic in contemporary discourse. Depending on the preference for valuing the cultural messages of the source language or valuing the acceptability of the target language, translation theorists mainly fall within two schools: the adaptation school and the alienation school. However, whatever criterion is used, gains and losses are inevitable in the process of translation. In this article, the author, through textual analyses, proves this argument by providing specific findings from the case study of Traditional Chinese Medicine translation. He also argues that the best result of translation lies in choosing the right criterion that best accommodates the translation goal, which offers some help to translators who feel unsure about what translation criteria to abide by in their translation work.

1. Introduction

With the globalization process and economic integration gaining a great momentum, countries of the world have become increasingly interdependent in many fields. This trend means countless cross-cultural exchanges in many fields. Naturally, understanding a country's culture and translating it appropriately play a critical role. Just as Paul Engle puts it, "As this world shrinks together like an aging orange, and all peoples in all cultures move closer together (however reluctantly and suspiciously), it may be that the crucial sentence for our remaining years on earth may be very simply: TRANSLATE OR DIE" (Gentzler, 1993). So, we must attach great importance to translation. Without translation, there would be no exchanges in any field. The peace of the world and the development of all the countries both need translation as a communication tool. Without translation, mutual understanding and help across the world would be impossible.

In the medical world, translation is even more critical. The exchange of medical knowledge and skills across different cultures through translation improves experts' therapeutic skills and people's health, thus greatly extending people's life span. Because of translation, Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), being one of the major medical sciences, has gained more and more popularity among many countries worldwide. TCM has its own advantages. It differs from Western medicine in that it views human beings as ecosystems in miniature, so it seeks to improve their capacity to balance and renew their resources. TCM can minimize the erosion of human beings' soil by enriching it, maximizing the flow of nutrients by increasing circulation, and helping prevent bottlenecks that obstruct movement. Often, Western medicine intervenes only after crisis arises, whereas Chinese medicine anticipates problems by sustaining human beings' interior landscape. By correcting depletion and stagnation of vital energy in the human body at an earlier stage, Chinese medicine helps people to avoid greater problems later. Sometimes Western medicine has nothing to offer for chronic nagging complaints, but Chinese medicine can help in this way. The two are not a substitute for each other. They are often complementary. Whereas Western medicine may heroically rescue us, TCM can protect and preserve our health day to day. Because of these characteristics, TCM has become an important topic of translation. That is why the author takes TCM translation as his research topic in this article. Regarding what would be the appropriate translation criteria, different translation theorists have different opinions as shown below.

2. Literature Review

According to Peter Newmark, Translation theorists mainly swung between literal and free, faithful and beautiful, exact and natural translations, depending on whether the bias was to be in favor of the author or the reader (1981). Scholars such as I.A. Richards, Ezra Pound, and Frederic Will advocate the theory of the same aesthetic experience (or aesthetic equivalence) and adopt a hermeneutic approach to translation. They focus primarily on literary concerns, rejecting theoretical presuppositions, normative rules, and linguistic jargon. Richards holds an aesthetic belief that there exists a unified "meaning" that can be discerned and that a unified evaluative system exists by which the reader can judge the translation, and translators can arrive at perfect understanding and reformulate the messages properly (Gentzler 1993).

Unlike Richards' theory of proper translation, Pound's theory of translation focuses upon the precise rendering of details, of individual words, and of signal or even fragmented images rather than assuming the single, unified meaning of the whole work. The specific details are seen as a sculpted image. So, translators are seen as artists, engravers or calligraphers trying to produce artistic work. Pounds holds that language is charged and energized in phanopoeia (visual property), melopoeia (musical property), and logopoeia (the direct meaning and the play of word in its context). Among these, logopoeia is the most difficult one for translation. Because Pound says "It is the dance of the intellect among words... It holds the aesthetic content." Rhymes and dictions are more important than syntax in Pound's view; translation is to set off the energy and the images of the language (Gentzler 1993).

