A Comparative Study of Pound's and Lu Xun's Syntactic Experiments

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Abstract

The first half of 20th century saw two translators coming from the west and east respectively choose the same translation strategy to carry out their syntactic experiments in their translation practice. The two renowned translators are Ezra Pound and Lu Xun. Staying in different historical contexts and encountered with the dominant target poetics they were dissatisfied with, both Pound and Lu Xun attempted to fulfill their syntactic experiments by signifying the syntactic differences of the source texts through the use of foreignization strategy. Although attracting many negative comments because of the unfluent translation resulting from them, Pound' and Lu Xun' syntactic experiments exert great influence on the development of their target languages, further contributing a lot to the development of their target culture. This paper will make a comparative study of Pound's and Lu Xun's syntactic experiments by exploring their motives, elaborating their translation principles and strategies, and analyzing their influence and significance.

Keywords: Ezra Pound, Lu Xun, syntactic experiment

1. Introduction

Fluency has been traditionally regarded as one of the most important criteria to evaluate a translation because, generally speaking, it can ensure a successful landing of a translated text in the receiving culture. Therefore, seldom does a translator preserve the foreigness of the source text in the linguistic layer although frequently he might adopt the foreignization strategy in the aspect of the content. However, to trace the history of translation, it can be found that there are some unfluent translations resulting from intentional choice instead of lack of language proficiency. In this respect, Pound and Lu Xun may serve as two typical representatives. Locating in completely different cultural contexts, Pound and Lu Xun, surprisingly chose the same translation strategy in their translation practice, that is, they endeavored to project the morphosyntactic structure of the source language in their translation by means of the foreignization strategy. Such kind of translation, which signifies the syntactic differences of the source texts, is in fact a syntactic experiment carried out by the two renowned translators in the first half of 20th century.

Such syntactic experiment, for its resistance to the target cultural and linguistic norms and its inevitable failure to reach the target readers, received a lot of negative comments or even criticism from various scholars. However, as a typical translation phenomenon, it is experiencing some change from being challenged, frowned upon and criticized to being analyzed and accepted by scholars of translation. This largely results from the dominance of descriptive approach in translation studies today. With the emergence of some translation theories and the development of some translation-related theories, there is a shift of translation study paradigms from traditional normative approach to descriptive approach. By the descriptive approach, we are allowed to have a more objective attitude to re-observe and re-evaluate these translation phenomena in the history of translation.

This paper, by employing a descriptive approach, will make a comparative study of Pound's and Lu Xun's syntactic experiments in their translation practice. From a broad cultural perspective, we will cast our eyes to the motives, the process and the significance of their syntactic experiments, so as to give an objective evaluation on their translation activities.

2. Motives for Pound's and Lu Xun's Syntactic Experiments

2.1 Motive for Pound's Syntactic Experiment

Ezra Pound (1885-1972), recognized as the major figure of the whole modern period and the father of most present-day writers, has a great impact on the sensibility of his age and plays an important part in the history of modern poetry, in particular, in the Imagist Movement. The Imagist Movement is an Anglo-American movement in poetry at the beginning of 20th century, and in fact, it is under the background of the Imagist Movement that Pound began to carry out his syntactic experiment in his translation. In other words, Pound's syntactic experiment is deeply rooted in the Imagist movement and, sure enough, exerts great counter-active impact on this movement. There is a prominent interactive relationship between Pound's syntactic experiment and his historical context.

2.1.1 The Imagist Movement: A Domestic Poetic Innovation

In the history of American poetry, Imagism is only a transient phase, but the movement is quite important in the development of modern poetry. It is seen as "an experiment toward the rejuvenation of the language of poetry, a reaction against the flabby, abstract language and structure into which poetry of the 19th century had degenerated". (Note 1)

In the 1890s, the traditional poems of Victorian style took a dominant position and most poets in America deliberately followed the norms and premises of the Romantic and Victorian traditions. However, poems of this Victorian style, which were inflexible or old-fashioned in form, too indulged in melancholy mood and lack of content, more or less obstructed the development of English poetry at that time. Besides, at the end of the 19th century, London was still the cultural capital of the United States as well as of England; the theories and poems of London controlled the field of American poetry. Feeling themselves in an inferior and disadvantaged position, some American poets, willing to be independent, were frequently ready to embrace whatever standards and ideals were established in the literary center. "American poets hungered for approval." (Note 2) These American inferiority anxieties and the rigid norms of the traditional poetry motivated the American poets to take up a poetic innovation.

