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從英語作為通用語觀點探究武俠小說翻譯的文化重

構：以《射鵰英雄傳》英譯本為例

English as a Lingua Franca:

Reconstituting Wuxia Culture in English Translations

with *Legends of the Condor Heroes* as a Case Study

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English as a Lingua Franca: Reconstituting Wuxia
Culture in English Translations with Legends of the
Condor Heroes as a Case Study

本論文係葉織茵君 (R08147006) 在國立臺灣大學翻譯碩士學位學程完成之碩士學位論文，於民國 112 年 7 月 21 日承下列考試委員審查通過及口試及格，特此證明

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摘要

全球化促使英語盛行，成為大多數跨文化交流活動中約定俗成的共通語言。英語的霸權地位間接導致世界各地出現文化交流不平等的現象，在全球書籍翻譯市場即可見一斑。職是之故，研究英語翻譯勢必要將英語盛行全球的強勢地位納入視野。如今「英語作為通用語」(English as a lingua franca, ELF) 相關研究蔚然成家，描述在跨文化交流活動中語言文化背景各異的人以英語作為必要溝通媒介的現象。在 ELF 溝通脈絡中，ELF 使用者會從自身多元的語言文化庫 (lingua-cultural repertoire) 中汲取語意資源，進而達成溝通目的。本研究以武俠小說家金庸的《射鵰英雄傳》英譯本為案例研究，進一步提出將武俠小說譯者視為擁有多元語言文化庫可資利用的 ELF 使用者。結果顯示，將武俠小說此種文化包袱較重的文類作品譯介到英語世界時，譯者扮演的中介角色就如同 ELF 使用者，會利用自身擁有的語言及文化資源來協調文本敘述的意義，致力建構一個原文作者能表意且譯文讀者能解意的話語社群，而譯者為了實現溝通效果對語言文化資源創新使用的能力，正是文學譯者賴以勝任文學翻譯工作的創造力基礎。另一方面，本研究亦發現譯者為求譯文流暢易讀，傾向刪略文化指涉與人物塑造，呼應前人研究所見 ELF 作為全球現象加諸英譯文的同質化作用。雖然譯文有諸如此類與原文敘述不盡相同的歧異，本研究依然肯定譯者創造性運用 ELF 在英譯文中重新建構武俠文化的意義與價值。歸根究底，流暢的譯文閱讀體驗能吸引到更多來自世界各地的讀者，進而提升翻譯作品作為世界文學的國際能見度。

關鍵字：英語作為通用語 (ELF)、武俠小說翻譯、跨文化溝通、金庸、浪漫主義小說

Abstract



English spreads with globalization and dominates most intercultural communication as the default common language. The hegemonic status of English sustains worldwide unequal patterns of cultural exchange, notably in the market of book translations. The study of English translations therefore cannot be separated from English's spread and superiority around the world. English as a lingua franca (ELF) refers to the use of English as a communicative means indispensable to people of different lingua-cultural backgrounds. ELF users draw on semantic resources from their lingua-cultural repertoire to fulfil communicative purposes. In this study, I proceed to propose that we understand the translator as resourceful ELF user, with Jin Yong's wuxia novel *Legends of the Condor Heroes* chosen as a case study. The analysis of results demonstrates that the translator functions as ELF user in the translation of highly culture-bound literary genre such as wuxia novels. The novel's translators tap into their linguistic and cultural resources to negotiate the text's meanings and engage the author and the target readers as a discourse community. This innovative use of lingua-cultural resources actually underlies their competence and creativity as literary translators. Just as important, the novel's translators were found to opt for a fluent reading pace insofar as it dilutes cultural references and simplifies the characterization, corroborating previous research findings that ELF as a global phenomenon exerts a homogenizing influence on English translations. Despite these deviations from the source narratives, the translator's creative use of ELF nevertheless helps reconstitute the wuxia culture in English translations. The smooth reading experience appeals to more readers and may well increase the novel's international visibility as part of world literature.

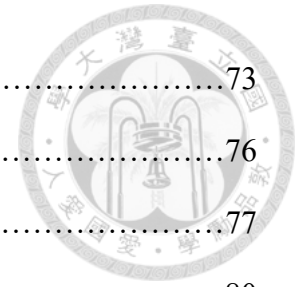
Keywords: English as a lingua franca (ELF), translation of wuxia novel, intercultural communication, Jin Yong, romantic novels

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1. Introduction

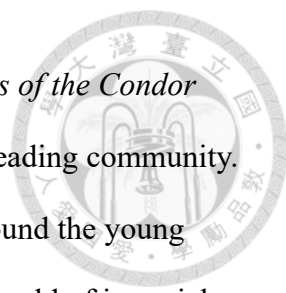
Globalization has broadened the worldwide use of English as a common language in intercultural communications. Statistics suggest that English has become the most common language in cyberspace, employed by 25.9% of worldwide online users as of January 2020¹ and used by 60.4% of the top ten million websites by traffic rankings in 2021 (Bhutada, 2021). Since the spread of English is unprecedented with its non-native users outnumbering the native, the English language is now viewed as a linguistic resource which allows local adaptation and non-conformity to native users' linguistic norms, as will be explored in section 2.1. English as a lingua franca (ELF) accordingly refers to the use of English as a communicative means indispensable to people of different lingua-cultural backgrounds (Seidlhofer, 2011: 7). In fact, English has established unrivaled dominance over the other languages through the extensive use of ELF. To take a case in point, according to *Index Translationum*, UNESCO's database of book translations, English has been the most translated language into Chinese, but Chinese could not even make it to the top ten translated languages into English.² Sustained by the U.S. economic and political dominance, the hegemonic status of English as the most translated language marginalizes translation from less dominant languages and maintains unequal cultural exchange worldwide (Venuti, 2013: 57). The study of English translations, therefore, cannot be separated from the spread and superiority of English over other languages in the world (Campbell, 2005: 29), and an investigation into English translations from the ELF perspective may well bear fruit. That being said, there is still a distinct lack of research regarding how ELF research can

¹ A bar chart with more details can be acquired from the database of Statista: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/262946/share-of-the-most-common-languages-on-the-internet/>

² For more information please see <https://www.unesco.org/xtrans/bsstatlist.aspx?m=15>


benefit the studies of translation from less dominant languages into the dominant English language—for example, from Chinese into English. So this study specifically sets out to explore the translation of Chinese wuxia novels into English through the lens of the ELF theoretical framework.

ELF is widely employed as a vehicular language among people from across the world (Mauranen, 2017b: 225), transcending linguistic and territorial boundaries (House, 2014: 363). The practical use of ELF does not necessarily conform to any particular lexicogrammatical norms (Jenkins, 2007: 241; Dewey, 2009: 62), and by extension ELF has the openness to foreign forms that renders it functionally flexible according to contextual needs (House, 2018: 99). Specifically, these foreign forms are derived from the ELF user's multilingual repertoire, where different languages and cultures converge and coexist as semantic resources for the ELF user to play the English language game (Hülmbauer, 2009: 325; Seidlhofer, 2011: 119). In this view, the translator working into English, being the mediator who resolves intercultural disparity mostly through the English language, is an ELF user, too. The translator as ELF user communicates on behalf of the absent author and an audience that is beyond the author's imagination (Liddicoat, 2016a: 356). So far most ELF research centers on the non-native use of ELF in intercultural communications, and yet the role of ELF and its influence on translation activities remain relatively uncharted. Translation scholars have explored how ELF as a phenomenon impacts the translation profession (Bennett, 2013; Taviano, 2013; Albl-Mikasa, 2018), or leaves its traces in textual practices (Lee, 2020; Kung, 2021). The nature of the translator as ELF user and their use of ELF in the highly culture-bound genre of wuxia novels, however, need further investigation. So this study aims to understand the English translations of the Chinese wuxia novel from an ELF perspective, with Jin Yong's *Legends of the Condor Heroes* as a case study.



Written by the deceased Hong Kong author Jin Yong, *Legends of the Condor Heroes* is among the most widespread wuxia novels in the Chinese-reading community. Set in the Southern Song dynasty (1127-1279), the story revolves around the young martial artist Guo Jing and his adventurous journey into the martial world of imperial China and beyond. Translated by Anna Holmwood, Gigi Chang and Shelly Bryant, the English version of Jin Yong's *Legends of the Condor Heroes* is used as a case study in that novels from the wuxia genre are typically laden with genre-specific language and Chinese cultural elements, as will be explained in detail in section 2.4. Additionally, Jin Yong is known for his inspired appropriations of traditional Chinese arts, history and literature, which endow the novelist's narratives with bountiful cultural connotations. This culture-laden nature of Jin Yong's wuxia novels not only complicates the translator's work and puzzles the reader in another language, but it also makes their English translations well positioned to be examined through the lens of ELF. With this in view, this study will look into the English translations of Jin Yong's *Legends of the Condor Heroes* and its paratext. The primary focus will be on the translation strategies for puns, allusions, appellations, fight scene narratives and various genre-specific elements. These translation strategies will then be evaluated in terms of the ELF pragmatic approaches based on Cogo & House's (2017) prior study and my own observation. In so doing, this study hopes to answer the following questions: How does the translator of the wuxia novel operate as ELF user to achieve particular communicative purposes? How can the view of the translator as ELF user enlighten us on the nature of translating the Chinese wuxia novel into English?