Frederic Will has a similar theory of translation to that of Pound's. In the course of the activity of actual translation, he finds what he is translating has less to do with the meaning of the text but more with the energy of the expression and how meaning is expressed in language. So, he considers the traditional notion of translation as "carry over meaning" is too restrictive and has caused translation to fall into categories of "faulty equivalences" and of "version of the original." In this case, he advocates that translation should not focus on what a work means but the energy or the "thrust" of the work, for which there is no "correct" way of translating. Will holds the view that the translator can be most faithful to the true meaning of the text by being unfaithful to the specific meaning of the language of the text (Gentzler 1993). On the whole, scholars who advocate the same aesthetic experience are criticized for their being unscientific, subjective, too practice-oriented, and theoretically naïve.

Eugene A. Nida proposes dynamic and formal equivalence based on Noam Chomsky's deep structure/surface. Chomsky's generative- transformational grammar considers that any language deep structure can be represented by different surface structures. So, Nida holds that translation should use the language wording (not restricted to the original language form) that will trigger the same impact on the target language (TL) audience as the original wording did upon the source language (SL) audience (1964). That is what he means by dynamic translation, which he considers more important and superior to formal equivalence that consists of a TL item that represents the closest equivalent of a SL word or phrase. Nida makes it clear that there are not always formal equivalents between language pairs. Moreover, the use of formal equivalents might at times have serious implications in the TL since the translation will not be easily understood by the target audience (Fawcett, 1997). Nida and Taber themselves assert, 'Typically, formal correspondence distorts the grammatical and stylistic patterns of the receptor language, and hence distorts the message, so as to cause the receptor to misunderstand or to labor unduly hard' (1964).

In *Approaches to Translation*, Peter Newmark discusses two approaches to translation: communicative translation and semantic translation, which in nature are similar to dynamic translation and formal translation, respectively. Newmark says, "communicative translation attempts to produce on its readers an effect as close as possible to that obtained on the readers of the original" and that "semantic translation attempts to render, as closely as the semantic and syntactic structure of the second language allow, the exact contextual meaning of the original" (1981).

These two approaches are also similar to what people commonly call free translation and literal translation.

At the same time, young scholars like James Holmes and Gideon Toury pioneered new approaches to translation. Toury criticizes the source-text-oriented models of translation which prescribe aspects of translation in advance based on the source text, and its environment alone. He emphasizes the importance of the target literary system and advances the concepts of adequacy and acceptability which are two theoretical poles of the continuum in which all translations can be found. These two concepts are widely accepted by the translation circles. To put it simple, Toury emphasizes "adaptation" to the target culture or language in the process of translation so that the TL audience accepts the version easily. Translation theorists that advocate TL culture-oriented translation are regarded as of the adaptation school.

Contrary to Toury's opinion, Lawrence Venuti emphasizes the preservation of the original flavor of the source language. So, it is SL culture oriented. His theory is anti-translation in nature. He advocates "alienation" in the translation process, which means the alien elements in the SL text should be preserved. The purpose is to let the TL readers understand and accept the SL culture. Venuti claims openly that he wants to develop a translation theory and practice that goes against the dominant trend in which the TL culture is prioritized (1992). It is a new idea to regard translation as cultural communication rather than pure

linguistic sign transformation. Translation theorists who advocate SL culture-oriented translation are regarded as of the alienation school. On the whole, translation theories form a continuum from alienation to adaptation, which means any theory or approach falls somewhere within the continuum. Also, all these theories and approaches, when used appropriately, are good means to help achieve effective translation even though each of them has its limitation or weakness. What's more, no translation involves the use of only one theory or approach. The author holds that even within the same paragraph or text, different approaches have to be used to achieve the best translation. Since none of them is so perfect as to be able to cope with all the problems in the translation process, naturally, some loss is inevitable in the process. However, gaining always outweighs losing in translation. The translation of TCM can be used as evidence to support this argument.

3. Methodology

Discourse analysis from a linguistic perspective was the main approach to the study of the issue of the case of TCM translation. This is because the translation result is mainly in the form of either an oral discourse or a written discourse. Naturally, careful study and analyses of the discourse at hand are inevitable. So, close reading of the selected text of TCM in the original, as well as its translated text, was conducted and analyses of the linguistic features were made of both texts to interpret the meanings of the original text against those of the translated text. Then on the basis of the findings, categorized the technique used in the translation in light of the translation theories reviewed, the purpose of which is to study the effect of using the technique or the approach selected for the translation. Specifically, the language characteristics at the semantical, syntactic, and textual levels of both the original text and translated text were studied to identify the stylistic effects on both the reader of the source language and that of the target language. Comparative and contrastive study were also used as the main approach to identify what was lost or gained in the translation process.