On this condition, a Modernist Movement in the realm of poetry inevitably broke out. Regarded as an explicit rejection not just of late Victorian poetry, but of the fundamental tenets introduced into the theory of poetry by the Romantics, the Imagist Movement, advocated the poetic norms such as: no moralizing tone, no striving for the spiritual, no fixed metre or rhyme—but a rhyme organic to the image itself, no narrative, no vagueness of abstractions, etc. In short, just as its name suggests, the central point of reference was the "image" itself. By "image", Pound meant,

> The image is not an equation of mathematics, not something about *a, b*, and *c*, having to do with form, but about *sea, cliffs, night*, having something to do with mood. The image is not an idea. It is a radiant node or cluster; it is what I can, and must perforce, call a VORTEX, from which, and through which, and into which, ideas are constantly rushing. (Note 3)

And he participated actively in this poetic innovation and became a leading poet in the Imagist Movement.

To sum up, Pound lived in an era when the Victorian poetry was beginning to lose its former popularity and priority, and the American poetry as a literary genre was being faced with a kind of "crisis". At such a turning point, Pound as a reader on one hand distinctly felt the constraints of the old-fashioned style of poetry, and on the other, he himself a translator, began to pay much attention to foreign cultures and tried to seek a kind of new poetry through translation of foreign poems, especially those of Chinese poets. He endeavored to release the readers from that constraint and found a substitute successfully to pave the way for the further development of English poetry.

2.1.2 Pound's Selection of Classical Chinese Poetry

In the development of the Imagist Movement, Pound's translation of classical Chinese poetry made great contributions. However, it was by chance that Pound got touch on the classical Chinese poetry at the first beginning. In 1913, Pound received Fenollosa's manuscripts of Chinese poems from his wife and became infatuated with them immediately. Realizing the great values of Chinese poems, Pound launched his career as a translator of Chinese poetry in an attempt to break the established literary traditions and published his version *Cathay* in 1915. As Lefevere states, "faced with Victorian / Edwardian poetics, Pound manufactured the Chinese T'ang dynasty poets as an 'authoritative' countertext, one that did, as if by miracle, fit all the requirements of the new poetry he, Pound, was trying to create." (Note 4)

Pound once explained in public his reasons of translating Chinese poetry, "it is because Chinese poetry has certain qualities of vivid presentation; and because certain Chinese poets have been content to set forth their matter without moralizing and without comment that one labors to make a translation." (Note 5) "Vivid presentation" of Pound refers to the abundant images filled with the Chinese poetry. Chinese poems are grounded in the concrete and the specific images. With its language made up almost entirely of images charged with symbolic sense, classical Chinese poetry is noted for its virile laconism and austere pregnancy. Pound's such discoveries actually echoed the Imagist Poetry that he had been experimenting by then as one of his major efforts to rebel against the Victorian Poetry and became a main cause for his translation of classical Chinese poetry.

Besides the image, Pound also felt it attractive that Chinese poets were content to set forth their matter without moralizing and comment. Different from the English poems of that period, understatement is the basic technique used by Chinese poets. There is no melancholy release of feelings in Chinese poems and no direct interpretations or personal comment of the poets. However, poetry of the Romantic tradition at the turn of 20th century was essentially the voicing of emotion. Even with dramatic monologues and narrative poems, the assumption was still that poetry offered a valued, intimate contact with the poet. It made those poets who followed the Victorian tradition refrain themselves from personal comment or discursive interpretation.

With such a hostile attitude to comments and abstract descriptions that were exuberant in the English poetry and such an advocacy of "direct treatment of the 'thing' whether subjective or objective" (Note 2), it is no wonder that Pound and other Imagist poets were infatuated with Chinese poems and Pound chose the translation of Chinese poems as a weapon to oppose the late Victorian tradition and to realize his poetic theory.

2.2 Motive for Lu Xun's Syntactic Experiment

Lu Xun (1881-1936) is a respectable Chinese writer. His career of literature began when he studied in Japan. During the six years after he left Japan, he took up literature translation. Lu Xun regards translation as the way to enlighten Chinese people and improve Chinese society. He severely criticizes antiquated elements of the Chinese culture and highly advocates learning from western countries. Showing much more respects to the original works and being highly faithful to the original works in translating, Lu Xun pins hope on translation in realizing his desire to enlighten Chinese people and employs *Yingyi* (referring to a strategy of extreme literal translation) to better the Chinese culture.