Overall, this thesis helps address the current shortage of research from an ELF perspective in the area of translation studies, with an ambition to throw light on the challenges in translating highly culture-bound literary works such as wuxia novels and



provide future translators with a real-world understanding of the translation of culture-loaded text into English as creative ELF use. Following this introduction, this thesis is structured as follows: In the Literature Review, I will explore current ELF research and relate its key concepts with relevant issues in translation studies, presenting the ELF theoretical framework for later analysis and discussion. Additionally, I will review the literature within the literary tradition of the Chinese wuxia novel and Jin Yong's narrative style, so as to justify my choice of the novel as a case study. In the Methodology, I will clarify the research questions and then give an overview of the novel and its paratext, which precedes a full explanation of how the textual analysis will be carried out. In the Analysis of Results, I will analyze the extracted data and put forward my interpretations using descriptive terms as specified in the Methodology. Finally, I will answer the research questions and elaborate on significant findings based on the analysis of results, as well as making a recap of this study and recommendations for future research in the Conclusion.

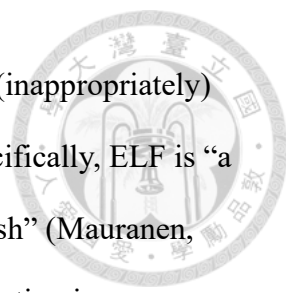


2. Literature Review

It is important to understand translation activities through the lens of English as a lingua franca, and thus imperative to examine English translations of the Chinese wuxia novel using ELF theoretical framework. I will review prior studies on the functions of ELF and the role of translators in intercultural communications, arguing that the translation of the Chinese wuxia novel into the English language is a distinguishing ELF use with the translator operating as intercultural mediator. Additionally, an overview of the literary tradition of the Chinese wuxia genre and Jin Yong's narrative features will be included to define the culture-laden nature of the novelist's works.

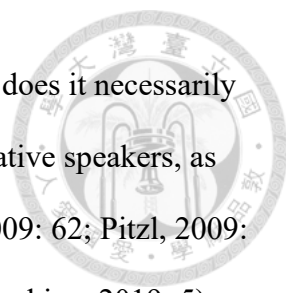
2.1 The use of ELF in intercultural communications

As noted in the Introduction, today English has become the most adopted lingua franca globally. The term lingua franca means "a vehicular language between speakers who do not share a first language" (Mauranen, 2017a: 7), and English as a lingua franca (ELF) in this sense refers to "any use of English among speakers of different first languages for whom English is the communicative medium of choice, and often the only option" (Seidlhofer, 2011: 7). By this definition, ELF communication can occur in any possible field, in either real or virtual spaces, where intercultural encounters are involved and English is an indispensable communicative means. Although some scholars maintain that discussions of ELF use should not include native speakers of English (Hewson, 2013: 260; Aibl-Mikasa, 2018: 369), many others have questioned such exclusion and counted native speakers as legitimate ELF users (Hülmbauer et al., 2008: 27; Mauranen, 2017b: 227; Bayyurt & Dewey, 2020: 370). In this study, I adopt the latter view. As Hülmbauer et al. (2008: 27) put it, anyone who uses English to



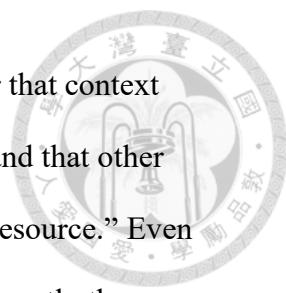
establish intercultural communication is speaking ELF, “unless they (inappropriately) insist on speaking ‘endolingually’” (emphasis in original). More specifically, ELF is “a product of language contact between their other languages and English” (Mauranen, 2017a: 10). The vehicular function of ELF in intercultural communication is foregrounded here irrespective of what mother tongue its users identify with.

In discussion of ELF, one of the many controversial issues has been whether the English language is a neutral medium in ELF communications. On the one hand, House (2014: 363-364) believes that ELF is a contact language and thus “neutral” with regard to the various languages and cultures of its users. Her understanding is resonated by Mukherjee (2012) in his research on the status of English as a link language between ethnic and linguistic communities in Sri Lanka. Some believe that Sri Lankan English is a neutral means of communication between the Sinhalese majority and the Tamil-speaking Hindu minority (Mukherjee, 2012: 192). On the other hand, Baker (2015: 36) contradicts this view of ELF as a neutral means of communication and argues that ELF communication, as with any other intercultural communication, is never culturally neutral in that its wording invariably arises from negotiation in a context where participants are in an unequal power relationship. I subscribe to Baker’s argument because, from my experience as a translator, I observe that what Liddicoat calls “cultural frames” of both the source and target text can never be excluded from consideration in the use of language. As also contradicted by Mukherjee (2012, 198) in his research, Sri Lankan English has been innovated and integrated into the local linguistic repertoire, endowed with nativized usages inseparable with its social-cultural context. Although I disagree with House’s claim that ELF is neutral, I find it persuasive when she supports her claim with the notion that a lingua franca transcends linguistic and territorial boundaries (House, 2014: 363). In other words, when English functions



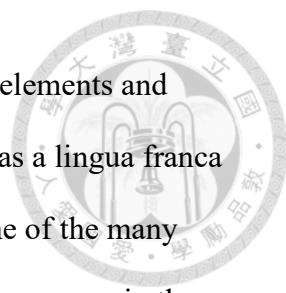
as a lingua franca, it does not belong to any national community, nor does it necessarily conform to particular lexicogrammatical norms, including those of native speakers, as acknowledged by most ELF scholars (Jenkins, 2007: 241; Dewey, 2009: 62; Pitzl, 2009: 298; Seidlhofer, 2011: 19; Hynninen, 2016: 35-36; Konakahara & Tsuchiya, 2019: 5). Baker also qualifies his argument with an emphasis on ELF's non-conformity to any overriding norm in a later article. He maintains that ELF is never neutral in the generic sense, but he concedes that in a differential sense, a named language such as English is independent of any definable culture (Baker, 2018: 29). It is in this differential sense that ELF becomes functionally flexible and possesses what House (2018: 99) calls "openness to foreign forms." With this openness, the English language can be loaded with "different national, regional, local and individual cultural identities" in lingua franca communications (House, 2014: 364). In this sense, the participants in an ELF communication can bend the English language to contextual needs by loading the language with their own identities.

The openness of ELF to formal variation and change underlies its function as a global lingua franca. As noted by Cogo (2012: 98), ELF is not monolithic because languages and cultures mutate when they are locally appropriated. The appropriation of the English language inevitably causes variable adaptations fit for contexts of use, and so widespread ELF usage varies and develops within and beyond native-speaker communities (Seidlhofer, 2011: 66-67). This non-conformist nature of ELF lies in the fact that different languages and cultures converge to form what Hülmbauer (2009: 325) terms "a situational resource pool" for ELF users to exploit. In addition to linguacultural backgrounds of ELF users, Hülmbauer (2009: 327) states that ELF context, namely "the shared situation," is another source of communicative resources which allows for grammatical deviations from native-speaker norms.



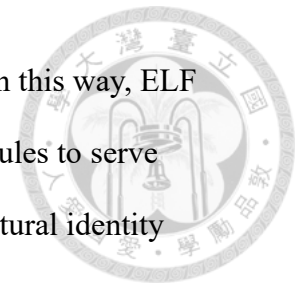
Similarly, Seidlhofer (2011: 104-105) agrees with Hülmbauer that context facilitates ELF users' non-conformist creativity in the linguistic use and that other languages blend with the English language as "composite linguistic resource." Even more important, she brings into focus the in-depth question of what exactly the resource is that is virtual in English for ELF users to draw on. She argues that the "underlying encoding possibilities" (ibid.: 111) on phonological, morphological, lexical and syntactical levels collectively constitute the "meaning potential" (ibid.: 96) inherent in languages, which exists as "semantic resources" (ibid.: 110) for innovative ELF use (ibid.: 112-117). Take *unsad* for example, such a coined word is "morphologically possible," thus embodying a realization of the meaning potential despite its absence in the native English use (ibid.: 115). Seidlhofer also points out that most ELF users, being at least bilingual, have other languages coexisting with the English language in their linguistic repertoire, and these non-English resources can be "adjusted to suit the virtual encoding rules of English" (ibid.: 112). What she illuminates here is that variant linguistic expressions in ELF, though seemingly non-conformist at one level, still conform to the virtual rules of English at a different level (ibid.: 116). Hynninen endorsed this view by adopting Pitzl's notion of norm-following and norm-developing creativity, arguing that this dual creativity "ensures intelligibility and functionality of new linguistic output" (Pitzl, 2012: 37, as cited in Hynninen, 2016: 55). That is, an innovated linguistic item, however non-conformist to shared linguistic norms, still makes sense to an ELF user due to its having at least one recognizable linguistic feature. It is from here that the non-conformist use of ELF can be regarded as legitimate English as well (Seidlhofer, 2011: 112), for the creative linguistic usage carries meaning that is understandable to an English user.