4. Characteristics of TCM Language

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) has a recorded history dating back over 2,000 years. *The Medical Classics of The Yellow Emperor (Huang Di Nei Jing)* is the oldest medical book in China. It contains the framework upon which TCM is based. This medical art has been continuously refined through the clinical experiences of some 200 generations of practitioners. Naturally, TCM records were mostly written in classical Chinese. So, it possesses the characteristics of classical Chinese in addition to some of its own. Briefly, these characteristics are manifested as follows: First, Chinese characters are monosyllabic, which means each character is a syllable. Such a characteristic implies that it is easy to create symmetrical sentence patterns with evenly distributed rhythms. So, TCM, written in classic Chinese, possesses this characteristic. Second, TCM is also characterized by its concise language form for comprehensive connotations. Third, most of the TCM texts were written by ancient scholars who became TCM doctors because they failed to pass the important government-held tests for choosing magistrates. These scholars, though failed the tests, were still good at using figurative language and creating short, rhymed poems in their TCM texts. This style shows their literary talents on one hand and helps TCM learners memorize the TCM principles easily on the other, for concise poems with rhymes and regular rhythms are easy to remember because of their musical properties. Finally, the TCM language uses lots of antithesis and metaphors in describing all kinds of TCM principles. All this forms the important characteristics of TCM, but in translation, most of these linguistic features are lost in gaining acceptability of the TCM texts. The discussion that follows confirms this fact.

5. Findings of the Gains and Losses in TCM Translation

As mentioned above, the first characteristic of TCM is its abundant use of concise sentences with rich meanings. For example, the Yellow Emperor, the common ancestor of the Chinese and the founder of Chinese civilization, says in *Huang Di Nei Jing*:

Original:

天有四时五行，以生长收藏，以生寒暑燥湿风。人有五藏化五气，以生喜怒悲忧恐。故喜怒伤气，寒暑伤形。暴怒伤阴，暴喜伤阳。厥气上行，满脉去形。喜怒不节，寒暑过度，生乃不固。故重阴必阳，重阳必阴。故曰：冬伤于寒，春必温病；春伤于风，夏生飧泄；夏伤于暑，秋必痲症；秋伤于湿，冬生咳嗽。（Huang 9）

Translated version:

The heaven has four seasons and the five elements that cause the cycle of generation, growth, reaping and storage, and cold, summer heat, dryness, dampness, and wind are produced. A man has five *zang*-organs to generate the *qi* of the five *zang*-organ, so that joy, anger sorrow, melancholy and fear are produced. Hence, excessive joy and anger injure the *qi*, and cold and summer heat injure the body form. Tempestuous anger impairs the *yin*, and frantic joy impairs the *yang*. The reverse *qi* moves upwards—the full pulse loses its normal shape at that point. When joy and anger are intemperate, and cold and summer heat are excessive, one's life will not be secure. So, double *yin* must

lead *yang*, and the double *yang* must lead to *yin*. Hence the saying: Impaired by cold in winter cold, one must get a pyretic disease in spring; impaired by wind in spring, one must get diarrhea containing undigested foods in summer; spoiled by summer heat in summer, one must be afflicted with malaria in autumn; spoiled by dampness in autumn, one must be afflicted with cough in winter (Zhu 2001).

When contrasting the translation with the original work, the author finds that Zhu Ming mainly adopts literal translation or semantic translation approach in translating the paragraph. In fact, this is actually what Zhu Ming (1999) explains in the preface to this translated version of *Huang Di Nei Jing*. He says that because “Many books have been successfully translated word-for-word into English and published in order to introduce TCM to the world, so the principle of literal translation penetrates the entire proceeding of my work”. Looking at the quoted paragraph, one finds that in the original, there are about 100 words, but in the translation, there are about almost 200 words. This addition of about 100 words in the translated version obviously loses the concise style of the original TCM language as one sees that the translated version is about twice the size of the original text. What this means is that, in the process of translation, the concise language style is lost. In addition to this, one also sees that in the source text, there are many short sentences, most of which have the four rhythms for the four characters in them. When read aloud, the paragraph sounds very rhymed and is rhythmic like a poem. But obviously, in the translated version, the rhyming and rhythmicity, a kind of musical property, also disappears, so some linguistic loss is sustained as both concise style and the musical property of the language are sacrificed because of the literal translation.