Lu Xun's *Yingyi* has a great impact on the development of the Chinese language and arouses a big stir in the history of translation field in China. However, Lu Xun in the early period of his translation career also adopted free translation. It is not until 1909 that the publication of *Selection of Foreign Stories* translated by his younger brother Zhou Zuoren and himself marks the great change of his translation methods—from free translation to literal translation. (Note 6) By applying literal translation, Lu Xun challenges the unfaithfulness and intentional alteration to the original texts.

Why Lu Xun preferred free translation at the first beginning when he began to take up the translation in 1903 and published his first translation works *The Soul of Spartans*? In Lu Xun's words, "I thought myself clever when I was young and thus was not willing to adopt literal translation. When recalling it, I am so repentant but it is too late." (Note 7) This is one part of the reason. On the other hand, he was deeply influenced by the vogue of free translation in late Qing Dynasty. As we know, most famous translators of that time, including Yan Fu, Lin Shu and Liang Qichao, tended to adopt free translation. Just as Wang Hongzhi comments, "During the ending years of Qing Dynasty, free translation had been a kind of vogue." (Note 6) Under the influence of these target language-oriented translation methods, Lu Xun believed that a good translation should be impassioned and cadenced, so he used the abstruse classical Chinese, selected novels that could educate the people，and coped with the original contents freely. Reading his first translation works *The Soul of Spartans*, one could get a glimpse of it.

However, in the following years a great change occurred to Lu Xun's choice of translation method. Lu Xun began to advocate the literal translation and became a practitioner of it. He even proposed a particular translation theory of *Yingyi* in a debate on translation with Liang Shiqiu in the twenties and thirties of the 20th century. This debate was so severe that it lasted nearly eight years covering translation criteria, the development of national language, attitudes towards literary criticism, etc. In this debate, the biggest divergence was translation criteria and strategy. Lu Xun was a representative of the innovative force, who advocated *Yingyi*—a kind of foreignization—oriented translation strategy.

Lu Xun's advocacy of *Yingyi* can be explained by the following three reasons. Firstly, *Yingyi* is in opposition to the rewriting of Chinese ethnocentrism in translation which was very popular at his time. As we know, China had

been in century-long entrenchment in strong imperial institution. For so long a time, the Chinese, including the emperors, officials and average people, had always thought China the strongest and the cultural center in the world. Besides, the familiarity of Chinese people with the West in late Qing society was still very limited. Despite several defeats in the wars with foreign countries, some people were still not willing to recognize the fact that foreign countries had taken advantage over China in economy and military force. Even if some translators realized this, they had to consider the readability of their version and cater to such psychology of readers. So, many translators drove to domestication strategy. However, Lu Xun was different and he had a profound reflection upon the Chinese people's deep-rooted bad habits. Realizing that the overflowing of free translation may cause misreading about other culture, strengthen national expansionism and inhibit the modernization of China seriously, Lu Xun was not ready to make a concession to common people and took a radical foreignizing method.

Secondly, Lu Xun's *Yingyi* is directed against the mistranslations at that time. Lu Xun once mentioned that, "When *Selection of Foreign Stories* was published in 1909, Zhou Zuoren and I were in Tokyo. Lin Qinnan's translated novels in the elegant and simpler classical Chinese were quite popular at that time in China. These novels were really excellent, but there were so many mistranslations in them. We were dissatisfied with the matter and wanted to correct them, as a result, we started with this job." (Note 8)

Thirdly, it is very important for the revolution of the Chinese language. As is known to all, in traditional literary system, the classical Chinese had been in a dominant position for a long time. However, with a set of rigid grammatical norms and small vocabulary, it began to lose its significance of survival. Under such context, Chinese vernacular took on stage, and a great vernacular movement broke out. With an aim to enlighten the Chinese people, "May Fourth" New Literature Movement in 1919 "advocated the general use of vernacular Chinese in both speech and writing". (Note 9) But this transformation is not so easy, because the vernacular itself of that time is far from perfect. Lu Xun thought that this "crude" language was not only destitute but also sloppy in grammar, which held back people's mind and the development of literature. Lu Xun's dissatisfaction with the vernacular at that time was the direct cause for his later use of *Yingyi*. Just as he once said, "the written and spoken Chinese language is far from precise in its grammar. The knack of composition writing is avoiding the use of familiar words. In this way, the composition is well written. In spoken Chinese, words sometimes fail to convey the views, which, in fact, results from the inadequacy of vocabulary, and that is why teachers have to rely on chalks to give a lecture in class." (Note 10) So "in order to cure the 'disease' of the Chinese language, we have to make efforts to introduce exotic expressions from the ancient language, from various dialects and foreign languages as well...." (Note 10) That is to say, the people should take pains to absorb elements that are exotic and alien, and hopefully some of them will become integrated into the Chinese language some day.