The adjustment ELF users make to the English language are reflective of it being a



lingua franca. A lingua franca is a vehicular language which carries “elements and structures of diverse origins” (House, 2014: 363); the use of English as a lingua franca in this sense is, as above confirmed by Hülmbauer and Seidlhofer, one of the many possible formal realizations of the ELF user’s linguistic and cultural resources in the English language. ELF users would “employ all the semiotic resources at their disposal, including nonverbal ones and contextual cues,” to get their message across (Larsen-Freeman, 2017: 53). Consequently, occurrences of linguistic variation in ELF embody an expedient deployment of its users’ linguistic resources to transfer meanings, indicating that there is a communicative purpose to serve (Widdowson, 2017: 110). More specifically, these formal properties exist in ELF so as to fulfill particular communicative functions. ELF’s formal properties are “functionally motivated” and thus “a natural consequence of appropriate communicative adaptation” (Seidlhofer, 2011: 124). Larsen-Freeman (2017: 53) views ELF use as a collaborative process in which “language-using patterns,” namely prevalent properties of the linguistic performance, emerge when ELF users “co-adapt to one another’s resources.” I would argue that this view of ELF use as collaborative effort is crucial to understand the miscellaneous nature of ELF and how it is jointly developed by its in-group users. Larsen-Freeman’s notion of linguistic properties in ELF as its users’ joint enterprise goes in line with what is suggested in Seidlhofer’s (2011: 138) discussion of “idiomatizing process” (see also Cogo & House 2017: 211). Seidlhofer observes that semantic resources can be “customized” to communicative needs and used by ELF participants as “a recurrent referential token” to function territorially in terms of establishing the ELF users’ “insider status” in their co-constructed discourse space, as well as cooperatively in terms of increasing mutual intelligibility (ibid.: 142). In short, these customized semantic resources serve as identity markers that delineate an ELF-

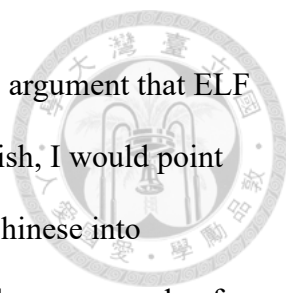
using community and, by extension, define its in-group languages. In this way, ELF users play “the languaging game” by creating their own expressive rules to serve versatile communicative functions, such as humor, emphasis and cultural identity (Seidlhofer 2011: 138-143).



While Seidlhofer confines her discussion of functionally-motivated linguistic forms to non-conformist ELF use, I would extend this form-function relation to conformist use of English, pointing out that all manifest formal features in ELF indicate a functionally-motivated deployment of its user’s semantic resources and accordingly a communicative purpose to serve. How these textual features function to communicative needs deserves proper scholarly attention. So I would like to extend Seidlhofer’s view of “customized semantic resources” to above mentioned Larsen-Freeman’s “language-using patterns,” arguing that these language-using patterns exist not randomly but purposefully to fulfill communicative functions. To put it succinctly, distinctive language-using patterns in ELF use strongly indicate special communicative needs to be served. It is revealed in previous research that different uses of English as a lingua franca carry several characteristics in common (Cogo & House, 2017). What communicative purposes they come to achieve in different ELF contexts remain to be explored. With this in view, I would continue to clarify how we can understand the translator’s work from an ELF perspective.

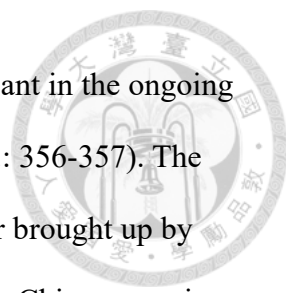
2.2 Translator as resourceful ELF user

So far the literature review has revolved around ELF’s nature and characteristics, and I would now take a step further to discuss the translator’s role and task in intercultural communication through the lens of ELF. We are informed by scholarly definition that ELF functions as a communicative medium among speakers of different



linguistic and cultural backgrounds. In view of Mauranen' (2017a: 8) argument that ELF is a contact language used by native and non-native speakers of English, I would point out that the translation of highly culture-bound literary works from Chinese into English, such as the wuxia novel *Legends of the Condor Heroes*, is also an example of ELF use. Here the translator assumes a mediational role communicating between two different language parties: the English-reading community and the Chinese-speaking author (Steiner, 1975: 45, as cited in Katan, 2004: 16). When English is used as a mediating language, “there arises a unique and genuine speech community where the roles and rules of mutual understanding have to first be established” (Hüllen, 1982: 86, cited in Meierkord, 2012: 14), indicating that the participants can be seen as an emerging discourse community that seeks to reach communicative consensus. From the same reasoning, when the translator uses English as a mediating language, there arises a discourse community which involves both the author and the audience, with its rules of mutual understanding under construction.

In addition to Steiner's view of translator as interlinguistic mediator, Katan (2004: 20-21) points out that translators are more than interlinguistic mediators; they are also intercultural mediators with “bi-cultural vision,” obliged to resolve intercultural disparity through language. In this sense, translation process is intercultural in nature. The mediational mission is for the translator to negotiate their interpretation of meanings across the source and target cultures (Scarino, 2016: 473). The translator as intercultural mediator interprets the culturally-constructed language of source text not only with reflexivity to comprehend the source meanings, but also with intention to convey their comprehension to the potential readers who do not share “the cultural framing of the interpretation” (Liddicoat, 2016a: 358). In other words, translation is an instance of intercultural mediation. What distinguishes translation from other forms of



intercultural mediation is that the translator is the only active participant in the ongoing communication, isolated from both the author and the audience (ibid.: 356-357). The notion of the translator communicating on behalf of the absent author brought up by Liddicoat adds weight to my argument that English translations of the Chinese wuxia novel is a distinguishing ELF use. English functions as a lingua franca where different languages and cultures converge to create meaning through novel use of the English language (Baker, 2018: 29).

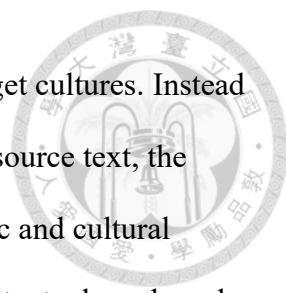
From the perspective of translation as intercultural mediation, translation is an interpretative and intervening act to render cultural meanings embedded in the source language palpable to its target audience (Liddicoat 2016b: 348). In other words, in the process of translating wuxia novels from Chinese into English, the translator communicates by means of the English language at the convergence of source and target languages and cultures, mediating for the absent author and “an audience that is not the audience imagined by the writer” (Liddicoat, 2016a: 356). It is now conceivable that the translator, straddling the source and target cultures, mediates through the use of ELF to get meanings across to English language readers. To put it succinctly, the role of mediator also makes the translator ELF user. ELF users “play the English language game” (Seidlhofer, 2011: 119) by drawing on the “composite linguistic resources” in their multilingual repertoires, which can be understood from the linguistics view as “the total encoding possibilities of each language” (ibid.: 68), as identified in section 2.1. By the same token, the translator can be regarded as ELF player equipped with composite linguistic and cultural resources. In fact, Seidlhofer’s vision of “playing the language game” resonates with Snell-Hornby’s (1988:50-51) adoption of Reiß & Vermeer’s (1984) game analogy for literary translation. As Snell-Hornby (1988: 52) states it, literary language involves “the exploitation of the entire capacity of a language system,”

or to be specific, “the creative extension of the language norm,” and the task of rendering these creative extensions in the target language by exploiting its “rule-governed potential” falls on the shoulders of translators.




Again, Snell-Hornby’s phrasing of “the rule-governed potential” reminds us of what Seidlhofer terms “the meaning potential” driven by “encoding possibilities.” That is, the virtual encoding rules of English on phonological, lexical and syntactic levels collectively constitute a pool of semantic resources for creative ELF use. While Snell-Hornby was not describing translation, I would point out that, by extension, translating literary works, which means transplanting her so-called “creative extensions of the source-language norm” into the target language, inevitably activates another set of creative extensions of the target language norm. That is, the translator’s intertextual negotiation between the source text and the target culture results in lexicogrammatical innovations and the formation of the translation’s own literariness in the target culture (Scott, 2007: 115-116). As a matter of fact, linguistic competence is the utmost foundation of literary competence (Albaladejo & Chico-Rico, 2018: 122), and the literary creativity of literary translators lies partly in their ability to be linguistically creative (Rossi, 2018: 385). The translator creates the textual effect actuated by the syntactical devices of the source text “through the different resources of the language of the translation” (Holmström, 2007: 41). What ELF’s theoretical framework offers here is an integrated view: the creative use of lingua-cultural resources to fulfill the meaning potential inherent in the English language underlies the translator’s literary competence in communicating the source text to the target recipients.

In this view, I propose that we understand translators as resourceful ELF users and their applications of translation strategies as creative, and usually expedient,



deployment of their semantic resources from both the source and target cultures. Instead of being caught in the dilemma of foreignizing or domesticating the source text, the translator actually meets challenges in how to leverage their linguistic and cultural resources to make the optimal translation choice according to the contextual needs and communicative purposes. As discussed in section 2.1, language-using patterns develop from the mutual adaption of different lingua-cultural resources with ELF users co-constructing their discourse space, and these formally distinct patterns are functionally motivated to achieve communicative purposes (Seidlhofer, 2011; Larsen-Freeman, 2017). If my proposition of the translator as ELF user in this case study rings true, then we may consider the translating process of the Chinese wuxia novel into English an ELF context. The translator in this context endeavors to construct an intelligible discourse space that engages an English language reader by tapping into semantic resources in their lingua-cultural repertoire, thereby achieving translation solutions in a way that shows prominent language-using patterns. In fact, what is suggested in recent studies on pragmatics of ELF may substantiate my argument that translating into English is ELF use in nature. Some ELF scholars have explored how ELF participants mobilize multilingual resources, accommodate to each other and co-construct understanding, demonstrating that strategic use in ELF follows some set patterns, such as code-switching and self-initiated repair (Jenkins, 2011; Cogo & House, 2017), which I find informative in explaining and categorizing familiar translation strategies, as will be fully described in section 3.4. By focusing on translation strategies as ELF pragmatics, this study may shed light on how the translator asserts their agency and deploys a composite of lingua-cultural resources to fulfill various communicative functions in the process of translating into English.