On the other hand, we also see the TCM message in the translated paragraph is successfully conveyed, for any English reader, after reading the translated version, understands that the passage mainly says human beings’ diseases are closely related to different weather conditions in different seasons. So, people need to guard their health against being exposed to whipping wind in the spring, extreme heat in the summer, excessive dampness in autumn, and severe cold in winter. He/she also knows from the passage that people’s health may be affected by their uncontrolled emotions such as extreme anger, joy, and distress, as these emotions are the derivatives of the *qi* of the five-*zang* organs according to TCM theory. Among other things, the reader may also have an idea of how TCM tends to compare human beings’ physiological situation to that of the nature’s from reading the first sentence. This is very important, for the purpose of translating TCM is to communicate TCM knowledge and its principles to Western readers. If Western readers are able to use TCM theories or principles to protect their health and reduce diseases caused because of extreme weather, the translation’s purpose is achieved. So, in this sense, the linguistic loss is quite negligible.

In fact, linguistic loss in translating TCM is not limited to the concise style and rhythmic and rhyming features in a literal translation. There are other types of linguistic loss. But whatever linguistic loss it might be, it still will not affect the medical knowledge that the TCM translation achieves. Look at this paragraph:

**阴胜则阳病，阳胜则阴病。阳胜则热，阴胜则寒。重寒
则热，重热则寒。寒伤形，热伤气；气伤痛，形伤肿。故先
痛而后肿者，气伤形也；先肿而后痛者，形伤气也(Huang 9)**

In this paragraph, a typical feature of antithesis in TCM language is demonstrated. The first three coordinate sentences have two contrastive clauses in each of them. For example, in the first sentence, there are two clauses, of which the first has two contrasts with the first one against the fourth word (*yin vs yang*), and the second against the fifth (*strong vs ill*), the middle word is a conjunction. The second clause has the same antithetical pattern except that it has four characters, but it also forms a contrast with the first clause. So, both within the clause and between the clauses, there is an antithesis. The second and third sentences have the same contrastive pattern but differ in the number of words. So is the last sentence where the antitheses are found both within the first and the second clauses and between these two clauses. These are the basic antithetical patterns and rhythms of the original text. TCM is particularly rich in the antithetical language patterns and rhythms because they are easy to read aloud fluently and help readers memorize quickly. But translated into English, these linguistic characteristics are disrupted. Look at the following English version of the above Chinese version:

The *yin* being overwhelming, the *yang* becomes ill. The *yang* being overwhelming, the *yin* becomes ill. When the *yang* prevails, there is heat. When the *yin* prevails, there is cold. Double cold leads to heat, and double heat leads to cold. Cold damages the form, and heat damages the *qi*. The damaged *qi* causes pain, and the damaged form causes swelling. Therefore, when the swelling follows the pain, the damaged *qi* harms the form. When the pain follows the swelling, the damaged form harms the *qi* (Zhu, 2001)

As is seen here, the translator mainly applied a literal translation as the original meanings in words such as *yin*, *yang*, *ill*, *double cold*, *double heat*, *harm*, *form*, *qi*, *prevail*, etc. are preserved. If these words are back translated, it is very likely that one may get the original Chinese characters. In addition, the original antitheses are also preserved as we can see that the first and second sentences, the third and the fourth sentences, and the fifth and sixth sentences all form a contrast between them. However, the syntactic structures changed a lot. For example, the first clause in sentence 1 and sentence 2 is converted into an absolute structure, turning the two original compound sentences into two simple sentences. Also, there are no conjunctions in sentence 4 in the original, but in the translated version, two conjunctions are added, and the sentence is broken into two sentences. But the changes in sentence structure do not affect the translation's purpose. The audience still understands from this paragraph that imbalance between *yin* and *yang* will lead to disease, as well as what symptom (heat or cold) and what result (*qi* or form) the impaired *yin* or *yang* will cause. Therefore, the syntactical changes here are quite insignificant compared with what has been achieved by the translation. The knowledge of TCM is successfully communicated, and the philosophical basis for TCM disease theory is well understood.