So, translation plays a significant role in absorbing new ways of expression in the development of the vernacular Chinese. According to Lu Xun, to introduce grammatical rules of foreign languages was a good way of making the vernacular Chinese more precise. Therefore, Lu Xun's awareness that the readers might feel the foreign grammar strange and feel it hard to get used to the foreignized translation could not stop him from reserving the sentence structure of the source language even by translating word by word. Just as he said, "such a translated text, not only can its new ideas be introduced, the new style of presentation can also be conveyed." (Note 10) He believed that readers would accept these unfamiliar sentences sooner or later, because when a work was translated, "a part of the translation will become smooth from its non-smoothness and part of it will be kicked off and fall into disuse due to its 'non-smoothness'." (Note 10)

2.3 Summary

Both Pound and Lu Xun are influential figures in the history of literature in their home country and even in the world. Although the cultural background at their times are quite different from each other, the motives for their syntactic experiments are surprisingly similar—they are dissatisfied with the cultural constraints that hinder people's thinking and the development of the source culture and devote themselves to the "cultural struggle" to free the readers from those constraints. Whether their cultural struggle is successful or not, Pound and Lu Xun, by importing new elements of cultural others in their syntactic experiments, display their broad view of and deep insight about the cultural phenomena in their times. They could be viewed as the "brave warriors" of their times.

3. Pound's and Lu Xun's Syntactic Experiments

With different cultural ambition and poetic views in mind, Pound and Lu Xun began to carry out their syntactic experiments in their translation practice in the first half of 20th century. Next we will have a look at how Pound and Lu Xun perform their experiments respectively to better fulfill the function of translation.

3.1 Syntactic Experiment by Pound

Translation practice is always guided, consciously or unconsciously, by translation principles of a translator. Therefore, in order to have a better understanding of Pound's syntactic experiments, we need to learn Pound's translation principle first.

3.1.1 Pound's Translation Principle

In the Imagist Movement, the poetry of the Orient, especially classical Chinese poetry gave Pound a lot of enlightenments. As is known to all, in translating classical Chinese poems into English, there are mainly two tendencies—foreignization and domestication. By foreignization it means the attempt to reshape the English language so as to preserve the linguistic structures of Chinese poetry and its underlying ways of thinking and feeling, while by domestication it refers to the attempt to turn Chinese poetry into English poetry without violating existing conventions of the English language. Pound is a barbarizer, who resorted to the method of juxtaposition to imitate Chinese syntax so as to intensify the effects of simultaneity and visual perspicuity, and thus disrupted the English syntactic structure, but simultaneously he doesn't give up the method of domestication, neglecting the real intention of the Chinese poets and recreating English poetry according to his own poetics. In Venuti's words, "Ezra Pound's translations often focus on the signifier, creating an opacity that calls attention to itself and distinguishes the translation both from the foreign text and from prevailing values in the target-language culture." (Note 11)

The translation strategies adopted by Pound were closely connected with his views of translation. With less emphasis on the "meaning" of the translated text, Pound emphasized much the rhythm, diction, and movement of words. So it could be safely said that Pound attached much more importance to the form instead of the meaning of the text, and his "theory" was based on a concept of energy in language instead of a unified meaning of the whole text.

Based on this translation thought, when translating Chinese poems, Pound attached great emphasis on the images displayed by isolated words and phrases, and reserved the collocation of words in Chinese poems without taking the grammatical structure rules of English into consideration. Consequently, he presented a series of images by juxtaposing words in the same line, leading to grammatically incorrect and unfluent translation. This is the syntactic experiment that we focus on in Pound's translation practice, and this syntactic experiment, for its preservation of the linguistic differences of foreign texts, must deviate from the linguistic and literary values of the source culture, just as a comment by Bailey describes, "He is sometimes clumsy, and often obscure, and has no fine tact about language, using such words and phrases as 'Ballatet,' 'ridded,' 'to whomso runs,' and others of dubious or unhappy formation." (Note 11)

3.1.2 Pound's Syntactic Experiment in his Translation Practice

When we get into how Pound employs the translation of Chinese poems as a tool to innovate the English poetry by image juxtaposition, the primary consideration is to be given to the problem of what the Chinese language is and how it is used as a medium for poetic expression compared with the English language.