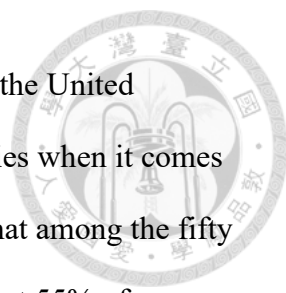
2.3 The influence of ELF on translation activities



This study aims to understand translation activities from an ELF perspective. It is now clear that the translator working into English can be viewed as resourceful ELF user. Nevertheless, ELF as a widespread phenomenon also complicates the translator's work in a way that is inseparable from our discussion. While most ELF research has explored linguistic features and adaptive strategies of non-native use in various lingua franca contexts, the role of ELF and its influence on translation activities remain relatively uncharted. Prior discussions in the translation field pinpointed the impact of ELF on linguistic forms of its target languages (Proshina, 2005; Cabrita, 2012; House, 2013), or centered on ELF's implications for the translation profession (Bennett, 2013; Taviano, 2013; Albl-Mikasa, 2018). None of the above, however, involved communicative strategies and functions of translating into ELF. In this regard, Taviano (2018) considered the translational nature of ELF-written EU documents, revealing the coexistence of plural lingua-cultures in ELF. Additionally, Lee (2020) investigated the use of ELF as an interventionist tactic in Chinese fansubbers' practice, and Kung (2021) examined the homogenized form of ELF manifested in English translations of Taiwanese literature. But the use of ELF in a highly culture-bound literary genre such as wuxia literature and its translational features still needs further understanding. This study therefore explores ELF's functions and influence by examining English translations of the Chinese wuxia novel, seeking to demonstrate that translating the Chinese wuxia novel into English is in itself a distinguishing ELF use.

As noted in the Introduction, English has gained an unrivaled position over the other languages with the globalizing process, and the hegemonic status of English as such exerts a palpable impact on translation flows in the global book market.

UNESCO's database of book translations *Index Translationum* shows that although English has been the most translated language in the global book market from 1979 to

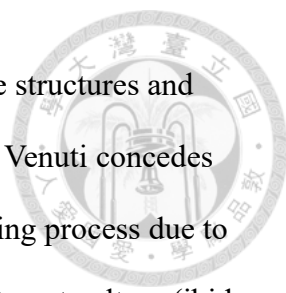


2019, English-speaking countries such as the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia are far from the keenest of translating countries when it comes to book translations.³ It is also indicated in the UNESCO statistics that among the fifty most translated languages, English as source language comprises about 55% of worldwide book translations, while Chinese as source language accounts for only 0.6%.⁴ This unequal cultural exchange in the global market of book translations reflects a lack of interest in literary translations within the English-reading community (Venuti, 2013: 231; Kung, 2021: 75). Translating from Chinese into English, therefore, is translating from a much less dominant language into the most dominant, or “translation up” in Bellos’ (2011: 168) terminology. These translations tend to erase the foreignness of the source text and adapt itself to the target culture (Bellos, 2011: 169), resulting in what Venuti (2013: 71) calls “illusionistic transparency” in translation. As evidenced in Kung’s (2021) research on English translations of the Taiwanese novel *Wintry Night*, linguistic and cultural information of the source text is condensed and homogenized insofar as cultural references are eliminated and different narrative perspectives are merged into the extradiegetic narrative.

Venuti (2013: 27; 71; 100) says that the illusion of transparency in English translations stems from publishers’ for-profit pursuit of readable translations and leads to Jacques Derrida’s so-called “ethnocentric violence” against the source text. But I say, in line with Kung’s (2021: 97-98) conclusion on her research as described earlier, that this easy accessibility of literary translations is the key to their appeal for a broader readership and international visibility, as will be explained later. Despite his advocacy of

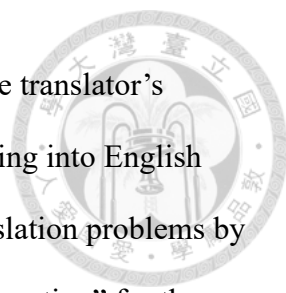
³ For more information please see <https://www.unesco.org/xtrans/bsstatexp.aspx?crit1L=1&nTyp=min&topN=50>.

⁴ As based on statistics retrieved from <https://www.unesco.org/xtrans/bsstatexp.aspx?crit1L=3&nTyp=min&topN=50>.



“abusive fidelity,” an anti-fluency translation practice that resists “the structures and discourses of the receiving language and culture” (Venuti, 2013: 72), Venuti concedes that textual features of source text never come intact through translating process due to the necessity for the text to become intelligible and of interest in the target culture (ibid.: 3). He goes on to claim that translation should be seen as “one interpretive possibility among others” (ibid.: 4) and “not as based on some value inherent in the source text” because knowledge and taste that affect reader reception or define the value of the source text invariably change with time in the target culture. (ibid.: 163-164). In other words, the receiving culture’s awareness and appreciation of literary forms and content, in Venuti’s own view, determine its interpretation of the source text. I agree with Venuti up to a point that abusive fidelity facilitates the translating community’s reflection on linguistic and cultural complacency (ibid.: 78), but I still believe he can hardly have it both ways, namely that translation of abusive fidelity rarely coincides with intelligible interpretations, let alone with those that meet the target culture’s ever-changing taste. In fact, the homogeneity of “Tranglish,” namely “the language of translations in English,” is “the unintended result of the unbounded nature of the English language itself,” since the target readership of most English translated books is “indeterminately large” and linguistic quirks are removed on the grounds that regional variations can cause misunderstanding or incomprehensibility (Bellos, 2011: 191-192).

This is not to say that it is an either-or situation, but rather it lies in the translator’s decision to find a balance between intelligibility and abusive fidelity when oftentimes the former must be chosen over the latter. In view of the difficulty of carrying out absolute abusive fidelity to represent so-called “foreignness” in the target text, I would argue that we should challenge the binary view of translations as either foreignized or domesticated and start to see any translation as what Venuti calls “one

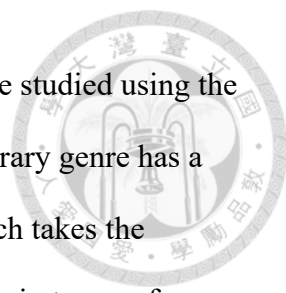


interpretive possibility among others,” one that is realized through the translator’s creative use of their lingua-cultural resources. Thus, translators working into English might as well be regarded as resourceful ELF users who resolve translation problems by literary creativity in the sense that “foreignness demands cultural innovation” for the source text’s heterogeneous properties to be properly rendered in the target text (Venuti, 2013: 192).

Besides, since English as a “pivot tongue” is the most translated language, books with an English version are in with a real chance to get translated into any other language, irrespective of their original language (Bellos, 2011: 212). The readability of English translated books, therefore, is for them to reach more readers and establish its international prestige through the English language (Kung, 2021: 97). It is through translation that foreign works start to be seen as world literature by local readers (Venuti, 2013: 208), and reader consumption is the key factor that defines a translated work as world literature (Trivedi, 2019: 15). On this account, the smooth reading experience of the Chinese wuxia novel’s English translations may well increase its international visibility as part of world literature by attracting a worldwide readership. So instead of evaluating the translator’s work by the prescriptive rule of abusive fidelity, my own view is that the translator should be understood as ELF user and how they deploy linguistic and cultural resources to render Venuti’s so-called “interpretive possibility” in the English language deserves scholarly attention.

2.4 The choice of *Legends of the Condor Heroes* as a case study

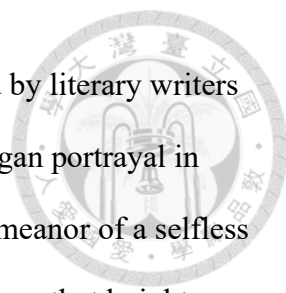
Having just argued my view of translators as resourceful ELF users and their position in a world where English’s hegemonic status dominates intercultural exchange, I would like now to justify my choice of Jin Yong’s *Legends of the Condor Heroes* as a



case study by explaining how the wuxia genre is well positioned to be studied using the ELF theoretical framework. Firstly, the Chinese wuxia novel as a literary genre has a long history and so holds a reservoir of genre-specific language, which takes the translator's effort to function along the same lines in the target culture in terms of constructing a discourse space and engaging the discourse community, namely the target readers. Secondly, Jin Yong, the author of *Legends of the Condor Heroes*, often draws inspiration from traditional Chinese arts, history and literature, so his narrative is known to be laden with cultural connotations. This culture-loaded narrative style not only complicates the translators' work but also constitutes a substantial intercultural gap that I expect would foreground the role of the translator as resourceful ELF user and the influence of ELF as a global force on the translator's decision. With this in mind, I would continue to present an overview of the nature of the wuxia genre and Jin Yong's writing.


To explore the translation of *Legends of the Condor Heroes* as an ELF context as discussed above, a further understanding of what constitutes the wuxia novel is necessary. The term *wuxia* is in fact composed of two Chinese words—*wu*, literally “Chinese martial arts,” and *xia*, independent individuals who exert martial arts to fulfill benevolence (Ni, 1997: 9-10; Lin, 2021a: 98). So the wuxia novel is supposed to consist of the two elements, *wu* and *xia* (Chen, 1995: 155; Ni 1997: 10-11). As stated by Chang (1991: 338), “wuxia novels invariably revolve around the altruistic spirit and action of martial artists” (my translation, 2022).