Normally speaking, each language has its own preference of using sentence patterns or cohesive means to create a text. According to Shuneng Lian, a Chinese linguist, English tends to emphasize overt cohesion while Chinese tends to emphasize covert cohesion (Lian 1993). What this means is that English tends to use many conjunctions to achieve cohesion within a paragraph, but Chinese uses very few conjunctions. In addition, English tends to use many complex sentences which include subordinate sentences. That is why it is also called hypotactic language. "Hypotactic" is defined in *American Heritage Dictionary* as "The dependent or subordinate construction or relationship of clauses with connectives (2000), for example, a sentence like "I shall despair if you don't come" is a hypotactic sentence. However, Chinese is called paratactic language, which is defined in *The World Book Dictionary* as "The arrangement of clauses one after another without connectives showing the relationship between them (1952). For example, this is a paratactic sentence pattern: The rain falls; the river flooded; the house washed away. According to the translation theory of adaptation school, translation should be the target language (TL) oriented so as to be accepted by the TL audience. Translation approaches such as a communicative approach, free translation and dynamic equivalence mainly fall in this category. Gideon Toury is the representative of this school. He emphasizes the importance of the target literary system and advances the concepts of adequacy and acceptability. But in translating TCM, Zhu Ming mainly sticks to literal translation which emphasizes the preservation of the original language characteristics. However, in doing so, he does not seem to lose much; he still reaches his translation purpose. The following paragraph is about how to find out the causes for coughing by different symptoms:

Original:

帝曰：何以异之？岐伯曰：肺咳之状，咳而喘息有音，甚则唾血。心咳之状，咳则心痛，喉中介介如梗状，甚则咽肿喉痹。肝咳之状，咳则两胁下痛，甚则不可以转，转则两胠下满。脾咳之状，咳则右肋下痛，阴阴引肩背，甚则不可以动，动则咳剧。肾咳之状，咳则腰背相引而痛，甚则咳涎。

(Beijing, 1999)

English version:

The symptoms of lung coughing are coughing, gasping with sounds, and even expectorating blood. The symptoms of heart cough are manifested by coughing with pain in the heart, an indistinct choking sensation in the throat, and even a swollen pharynx and a numb larynx. The symptoms of liver cough are signified by painful parts of the rib sides when coughing, even an incapability of turning the body. The symptoms of spleen cough are marked by pain at the lower part of the rib-side when coughing, faint pain radiating to the shoulders and back. The symptoms of kidney cough are characterized by painful loins and back when coughing, and even expectorating saliva and thin sputum (Zhu 162).

In the English version, the translator still follows the Chinese sentence patterns. That is to say, there are mainly simple sentences though some of them have more modifiers. Normally speaking, it is not very common to read only simple sentences within an English paragraph that has not even a conjunction. Evaluated from the dynamic equivalence's perspective, the translation can not be said as having achieved an equivalent effect on the TL reader. According to Halliday and Hansan, English uses cohesive devices such as reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion to form a cohesive paragraph (1976). But in this paragraph, not too many such devices are used. The paragraph simply consists of a series of simple sentences with no conjunctions, transitional words, or advanced organizers to provide the reader with cues. The organizational pattern of the paragraph is monotonous since no other sentence patterns are used in terms of varying the sentence length, types or

rhythms. At least in form, it may not appear as very cohesive to the native speaker as a paragraph. In other words, the paragraph does not produce an equivalent effect on the native speaker as it does on a Chinese reader. So in terms of Nida's dynamic effect, the translation is not a good one, for an English speaker may not regard the language used there as very idiomatic. It is not adapted to the audience needs in terms of cohesion. He or she still thinks that this text is somewhat alien as it is different from his or her expectation. However, in terms of preserving the cultural characteristics or the communicative purpose of the translation, the paragraph still achieves its purpose. It will not be difficult for a native speaker to understand that this paragraph tells him or her that coughing is further differentiated in TCM as caused by the wind-evil-affected *qi* of the heart, liver, lung, spleen, and kidney. And coughs of different types take on different symptoms. In addition to this, a TL reader may also realize that TCM language tends to use simple sentences more frequently and use highly literary words like *sputum*, *saliva*, *expectorate*, *indistinct*, etc. Finally, the topic-prominent information flow pattern within the paragraph is certainly different from the theme/rheme information flow pattern the English reader is more used to (Baker 143). But definitely, cultural characteristics of the TCM language are well preserved and communicated through the literal translation.