Chinese is an uninflected language, characterized by a greater degree of syntactic flexibility compared with English. In Chinese grammar, there are no explicit distinctions made in tense and mood for verbs, number and article for nouns, case and gender for pronouns. Many classical Chinese poems capitalize upon this syntactic freedom. And the syntactical construction of Chinese language allows the juxtaposition of images without any connectives. Therefore the Chinese poems enjoy a particular kind of grammatical sparseness, that is, the omission of verbs and / or connective elements such as prepositions and conjunctions, which greatly contributes to sharpening the visual effects of the poetry. For instance, in Du Fu's lines "细草微风岸，危墙独夜舟", the images, "细草"(grass), "微风"(breeze), "岸"(bank), shed of all the connecting links, are simply juxtaposed to each other with their relationship unspecified. In this way, these images stand out sharply and distinctly without the poet's intellect or subjectivity.

And there is another two lines also by Du Fu "国破山河在，城春草木深". In the first line, there is a concession relation between the two parts "国破" and "山河在". However, such connectives indicating the relations can be omitted in the Chinese poems and readers just perceive their relationship according to their own knowledge. This is quite different from the English grammatical norms. Read the version by Witter Bynner "Though a country be sundered, hills and rivers endure"; (Note 12) it can be seen that, in order to ensure the coherence of the two parts and make it more acceptable in English, the translator add a transitional word "though" between them. Therefore, based on the syntactic differences that we have analyzed, it is easy to visualize how Pound greatly violates the norms of the English language by imitating the syntactic structure of Chinese poems.

It is obvious that specific images are just what Pound's translation theory concerns about. In order to focus on images when translating classical Chinese poetry, Pound, by means of juxtaposition and combination, put much emphasis on the precise translating of details, of individual words, and single or even fragmented images rather than complete sentences. In Pound's eyes, the words and the specific details were seen not simply as "black and white typed marks on a page", but as "sculpted images—words engraved in stone". (Note 3) This word-focused view leads to his frequent considering word (image) as his translation unit and results in his literal translation to represent the Chinese syntactic structure in the English versions despite their unfluency. Just as those who advocate "free" translation argue that Pound planted "howlers" on purpose and he was translating something other than the literal sense. (Note 3)

Look at the example "抽刀断水水更流，举杯消愁愁更愁", and read Pound's translation "Drawing sword, cut into water, water again flows. / Raise up, quench sorrow, sorrow again sorrow." (Note 9) To analyze Pound's version, it can be seen that images "刀" and "水" in the first line and "举杯" and "愁" of the second line are all directly rendered into the English words as "sword" and "water", "raise up" and "sorrow". No any alteration was made, particular in the word order and structure. As a result, his translation signified the foreignness of the Chinese poems, especially the linguistic and syntactic foreignness. When reading it, it is believed that the English readers of Pound's time may feel it quite strange because without any connective and article it is a grammatically incorrect English sentence.

Now go to some other experiments by Pound. Take the line from "Lament of the Frontier Guard". The original reads: 荒城空大漠. It means that the ruined castle stands vacant in the great desert. The visual objects—"荒城" and "大漠"—suggest the desolation of the frontiers' environment. Pound rendered the line into "Desolate castle, the sky, the wide desert". (Note 9)

Here one may easily argue against Pound for making a philological mistake—having read the Chinese character "空" (*vacant* in this context) for *sky* in another context. However, some scholars argue that Pound's deviation in this line aims at deepening the atmosphere of desolation and loneliness. Whether Pound deliberately translated in such a way to heighten artistic intensity, Pound's English version, a juxtaposition of several images rather than a grammatically correct English sentence, helps him to realize his translation purpose.

Take another example collected in *Cathay* to see Pound's syntactic experiment. Look at this: "闺中少妇不知愁，春日凝妆上翠楼。" Pound put it in this way: "In boudoir, the young lady—unacquainted with grief, Spring day, —best clothes, mounts shining tower." When reading Pound's lines, readers can be easily attracted by those images in juxtaposition and their attention just move from one image to another. Pound successfully completed his syntactic experiment by a deliberate violation of English grammatical norms and an intentional choice of preserving syntactic features of the Chinese poems.