Although the wuxia novel as a genre was not identified until the early ROC era (Chang, 1991: 338), its origins go back to Tang dynasty (618-907 AD) (Mok, 2002: 273) and the literary production on the image of *xia* in written texts dates at least to



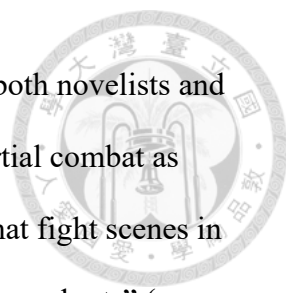
Warring States period (403-221 BC) (Hamm, 2005: 11). Embellished by literary writers from generation to generation, the term *xia* is not limited to the hooligan portrayal in early recorded history; instead, it conjures up the noble deeds and demeanor of a selfless person (Chen, 1995: 25-26; Yang, 2020: 362). Chen (1995: 65) observes that knight-errantry novels of Tang dynasty have laid foundations for the development of literary motifs, means of *xia* practice and the image of *xia* in later wuxia novels. Alongside such features, the corresponding cultural awareness, narrative mode and story structure have finally been recurrent enough in chivalric novels of Qing dynasty (1636-1912 AD) to distinguish wuxia novels as a genre from other literary works (Chen, 1995: 71-72). It is thus important to represent *xia* in translation by foregrounding *xia*'s philosophy of life. As Lin (2021: 388) points out, without the altruistic spirit of *xia*, “a wuxia novel will be spoiled” (my translation, 2022).

In addition to the spirit of *xia*, the means of *xia* practice, namely *wu*, or martial arts, is another crucial element of the wuxia novel. In the world of wuxia, martial techniques and inner strength constitute the basic concepts of martial arts, and different weapons are often used to produce a variety of martial moves (Yi, 2000: 40; 44-45). The employment of fantastic kung fu and weapons in fictional stories, such as flying sword and lightness skill, traces its origins to Tang dynasty's knight-errantry novels (Lin, 2021a: 95-97). It is since the late Qing dynasty that hidden weapons like flying darts, sleeve arrows and poison needles have been widely adopted in chivalric novels to function as ranged weapons in martial fights (Chen, 1995: 140). While the use of visible arms such as sabers, swords and hidden weapons makes a fight vivid and thrilling, the introduction of inner strength in modern wuxia novels has not only enriched martial arts moves and fight scenes but increased the profundity of martial arts as well (Chen, 1995: 142-143).



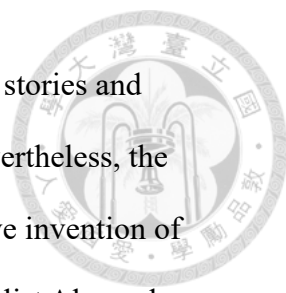
The notion of inner strength owes its origins to the Qi theory in traditional Chinese medicine, and with the emphasis shifting from physical weapons to inner strength, the agency of a martial artist as a fighting subjectivity has been well improved, reflecting an approving attitude towards individual freedom (Chen, 1995: 143-144). As noted by Ko (2014: 8), the main attraction of wuxia novels for modern readers lies in the modern value of individualism inherent in the charisma of *xia*. In fact, most names of martial arts moves are given for a reason (Lai, 1997: 77). The weapon carried by martial artists often indicates their temperament (Ko, 2014: 69), and in a similar vein, various styles and schools of martial arts mirror and shape their performer's character, especially in the case of Jin Yong's works (Hamm, 2005: 91; Lin, 2021b: 132-133). Chen (1997: 95) further points out that since it is difficult and unnatural to create different styles of martial arts to represent every single character in a story, a martial artist's distinctive personality might also be elaborately reflected in how they perform the same moves differently in combat. In view of such significance of martial arts in delineating characters, certainly every move's connotations are expected to be properly rendered into English translations.

As explained in the above paragraph, it is part of the literary tradition of the Chinese wuxia novel to stress the individuality of martial artists and reveal their character traits in the portrayal of fight scenes, namely "to characterize *xia* with *wu*" (my translation, 2022) (Chen, 1995: 83-84). Considering that fight scenes are the key ingredient which makes wuxia novels exhilarating enough to appeal to the reading public, wuxia novelists usually devote space to the depiction of martial arts and fight process (Chen, 1995: 129). As observed by Chen (1995: 136), "readers expect the characters not just to win the fight, but to fight beautifully." (my translation, 2022) From Tang dynasty's knight-errantry novels to contemporary wuxia novels, the delineation of



fight scenes gets more and more exquisite (Chen, 1995: 207) in that both novelists and readers began to take even more interest in the aesthetic value of martial combat as opposed to its results (Chen, 1995: 136). Lin (2021b: 129) remarks that fight scenes in Jin Yong's works are narrated typically as "a performance of literature and arts" (my translation, 2022) which, in Hamm's (2005: 91-92) words, is "interlocking of philosophical principle, textual tradition, culture-specific arts, and martial realization." Indeed, most martial styles and techniques in contemporary wuxia novels are figments of the writer's imagination (Chen, 1995: 146; Lai, 1997: 77; Chen, 2021a: 227), and Jin Yong is known to draw inspiration largely from traditional Chinese arts and literature, adding a subtle touch of Chinese aesthetics and philosophy to his fight scenes (Chen, 2021a: 182; 227; Lin, 2021b: 163-164). As Chen (2017: 67) points out, Jin Yong has established a wuxia world where superlative martial arts are normally associated with traditional Chinese philosophy, including Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, with cultural significance overriding naturalistic description of martial techniques.

Martial arts moves and fight scenes loaded with such cultural connotations can be problematic for translators to represent in English, difficult for western readers to appreciate, and likewise the poetry, allusions and appellations dispersed throughout Jin Yong's narration of the story. The motley interweaving of classical literature, martial arts and traditional knowledge, such as medicine, arithmetic, astrology and divination, constructs an original tapestry of Chinese culture in Jin Yong's works (Chen, 2021a: 27; Lin, 2021b: 303). Besides, to render his fictional story more convincingly entertaining for readers, Jin Yong would relate his invented characters to historical personages (Chen, 2021a: 29-30; Lin, 2021b: 143-144). Chen (2021b: 87-88) observes that since Sima Qian, prestigious historian of Han dynasty (202 BC-9 AD), incorporated legendary characters into his reports of real history and then Tang dynasty's novelists



based their imagination on historical figures, the hybrid of legendary stories and historical facts is familiarly digestible to the Chinese readership. Nevertheless, the incorporation of historical facts into literature may not be an exclusive invention of Chinese culture. As confirmed by Jin Yong, not only did French novelist Alexandre Dumas' *The Three Musketeers* inspire him to embark on the career as a wuxia novelist, but the masterpiece also enlightened him on how to “make liberal use of historical stories” (my translation, 2022) (Jin & Ikeda, 1998: 298; 301-302). Historical and literary references like this provide an in-depth cultural backdrop for Jin Yong's wuxia world, which can be understood as a re-interpretation of traditional culture and history (Chen, 2017: 228; Lin, 2021b: 162). While western readers prove to be as familiar with such historical fantasy as their Chinese counterparts, they may not find ancient Chinese history as readable and relatable, for such information are entirely new to most of them and may not ring a bell. All these “ancient Chinese ingredients,” to borrow Lai's (1997: 67) words, may be “not necessarily important to the plot,” and how translators would tackle these “Chinese ingredients” in English by consulting their lingua-cultural repertoire is worth further investigation.

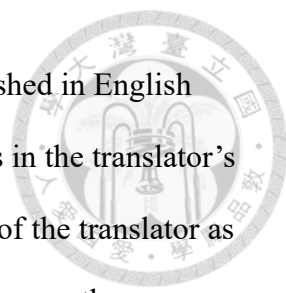


3. Methodology

Now we know from the Literature Review that the translator can be seen as creative ELF user equipped with dual lingua-cultural resources, and that ELF as a common phenomenon necessitates the Chinese wuxia novel's being translated into readable English for international visibility. Being endowed with archaic languages and ancient cultures, the translation of the wuxia novel is the best place to understand how the translator as ELF user deploys their resources to reconstitute the narratives in English, and how ELF as a global force influences translation decisions. With this in mind, I will continue to describe my research methods for collecting and classifying data after outlining the research questions. As stated in the Introduction, this study aims to understand English translations of the Chinese wuxia novel from an ELF perspective. In order to operationalize this general aim, two sets of research questions are formulated as follows:

- 1) To what extent the act of translating into English can be regarded as an ELF use?
How does the translator function as ELF user by creatively mobilizing the linguistic and cultural resources at their disposal to reconstruct the wuxia narratives in English translations? And what are the resultant communicative effects of their intended efforts?
- 2) Previous studies of ELF use in translation activities attest the hegemonic status of English and its homogenizing influence on English translations. Can this finding be generalized to English translations of the Chinese wuxia novel? And how can an ELF perspective enlighten us on the nature and implications of the translator's work?