Nevertheless, no matter how effectively a literal translation can preserve and communicate cultural information, free translation or communicative translation has to be employed on some occasions. In fact, Zhu Ming also mentions that he makes addition and reduction in meaning and the number of words from time to time for effective translation, which means he has employed a free translation approach. Here are two examples:

At the beginning of the first chapter of *Huang Di Nei Jing*, the Yellow Emperor said,

“ 阴阳者，天地之道也，万物之纲纪，变化之父母，生杀之本始，神明之府也。”(1999). Zhu translated it as, “The *yin* and *yang* are the law of the heaven and earth, the rules of everything, the parents of variation, the root of life and death, and the locus of the power of the universe” (1999). In this translation, words such as “law,” “rule,” “power of the universe,” and “locus” are different from the original meanings of “way,” “principle,” “deity,” and “mansion” respectively. That is to say, if they are back translated into Chinese, it is almost impossible to get the original Chinese words. However, as the translator realizes that these words are metaphorically used, he adopts a communicative approach to translating these words. The result is that the original meanings are lost in translation, but the general goal of introducing TCM to Westerners is well achieved since the original concepts about the significance of *yin* and *yang* are easier to be accepted by the TL reader.

Other communicative or free translation examples are found in the translated terms of indicating pulse conditions. *Goumai* is translated as surging and full pulse instead of hook pulse (literal meaning for *Gou*, a hook). Though the image of the pulse is lost, “surging and full” still presents a vivid picture of pulse movement and is easier to be accepted by a TL audience. *Maomai* (pulse that can be felt by slightly resting the fingers on the wrist) is translated as floating pulse instead of feather (*mao*) pulse. The original metaphor (comparing the surface pulse to a feather) is lost, but the meaning is much clearer to a TL audience. Normally speaking, in translating technical information, one needs to emphasize its acceptability. So, it is the right strategy to be used here. Similarly, *Shimai* (literal meaning: stone pulse) is rendered as “a sinking pulse” (need to press deeper to feel it; stone sinks), which also helps increase acceptability. So, it is a good translation.

6. Discussion

As seen above, TCM translation, whether it takes free or communicative approach or literal or semantic approach, will to some extent, suffer some linguistic or cultural losses in the information-communicating process. Also, it is not possible to stick to one translation approach in translating a book. Both translation approaches used have to suffer some losses while still gain something. In the case of a literal translation, the translator will suffer some linguistic losses such as sentence rhythm, rhyme, style, syntactical pattern, semantic inadequacy, and rhetorical style. Or in the case of a free or communicative translation, the translator may sacrifice some cultural meanings in order to increase the intelligibility or acceptability of the original text. However, viewed from the general perspective of the translation's goal, which is either to communicate technological knowledge or cultural knowledge, or literature, depending on the needs of the translator, gains are often more than losses. This is true in the case of TCM translation as analyzed in the foregoing paragraphs. The translator, through using mainly a literal translation approach, and occasionally a communicative or free translation, has successfully communicated TCM knowledge and its cultural background. And it is just because of the fact that gains always outweigh losses in the process of TCM translation that TCM has spread over the world and has gained popularity in various countries. According to the statistics issued by Shanghai Xietian Information Technology Co. Ltd, 130 countries in the world have established various TCM organizations and institutes (2003). There are already 138,000 TCM clinics among the four countries of France, Britain, Canada, and Australia. Even in the United States, more than 40 states have legislation that allows people to apply for a license if they are qualified for TCM practice. At present, there are already 12,000 licensed acupuncturists in the United States. Some health insurance companies have already accepted TCM treatment. Without successful translation, or if TCM translation had always lost more than gained, it would have been impossible to see all these developments in TCM over the world.