In a word, it is Pound's preference to focus on form, fragments and specific details that make him create a kind of grammatical foreignness in his translation. This grammatical foreignness is actually a kind of dislocation of syntax. Pound's dislocation of syntax results from his perception that forms of syntactical openness in the original Chinese poems should not be sacrificed just to fit into the constraints of English syntax, just as he once suggested that "a preoccupation with syntax may get in the translator's way". (Note 3)

From the analysis above, we come to get a better idea of how Pound carried out his syntactic experiment by the representation of the syntactic structure in *Cathay*. In the rival of opposing poetics, for realizing his poetic ideal, Pound ignored the grammatical rules commonly observed in English at his time and intentionally juxtaposed images without any verbs or connective words by means of foreignization. Although such disposal with the syntactical freedom shared by classical Chinese poetry seems very strange to the then English readers, its effects are so great that it has not only made an impact on the English language, but also brought freshness to English poetry.

3.2 Syntactic Experiment by Lu Xun

3.2.1 Lu Xun's Translation Principle

Faithfulness is the primary requirement of any translation. But the extent of faithfulness may vary from one to another, and generally it varies on a scale from being very literal rendering on the one extreme to being free to the point of complete rewriting on the other. Since Lu Xun decided to "revolutionize" the Chinese language by his syntactic experiment, the weight must tip unequivocally over to the "literal" end.

In this way, Lu Xun not only tried to be faithful to the original content in his translation practice, but also laid much emphasis on the faithfulness at the level of language or even the level of grammar, to be more concrete. Besides, Lu Xun regarded "mood" and "spirit" as important elements of the original works, so he considered

being faithful to "mood" and "spirit" as a requirement in literary translation. Since frequently being faithful at the level of grammar was indispensable to the faithfulness of "mood" and "spirit", Lu Xun always adhered to this basic principle. In Lu Xun's words, "I still translated the sentences literally, as I had always done in my translation; I also want to keep the original mood, and that's why I chose to preserve the original word order frequently in my translation." (Note 6) And Lu Xun almost used word-for-word translation with few exceptions.

It shows that *Yingyi* in Lu Xun's mind is closely related to sentence structure. By imposing an Indo-European syntax on the Chinese language, Lu Xun's translation very often leads to strangeness, unfluency and thus low readability. He thought that, in translation practice, faithfulness must come first, fluency second. In his original words, "Rather be faithful in thought rather than smooth in language." (Note 10)

3.2.2 Lu Xun's Syntactic Experiment

Yingyi, a foreignization-oriented strategy in essence, refers to the faithfulness to the original text at the level of both content and grammar. Just as Ezra Pound preserved the Chinese sentence structure in his translation, Lu Xun followed grammatical structures of source language in his Chinese version. And such faithfulness in form often leads to grammatically incorrect version since different languages have quite different sets of grammatical rules, especially the languages belonging to different families.

Look at the following example to see how Lu Xun did his syntactic experiment through the use of some strange collocations and Europeanized syntax in his translating in order to realize his goal of being "faithful to the original in thought".

The source text from Charles Darwin's *Origin of Humankind*:

> It may be well first to premise that I do not wish to maintain that any strictly social animal, if its intellectual faculties were to become as active and as highly developed as in man, would acquire exactly the same moral sense as ours. In the same as various animals have some sense of beauty, though they admire widely different objects, so they might have a sense of right and wrong, though led by it to follow widely different lines of conduct. (Note 10)

Lu Xun's translation:

> 我想，在最初，是有将我和恰如各各的群居的动物，如果那知底能力而发达到在人类似的活动和高度，便将获得和我们一样的道德底概念那样的思想，是(距离)很远的事，宣告出来的必要的。
>
> 正如在一切动物，美的感情是天禀的一样，虽然他们也被非常之多的种类的事物引得喜欢，它们[也]会有关于善的和恶的概念，虽然这概念也将它们引到我们完全反对的行动去。(Note 10)

By analyzing Lu Xun's rendering, we could summarize three prominent features in his syntactic experiment.

Firstly, there are a lot of awkward choices of words and strange modifiers. For example, Lu Xun rendered "any strictly social animal" into "恰如各各的群居的动物"，and "intellectual faculties" into "知底能力". These Chinese expressions are very strange not only in Lu Xun's times but also in today, and they are very hard for people to understand. Besides, unnatural collocations such as "发达到人类似的活动" and "是(距离)很远的事，宣告出来的必要" show translationese in his version. In fact, such kind of unnatural collocations are very common in Lu Xun's other translated works. For instance, in Lu Xun's translation of German works *Literature and Criticism*, one can also read many odd collocations, such as "只能给与半肉感底性质的漠然的满足", "有着兴味的劳动者", and so on.