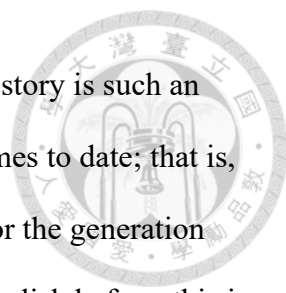
To answer these questions, I selected Jin Yong's *Legends of the Condor Heroes*



as a case study, particularly because it is the latest of his works published in English translations, which is supposed to be most reflective of current trends in the translator's ELF use. As suggested in section 2.4, the central focus is on the role of the translator as resourceful ELF user and the influence of ELF as a global phenomenon on the translator's decisions and the resultant textual presence. Translations that attest to predominant patterns of ELF pragmatics were extracted alongside their source counterparts for contrast and comparison, with the textual effect and communicative purposes foregrounded in the analysis. In addition, paratextual materials, such as blurbs, prefaces, interviews with the novel's translators and reviews from critics and readers, were collected as well to contextualize the translated work in the target culture and so better pinpoint the translation team's intended efforts potentially implicit in the target text (Kung, 2013: 53).

3.1 About the author and the novel

The wuxia novel *Legends of the Condor Heroes* is written by the deceased Hong Kong author Jin Yong, pen name of Louis Cha Leung-yung (1924-2018). He is a household name in the Chinese-speaking community and a prolific wuxia novel writer, authoring fifteen works of wuxia fiction between 1950s and 1970s, most of which were serialized in his own newspaper *Ming Pao* (《明報》) (Martial Arts Studies, 2022). Originally the story of *Legends of the Condor Heroes* was published in serialized form in *Hong Kong Commercial Daily* (《香港商報》) from 1957 to 1959 (Cathy, 2021a). Then it underwent revisions and came out in volumes first in the 1970s, with the latest edition published in the 2000s. Set in Southern Song dynasty (1127-1279), the story revolves around the youngster Guo Jing's character growth and his fantastic adventures throughout imperial China and afar, depicting the code of *xia* in his encounters with



other martial artists and life-and-death situations on the journey. The story is such an entertainment that it has been adapted for the screen at least seven times to date; that is, about every ten years there is a new on-screen version of the novel for the generation (Cathy, 2021b). Although the novel has been partly translated into English before, this is the first time that it gets authorized to be fully and officially translated and introduced to the English readership.

3.2 An overview of the novel's English version and its translators

The English version of *Legends of the Condor Heroes* has been published in four volumes by the UK's Macle hose Press at yearly interval from 2018 to 2021, with Anna Holmwood, Gigi Chang and Shelly Bryant as co-translators. Each volume of the novel and its translators are listed as follows:

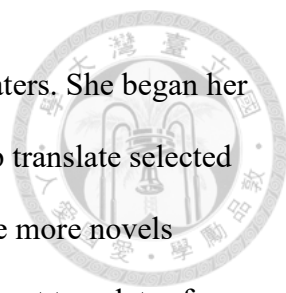
Volume I: *A Hero Born*, translated solely by Anna Holmwood

Volume II: *A Bond Undone*, translated solely by Gigi Chang

Volume III: *A Snake Lies Waiting*, co-translated by Anna Holmwood and Gigi Chang

Volume IV: *A Heart Divided*, co-translated by Gigi Chang and Shelly Bryant

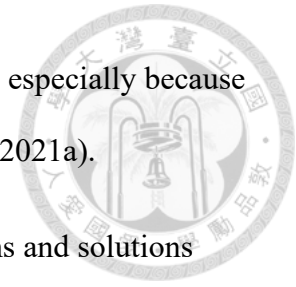
Co-working as a translation project team, the three translators come from divergent backgrounds. Anna Holmwood translates from Swedish and Chinese into English. In 2010, she received one of the British Centre for Literary Translation mentorship awards. She co-founded the Emerging Translators' Network in 2011 to support early career literary translators. The next year she was elected to UK Translators Association committee then proceeding to be the editor-in-chief for Books from Taiwan 2014-2015. Besides her translator job, she works as a literary agent of London-based Diamond Kahn & Woods Literary Agency. Gigi Chang translates from Chinese into



English, her translations including classical and modern Chinese theaters. She began her career as literary translator when Anna Holmwood invited her to help translate selected passages from a Hong Kong novel. After that they co-translated some more novels before translating *Legends of the Condor Heroes* together. Shelly Bryant translates from Chinese into English. She is a prolific writer and translator. Her translations of Sheng Keyi's *Northern Girls* were longlisted for the Man Asian Literary Prize in 2012. She is also a poet with her poetry scattered in journals, magazines, websites and several art exhibitions.

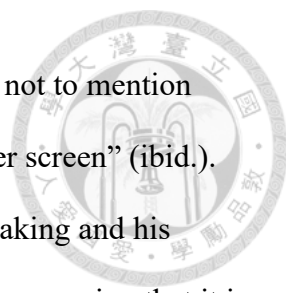
This collective translation undertaking was initiated when Holmwood learnt of Jin Yong and his works from Peter Buckman, the founder and a literary agent of The Ampersand Agency. Enchanted by the stories, she joined Buckman to secure the translation rights to *Legends of the Condor Heroes* in around 2011 (Thorpe, 2017; China Exchange, 2018). Later, the rights to the series were sold to the British publisher MacLehose Press, who commissioned Holmwood to carry out its translations in four volumes over four years. But Holmwood soon found it difficult to keep up with this rapid pace considering the sheer volume of content and brought Chang on board in 2012, with an intention of building a project team of three translators (Cathy, 2021a; Chen, 2021). So Bryant got involved in the project in 2019 after she met Holmwood in 2018's Singapore Writer Festival (Cathy, 2021a). As explained by Holmwood, the translation process has been a collaborative effort since the very beginning. Buckman gave Holmwood feedback on her sample translations and they discussed how to optimally frame and present Jin Yong's works (China Exchange, 2018). With Holmwood's approach established and narrative tone set, Chang aimed to emulate the style by reading the draft and revised her own translations based on comments made by Holmwood and the publisher (Chen, 2021; Martial Arts Studies, 2022). Likewise,

Bryant intended her translations to fit into what had been developed, especially because the first three volumes had been completed when she joined (Cathy, 2021a).



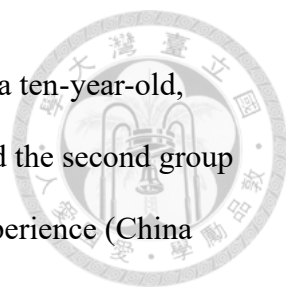
The three translators communicated their translation problems and solutions mostly during the translation process and also the editing process (Chen, 2021). Alongside their joint effort, their editor Paul Engles served a significant role in refining their drafts. Engles would “comb through the whole text, word by word, making comments and suggestions and asking questions,” recalled Chang, “We debate and have friendly fights over the content.” (ibid.) In addition, subeditors and proofreaders were involved to shape the final translations. The subeditors were entrusted with spotting “inconsistencies on every level, from spelling to plot details to the greater logic in the story,” while the editor focused on “the bigger picture, the overall language and style” (ibid.).

Holmwood believes that compromises are necessary to bridge Chinese and English in terms of culture and grammar; as she argues in a forum, translation is not just to display all the facts and details but to represent the spirit and the excitement of the Chinese fiction into English (China Exchange, 2018). Bryant confirms in an interview that she shares Holmwood’s view of “how translation should be approached,” noting that a degree of infidelity is needed “for the sake of greater fidelity” (Cathy, 2021a; Cathy, 2021b). Chang explains in a keynote speech that Chinese readers gravitate towards Jin Yong’s novels for the “rip-roaring fun and unstoppable” reading experience, which means “Jin Yong’s effortless prose, his memorable stories and characters, as well as the exciting fights” (Martial Arts Studies, 2022). So the team intended their translations to be “fun, addictive and exciting” by tapping into the cinematic language of action movies (ibid.). As Chang explains, it is “a common language of movie



imagination in action scene” intelligible to people all over the world, not to mention many of them have experienced “martial arts stories through the silver screen” (ibid.). She also points out that Jin Yong dabbled in screenwriting and filmmaking and his serialized wuxia stories were set out to attract readers to his newspaper, arguing that it is a reasonable strategy to translate the novel by appropriating the cinematic language and recreating the “addictive” reading experience (Cathy, 2021a; Martial Arts Studies, 2022). Now it can be seen from these remarks that the three translators have reached a consensus that a sense-for-sense translation approach is favored over a word-for-word one where factual details of the source text may appear obscure or out of place in English translations. Drawing on inspirations from the common cinematic experience, the translators consider the recreation of exciting narratives to be their top priority. To be specific, the representation of the tone and spirit embedded in the source text comes before the fidelity to lexis, sentence and discourse structure. So one might expect that while not every single detail would be retained in the English translations, the narrative spirit and style would still be communicated and continue to deliver an engaging reading experience.

Moreover, reader expectations fuel the project team’s pursuit of a fun, fluent narrative style in the English translations of *Legends of the Condor Heroes*. Certainly, the prospect readers are expected to be English language readers, specifically including those who know nothing of Chinese wuxia, those who cannot read the Chinese but have watched screen adaptations of wuxia novels, such as most Westerners and the overseas Chinese diasporic community, and those who have read the Chinese version and now fancy its English representation (Cathy, 2021a). It is clear that the first two groups form the major target readers, whereas the third group, the bilingual readers, is a minority. To attract this major target readership, the English translations are expected to be engaging

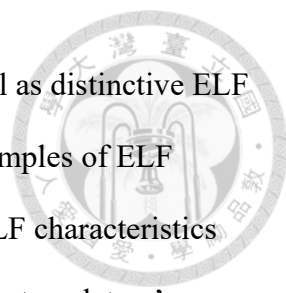


and exciting because the first group, including someone so young as a ten-year-old, better not get scared off by long-winded narratives and footnotes, and the second group anticipates the exhilaration of wuxia stories based on their screen experience (China Exchange, 2018; Cathy, 2021a).