7. Conclusion

The analysis of the TCM translation in this chapter shows that different translation approaches serve different purposes. When they are used properly, they help translation reach its purpose and maximize the benefit of introducing a new culture, communicating technology, and knowledge. Normally speaking, aesthetical equivalence is appropriate to use for translating literature works because translators want their readers to appreciate what Pounds calls phanopoeia, melopoeia, and logopoeia in works such as prose, poetry, and novels. Writers, by means of their artistic talents, make an artistic use of language to create picturesque scenes that offer the reader an aesthetic experience in reading. If a translator fails to reconstruct these aesthetical values in the translation, such as rhyme, rhythm, tone, imagery words, shades of words, onomatopoeia, and other rhetorical devices that set off an image, a musical atmosphere, or trigger the audience's empathy, the reader can only have an insipid taste of the work, and the artistic effect of the works and the artistic talents of the author are totally lost. So, aesthetic equivalence is of great importance in this aspect.

However, when it comes to translating scientific and technical information, this criterion of aesthetical equivalence is not of great value, for scientific and technical information is more about facts, statistics, procedures, and truth. Language of this genre is characterized by plain, concise, direct, and sincere language. Translation aims at informing or instructing rather than entertaining. By no means can a translator be "most faithful to the true meaning of the text by being unfaithful to the specific meaning of the language of the text" as is put by Will. In such a case, a literal translation works best. That is why Goethe says that, if one wants to exert a great influence on the general public, simple translations are best translations (Lefevere 1992). As analyzed above, Zhu Ming chose the right strategy when he used a literal translation approach. He successfully introduced the most famous classic TCM works, *The Medical Classic of the Yellow Emperor* to Western readers. His translation definitely gains more than loses.

Finally, free translation or communicative translation helps increase the accessibility or the intelligibility of the translated works, thus overcoming the problems literal translation can not solve and improving the chance of achieving aesthetical equivalence. For example, Western readers may have trouble understanding the TCM terms like "oxide lichen," "celestial pillar," and "white tiger joint running." But if these terms are translated as "psoriasis," "cervical vertebra," and "acute arthritis," through a communicative approach, they will have no difficulty understanding them. So, communicative or free translation is imperative on all translation occasions. On the whole, no translation theory or approach is perfect; no translation approach can solve all the problems. Total equivalence is also impossible, but if the right translation strategy is taken, as shown in the translation of *The Medical Classic of Yellow Emperor*, gains always outweigh losses in translation.

References

- [1] Baker, M. (2005). *In Other Words*. Routledge.
- [2] Beijing. (1999). *Huang Di Nei Jing*. Scientific and Technological Literature Press, China.
- [3] Fawcett, P. (1997). *Translation and language: linguistic theories explained*. St Jerome Publishing.
- [4] Gentzler, E. (1993). *Contemporary translation theories*. Routledge.
- [5] Halliday, M. and Hanson, J. (1976). *Cohesion in English*. Longman. "Hypotactic" (2000). *The American heritage dictionary of the English language*. 4th ed.
- [6] Lefevere, A. (1992). *Translating literature: practice and theory in a comparative literature context*. Modern Language Association.
- [7] Lian, S. (1993). *Contrastive study of English and Chinese*. Beijing: Higher Education Press.
- [8] Newmark, P. (1981). *Approaches to translation*. Pergamon Press
- [9] Nida, E. (1964). *Towards a science of translation*. E. J. Brill.
- [10] Nida, E. and Taber, C. (1982). *The theory and practice of translation*. Leiden: E.J. Brill.
- [11] "Paratactic" (2002). *The World book dictionary*. 1st ed.
- [12] Shanghai Xietian Information Technology Co. Ltd. (2003). "TCM in the world," retrieved on Sept. 12, 2003 from Nov. <www.tcm-port.com.cn>.
- [13] Venuti, L. (2001). Editor. *Rethinking translation. discourse. subjectivity. ideology*. Routledge.
- [14] Zhu, M. (2001). Trans, *The medical classic of the Yellow Emperor*. Foreign Languages Press.