Secondly, Europeanized syntax is frequently employed. For instance, in order to be faithful to the original sentence structure, Lu Xun attempted to put all the modifiers before central nouns. As we know, in English language, long modifiers are legitimate and considered idiomatic, but that is not the case with Chinese language. So this kind of Europeanized syntax didn't cater to the reading habit of Chinese readers. Read the version above "和我们一样的道德底概念那样的思想", one can see a long modifier before the central noun "思想". Take a look at another example: when translating "the most able should not be prevented by laws and customs from succeeding best and reaching the largest number of offspring", Lu Xun put it in this way: "法律和习惯，都不应该来妨碍有最大的成功和最多的子孙的有最大的能力者"。In Lu Xun's translation, there is a long modifier "有最大的成功和最多的子孙的" before the central noun "有最大的能力者". These examples fully show that, for his own poetic experiment, Lu Xun had never thought much about the readability and intelligibility of his translation. And consequently it might easily receive a lot of negative comments, just as Liang Shiqiu said: "It doesn't convey the meaning of the original text, let alone preserving the 'mood'." (Note 10)

Finally, to import new words and expression from the foreign language, Lu Xun ever stepped up efforts to invent new words, such as the auxiliary word "底" . Lu Xun had his own explanations about the usage of this Chinese

character: between adjectives and nouns, "底" is used. In the above rendering, we could read two words with "底" used, such as "知底能力" and "道德底概念". Besides, Lu Xun also made many other attempts in his translating and he once rendered "social being" into "社会底存在物", "psychische trauma" into "精神底伤害". Moreover, Lu Xun further pointed out that if the adjectives are transformed ones and end with "-tive" or "-tic" and so on, "底" can be also used in the Chinese version. For instance, romantic，speculative will be put into "罗曼底, 思索底". Here Lu Xun is, in fact, requiring for standardizing the use of "底"and "的" by English rules of word-formation. This is one of the extreme examples of Lu Xun's effort to carry out his syntactic experiment. In this way, Lu Xun believed that the absorption of new ways of expression, which leads to more unfluent Chinese versions though, would enrich the vernacular Chinese.

In a word, Lu Xun's *Yingyi*, by imposing the Indo-European syntax on the Chinese language, made his Chinese version grammatically incorrect, which inevitably leads to its great reception failure. However, the radical translation method of *Yingyi* contributes to absorbing the essence of foreign culture and improving the Chinese language. And it is really "a revolution in the translation history of our country in modern times and a milestone in the course of the introduction of foreign culture to China." (Note 13)

3.3 Summary

From the above analysis, it could be seen that Lu Xun's and Pound's experiences of doing syntactic experiments in their translation practice are surprisingly similar. First, both of their syntactic experiments result from their dissatisfaction with the leading poetics in their times and their cultural ambition of revolutionalizing it. Second, they are closely connected with their translation principles, which guided their translation practice. Third, their syntactic experiments contain much cultural significance, although they had once received a lot of negative comments.

4. Influence of Pound's and Lu Xun's Syntactic Experiments

4.1 Influence on Their Own Literature Creation

Pound and Lu Xun both play the roles of a writer (poet) and a translator. This special identity decides that their syntactic experiment might exert some influence on their own literature creation because both their writing and their translation could serve as a tool to realize their cultural ambition.

Take the famous poem *In a Station of the Metro* by Pound as an example: "The apparition of these faces in the crowed; Petals on a wet, black bough." In this verse, it could be easily found that there are no articles, prepositions, verbs, and even conjunctions, which seem so indispensable in the English language. Obviously enough, Pound's syntactic experiment was extended into the field of his own poem creation. In fact, even Pound himself admitted that his creation of the poem has a lot of relation to his own translation practice. As we can see, this poem is quite similar to a sentence written by Bai Juyin, a well-known poet in T'ang dynasty in ancient China, which reads: "玉容寂寞泪阑干, 梨花一枝春带雨". In the two verses, the first parts are both related to faces, and the second parts flowers. No wonder was Pound praised by T.S. Eliot as the person who created the poem in Chinese form in their times.

Such example is not rare in Pound's literature creation. In *The Cantos,* a great literature works enjoying high reputation by Pound, the author followed the Chinese syntax to present a series of images. Look at this: "Moon, cloud, tower, a patch of the battisero / All of whiteness." Without observing the rigid grammatical rules of the English language, Pound adopted several individual words to display a fascinating picture to the readers. Through this way, Pound continued to apply his poetic theory to the practice of both translation and literary creation.