As argued by Chang, English language readers motivated by the fun reading experience would spontaneously embark on the journey of learning the Chinese history and culture from other proper reads; so too are the Chinese readers, who read Jin Yong's novels mainly for entertainment instead of for identity exploration (China Exchange, 2018; Cathy, 2021b). In addition, the prospect of the English version coming in the audiobook form necessitates its “unstoppable” characteristic, since audiobook offers a reading experience so “linear” that the reader “can’t flick back and forth like a book” (Martial Arts Studies, 2022). So the communicative purpose ultimately is for the translators to emulate the smooth reading pace and enamor the broadest possible readership. To fulfill this communicative purpose, the translators have to overcome several challenges existing in the original text, including the meandering plot of serialized stories, the vast volume of fight scenes, the substantial length of the books, the deep-seated impression derived from screen adaptations and the archaic feel of Jin Yong's language, as summarized by Chang (ibid.). Further investigations will be provided in the Analysis of Results.

3.3 Data Collection

To demonstrate exactly how the translators use their linguistic and cultural resources as creative ELF user in representing the wuxia novel *Legends of the Condor Heroes* in English translations, I will look into the challenges identified by the translators and then draw on findings in ELF pragmatics to analyze their translation




strategies. In this way, the nature of the translation of the wuxia novel as distinctive ELF use will be illuminated by understanding translation strategies as examples of ELF pragmatics. I will extract candidate passages that show significant ELF characteristics from both the source and target text for contrast and analysis, with the translators' strategies for cultural issues and references brought into central focus of discussion. Specifically, the cultural issues encompass all translation challenges from those that clash with the reading habits of English language readers to those that, being sexist or racist for example, are "already problematic in Chinese" (Cathy, 2021b). The cultural references will be evaluated in the sense of Aixelà's (1996) "culture-specific item," namely any linguistic item that is "open to intercultural evolution among linguistic communities" because it does not exist or changes intertextual status in the target culture (Aixelà, 1996: 58). Besides, paratextual materials, such as blurbs, prefaces, interviews with translators and reviews from critics and readers, will be collected to contextualize the translations and better identify the translators' intended purposes. To be efficient, I will employ pre-established terms for both translation strategies and distinguishing ELF patterns specified in prior studies, as described in the following.

3.4 ELF pragmatics and translation strategies

Having organized previous findings in ELF pragmatics, House (2010) and Cogo & House (2017) have systematized several strategic solutions as characteristics of ELF communication. Since their conceptual framework is still under development, I will summarize their existent work and, if need be, propose new phrasing to describe other prevalent ELF patterns that have been spotted in the English translations of *Legends of the Condor Heroes*.

In general, Cogo & House (2017: 212) divide the pragmatic work into several



domains, including *negotiation of meaning* and *multilingual resources*, both relevant to this study of translations in the wuxia genre. In addition, I draw inspirations from Cogo & House's (2017: 212) notion of multilingual resources and propose *multicultural resources* as the third domain because based on my own observation, cultural references and images from both the source and target cultures often function as the translator's resources as well. I also propose *deletion*, which is inspired by the translation scholar Aixelà's (1996: 64) definition, as the fourth domain, since in the translation of the novel *Legends of the Condor Heroes*, it is prevalent enough for us to consider it an ELF pragmatic approach particularly adopted by the translator as ELF user.

Simply put, these four domains, *negotiation of meaning*, *multilingual resources*, *multicultural resources* and *deletion*, encompass all the ELF pragmatic approaches that will be referred to in this study. Each domain delineates a category of ELF pragmatic approaches, which are included because they are analogous to the translation strategies prominently adopted in the novel's translations. With these technical terms clarified, the particular ELF patterns of the translator as ELF user can be better defined and pinpointed in comparison with translation strategies, which will also be presented later in this section.

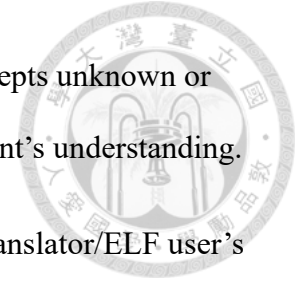
Firstly, the domain of negotiation of meaning is described by Cogo & House (2017: 212-213) as “strategies used to construct meaning and/or solve non-understanding.” In this study, I keep only the approach of *co-construction of utterances* in the domain of negotiation of meaning and put the other two approaches, repetition and self-initiated repair, into the domain of multicultural resources. While co-construction of utterance invariably involves English reproductions of existent linguistic items in the source text, repetition and self-initiated repair concern the use of

multicultural resources that technically does not exist as linguistic items in the source text. So the approaches of repetition and self-initiated repair, in my opinion, better fit the definition of the domain of multicultural resources, as will be further clarified later.

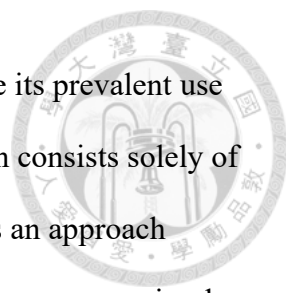
Co-construction of utterances is an approach ELF users adopt to reach consensus on meanings with what we know as “the discourse community” (Cogo & House, 2017: 215) from section 2.2. We also know from section 2.4 that the translator as ELF user endeavors to construct a discourse space to engage the target readers as the discourse community. So the approach of co-construction of utterances in this respect helps cultivate “a feeling of community and group identity” (ibid.), which in our case reinforces an English language reader’s sense of wuxia novels as an emerging literary genre.

Secondly, the domain of multilingual resources manifests itself in a mixture of linguistic items, such as lexis or syntax, from both the English and other languages, featuring the approaches of *transfer* and *code-switching* (Cogo & House, 2017: 218). Transfer means the transfer of pragmatic norms of other languages, usually from the speaker’s mother tongue (House, 2010: 370). House (2010: 371) observes that Asian ELF users often recycle the same topic in ELF communications and takes this transfer of the Asian communicative convention into the use of English as an example. I find her observation noteworthy and would add that the transfer of ST discourse conventions into the target text in translation is an example as well. To take a case in point, the word-for-word translation of the martial arts move’s name “九陰白骨爪” as “Nine Yin Skeleton Claw” exemplifies the transfer of Chinese discourse conventions into the English language. Code-switching, as observed in Cogo & House (2017: 218-219), is adopted to increase the interactant’s understanding of meanings by recourse to their first language or a third shared language. When it comes to translation as ELF use, however,

code-switching often involves the introduction of coinages and concepts unknown or unfamiliar to the recipient, therefore posing challenges to the recipient's understanding.



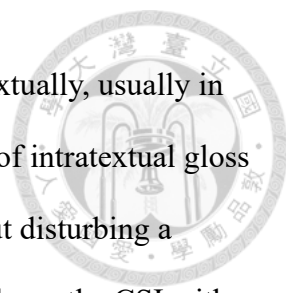
Thirdly, the domain of multicultural resources features the translator/ELF user's proactive use of multicultural resources, especially when it does not even exist as linguistic items in the source narratives. This domain consists of the approaches of *self-repetition*, *self-initiated repair* and *specification*. As noted earlier, I argue that Cogo and House's (2017: 213-214) repetition and self-initiated repair should be classified under the domain of multicultural resources, since both involve the use of non-existent phrasing in the target text. Moreover, I specify repetition as "self-repetition" in this study, because the ELF practice in translation activities is performed technically by the translator alone without their interactants involved. Additionally, though "specification" is not specified in current studies in ELF pragmatics, I still view it as an ELF approach of this domain drawing inspirations from Pedersen's (2005: 4) definition, for it is a strategy that is frequently used to fulfill semantic possibilities through the deployment of multicultural resources. Self-repetition corresponds to what Cogo & House (2017: 213) describes as an approach used "where information is deliberately and routinely restated to create coherence and ensure understanding." Self-initiated repair is regarded as a pre-emptive approach to linguistic pitfalls, "indicating awareness of potential miscommunication" (Cogo & House, 2017: 214). Specification is defined by Pedersen (2005: 4) as the use of additional, non-existent information to make extralinguistic culture-bound references more specific in the target text than in the source text. It is noteworthy that while the domain of multilingual resources focuses on the expedient use of lexical or syntactic features appropriated from the source language, the domain of multicultural resources here centers on the creative use of cultural meanings and images as resources to bridge intercultural gaps.



Lastly, deletion is what I proposed as the fourth domain, since its prevalent use characterizes the translation as ELF use, as noted earlier. This domain consists solely of the approach of *deletion*. As defined by Aixelà (1996: 64), deletion is an approach adopted where the original text is omitted for ideological or stylistic reasons, or simply because it is trivial or obscure. To put it another way, it is the replacement of what exists in the source text with nothing in the target text. In our case, the translators often adopt the deletion approach for the purpose of fluency or euphemism, as will be explored in the Analysis of Results.

All the above described domains are of interest to this study, as they are important for us to understand how the translators draw on linguistic and cultural resources from their repertoire to translate the Chinese wuxia novel into English. Besides the approaches identified as ELF pragmatics, I would also enumerate translation strategies that will be addressed in this study. By comparing translation strategies with ELF pragmatic approaches, the nature of the translator as ELF user will be clearly revealed. So in the text analysis of example translations, the definitions of several translation strategies will be touched on, as shown in the following.