Just as Pound, Lu Xun also intentionally used some Europeanized syntax in his writing. In the previous part, we discussed the use of putting long modifiers before the central nouns. Although this kind of usage is gradually integrated into the vernacular Chinese and become accepted by the readers, it is not so common in the traditional Chinese. However, in Lu Xun's literary works, many examples can be found, such as "我憎恶那不像子君鞋声的穿布底鞋的长班的儿子, 我憎恶那太像子君鞋声的常常穿着新皮鞋的邻院的搽雪花膏的小东西！" Look at the long modifier "不像子君鞋声的穿布底鞋的长班的", "太像子君鞋声的常常穿着新皮鞋的邻院的搽雪花膏的" before the central nounss, one may easily notice the close connection between Lu Xun's translation activities and literature creation.

In addition, there are many other example about Lu Xun's imitation of the Europeanized syntax in his novel writing. For instance, in the novel *Grieve over the Past*, there is such a sentence "然而现在呢, 只有寂寞和空虚依旧, 子君却决不再来了, 而且永远, 永远地", in which the postpositive adverbial modifier "永远, 永远地" was a typical presentation of the European syntax. This expression that involves a postpositive adverbial

modifier is unfamiliar to the Chinese reader in Lu Xun's time, however, it is an effective way to voice the emotions of the major characters in the novel and thus enhance the artistic effect of the language. In a word, Lu Xun's syntactic experiment, whether in his translation practice or in his literature creation, did a lot to help the enrichment of the Chinese language.

4.2 Influence on the Target Language and Culture

Syntactic experiment, to some degree, is a reform of a language system. Language system of any nation is never a static one. It is also influenced by other systems in a given society at a given time. Changes may take place within the language system with the lexical change as the most conspicuous one. Because changes of the vocabulary are closely related to the cultural input of the time, we witness a fast development of the vocabulary whenever exotic cultures flush into the target culture. In Lefevere's words, "Translation forces a language to expand, and that expansion may be welcome as long as it is checked by the linguistic community at large." (Note 4) The creation of the new words and the fading of the outdated words always accompany the emergence of novel concepts and the fading of some deserted ideas.

As for Pound, since Pound's syntactic experiment took place in the process of poetic innovation by the Imagist Movement, it must have considerable impact on the uprising of the theory and practice of Imagism, and further on the development of modern English and American poetic composition in the 20th century. In fact, besides Pound, many other American poets also imitate this style in their poetic composition, contributing to the rejuvenation of the English poetry.

While for Lu Xun, though his *Yingyi* was not so successful, his advocacy of *Yingyi* seems quite necessary in that particular historical context. Just as a Chinese scholar comments:

> As for Lu Xun's assertions "rather be faithful in thought than smooth in language", "*yingyi*" and "preserve the foreignness as much as possible", we must examine them historically and comprehensively. When foreign ideas flooded into China at Lu Xun's time, the vernacular Chinese was still in its infancy and indeed inadequate. So it was necessary to adopt numerous foreign expressions to introduce new ideas and content and enrich vernacular. (Note 14)

By his syntactic experiment, Lu Xun contributes to accelerating the transformation from the classical Chinese to the vernacular and shaping our national language. Qu Qiubai remarks that translation can help to construct "the modern vernacular Chinese language". He says, "apart from introducing the original content to the Chinese readers, translation plays a more significant role in the modern Vernacular construction." (Note 15) In the following decade after "May Fourth" New Literature Movement in 1919, under the guidance of Lu Xun, Qu Qiubai and some other renowned scholars, many translators began to advocate the use of foreignization in their translation practice. They did their share not only in absorbing a large amount of foreign new words but also in importing some Europeanized syntax, and finally contributed to the development of the Chinese vernacular language.

5. Conclusion

Situated in quite different cultural contexts, Lu Xun and Pound became the practitioners of syntactic experiments. Based on our analysis, it could be safely said that their practice of syntactic experiments are not an accidental or an unintentional choice made by the translators. To resist dominant target-language cultural values and realize their cultural purposes, the two translators try to signify linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text by applying extreme literal translating method, which leads to the unfluent renderings. For their syntactic experiments, it is far from reasonable to consider them as just right or wrong; we cannot ignore the fact that their syntactical experiments help to enrich the target language and encounter the readers and translators with new ideas about literature, thus contributing to the development of the target culture. Therefore, we need to make an objective evaluation on their contributions and achievements, and admit that both Pound and Lu Xun deserve recognition and approval.

Acknowledgements

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