The strategy of orthographic adaptation uses an alphabetic system alien to a target reader to render the culture-specific item (CSI), usually by means of transcription or transliteration (Aixelà, 1996: 61). The strategy of linguistic (non-cultural) translation offers “a target language version” of the source CSI which is analogously intelligible but alien enough to give an exotic vibe (Aixelà, 1996: 62). Linguistic translation approximates to what Pedersen (2005: 5) terms direct translation, but the latter is subdivided into calque and shifted. While a calque results from “stringent literal translation,” a shifted is a calque altered to be less obtrusive in the target text (*ibid.*).



The strategy of extratextual gloss attaches a gloss for the CSI extratextually, usually in the footnote, endnote, glossary, etc. (Aixelà, 1996: 62). The strategy of intratextual gloss integrates a gloss for the CSI intratextually into the target text without disturbing a reader's attention (ibid.). The strategy of limited universalization replaces the CSI with another reference which exists in both the source and target cultures but more familiar to the target readers (Aixelà, 1996: 63). The strategy of absolute universalization is used in situations similar to that of limited universalization, only it replaces the CSI with “a neutral reference” (ibid.). The strategy of autonomous creation autonomously adds a reference non-existent in the source text to the target text (Aixelà, 1996: 64). The strategy of addition, being part of the specification approach, adds latent senses or connotations to the CSI in the target text (Pedersen, 2005: 5). The strategy of compensation can be viewed as deletion of the CSI plus an autonomous creation elsewhere in the text to produce a similar effect (ibid.). The strategy of attenuation substitutes a reference, one that is more ideologically acceptable to a target reader, for the source CSI (ibid.).



4. Analysis of Results

The data for textual analysis in this chapter is broken down according to the categories of ELF pragmatics defined in section 3.4. The Chinese source text in each example was extracted from the New Century Edition of *Legends of the Condor Heroes*, which is the edition chosen by the translation project team to translate into English. Meanwhile, the example translations were extracted from the novel's English version, which is published in the United States by St. Martin's Griffin, an imprint of St. Martin's Publishing Group. To streamline the analysis and discussion, only page numbers are cited alongside the excerpts. The comparative results are categorized into multilingual resources, multicultural resources, negotiation of meaning, and deletion, based on the relevance of the translator's maneuvers within different ELF patterns. Each category splits into several subdivisions defined by dissimilar ELF approaches, as described in section 3.4.⁵

4.1 Multilingual resources

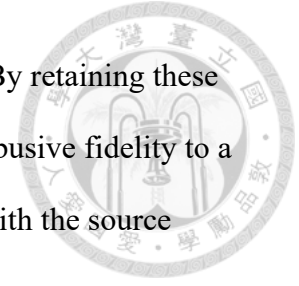
The domain of multilingual resources refers to an ELF user's mobilization of linguistic resources from other languages, often from their first language. The translator as ELF user may represent the lexical and syntactic features using the transfer approach. In other cases, they may apply the approach of code-switching to bring the phonological elements of other languages into the target text.

4.1.1 Transfer

The transfer approach features the transplantation of the source text's discourse conventions, so one can easily find the lexical and syntactical features of the source text

⁵ All text bolding and underlining in the examples have been added for reference purposes.

represented in the target narratives where this approach is adopted. By retaining these textual features, the translator as ELF user translates with Venuti's abusive fidelity to a higher degree, offering the target readers a more direct experience with the source culture.



Idioms

Example 1

ST: 官人生前是英雄豪傑之士，他在九泉之下，只怕也不能瞑目吧？(pp. 44)

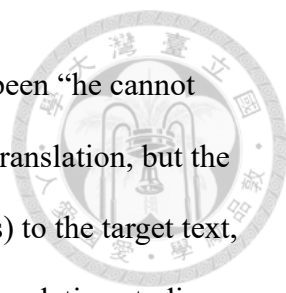
TT: Squire Yang was a hero in life. He'll **never find peace beneath the Nine Springs of the Underworld** if he hears you talking like that. (pp.41 Vol. 1)

Example 2

ST: 祖師爺在天之靈，要庇佑這孩子逢凶化吉，履險如夷，為普天下我幫受苦受難的眾兄弟造福。(pp. 868)

TT: **Spirits in the heavens**, bless this child so that she might **turn calamity into fortuity**. This I do for the good of all the Clan. (pp. 54, Vol. 3)

The retention of the source text's lexical or syntactic items conforms to Venuti's abusive fidelity, as explained in section 2.3, but expectedly it often causes non-understanding or compromises the fluency of the narratives when all these linguistic features in the source text are transferred to the target text. In this regard, Examples 1 and 2 illustrate how the translator, being ELF user, selectively applies the transfer approach to CSIs, translating the Chinese idioms into English with partial abusive fidelity. In Example 1, the Chinese phrase “九泉之下，不能瞑目” is an idiomatic expression commonly used in the wuxia genre, meaning that a soul who cannot let go of



the world of the living will not rest in peace. The idiom would have been “he cannot close his eyes beneath the Nine Springs of the Underworld” in back translation, but the translator selectively transfers the lexical item “九泉” (Night Springs) to the target text, leaving out the image of “瞑目” (close his eyes). From the view of translation studies, the translator uses the strategy of shifted direct translation to slightly adapt the whole idiomatic expression so that its English translation appears less obtrusive. While the connotations of “Nine Springs” are explicitated with the addition of “Underworld,” the image of “close his eyes” is translated into “find peace” using the strategy of limited universalization. Specifically, the expression “find peace” is a CSI that exists in both the English culture (as “rest in peace”) and the Chinese culture (as “安息”), only it is far more familiar with an English language reader and thus fits in better with the target narrative. In Example 2, the translator again selectively transfers the idiomatic expressions “在天之靈” (spirits in the heavens) and “逢凶化吉” (turn calamity into fortuity) to the target text, leaving out “祖師爺” (martial ancestors), a linguistic item that can be implicitly communicated through contextual cues such as “the Clan,” and “履險如夷” (to walk on a dangerous road as if on a smooth road), an expression that connotes similarly to “逢凶化吉” by implying that one will finally conquer the difficulties. In this case, the syntactic features of “在天之靈” and “逢凶化吉” are almost fully transferred to the target text using the strategy of linguistic translation.

Example 3

ST: 柯鎮惡啊柯鎮惡，你這殺千刀的賊廝鳥，臭瞎子，是你生生逼死這位好姑娘了！(pp. 1447)

TT: Ke Zhen'e, oh, Ke Zhen'e, you're no **Suppressor of Evil**, you're a **Suppressor of Good that deserves to be hacked into a thousand pieces!** You're a blind fool and

you've condemned a good woman to death! (pp. 323, Vol. 4)

Example 4

ST: 丘處機道：「君子一言？」韓小瑩接口道：「快馬一鞭。」 (pp. 101)

TT: “**The word of a gentleman...**” Qiu Chuji said.

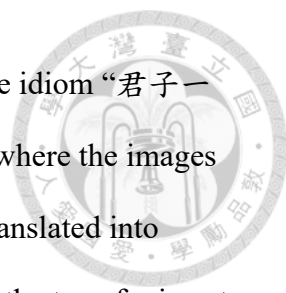
“**...is as true as a horseman's whip!**” Jade Han finished. (pp. 100, Vol. 1)

Examples 3 and 4 illustrate how the English language itself can be mobilized as a type of multilingual resources in translation. In Example 3, “Suppressor of Evil” is in fact a sense-for-sense translation of “鎮惡” (Zhen'e), which is introduced as in the sentence:

“This,” he said, gesturing to the blind man, “is their leader, Flying Bat Master **Ke Zhen'e, Suppressor of Evil.**” (pp. 63 Vol. 1)

In this way, the linguistic item, Suppressor of Evil, becomes more of a title rather than the character's name. Then the translator proceeds to capitalize on the sound effect of the expression by repeating the first word in another linguistic item, “Suppressor of Good,” creating a rhythm that makes the sentence catchy and places an emphasis on the character's upset tone of voice as delivered in the source text. In other words, the phonological feature of this linguistic item also constitutes part of the multilingual resources, which the translator can transfer to the target text using the strategy of autonomous creation. Furthermore, the source phrase “殺千刀的” (deserves to be hacked into a thousand pieces) is selectively transferred using the strategy of linguistic translation. Then the translator, again, capitalizes on the expression “Suppressor of Good” by using it as a linguistic resource to translate the profanity “賊廝鳥” (lowly bastard), seamlessly integrating the two CSIs into the fun and fluent target narrative.





In Example 4, the lexical and syntactic features of the Chinese idiom “君子一言，快馬一鞭” appear to be generally transferred to the target text, where the images of “word,” “horse,” and “whip” are retained and the CSI “君子” is translated into “gentleman” using the strategy of limited universalization. However, the transfer is not entirely successful, for the latter part of the expression, “as true as a horseman’s whip,” is an obscure, if not unintelligible, simile that actually deviates from what the source text indicates. Being an appropriation of two other Chinese idioms, “快人一言，快馬一鞭” and “君子一言，駟馬難追,” the idiomatic expression “君子一言，快馬一鞭” actually means “one needs only a promise to trust a gentleman, just as one whips a good horse only once to have it run fast” (Ku & Juan, 2019: 34). While the transfer of lexical features of the source text can exoticize the narratives and perhaps enchant the readers, it sometimes results in misunderstanding if the connotations are not explicitated using translation strategies other than linguistic translation, as demonstrated in this case.

Genre-specific elements

Example 5

ST: 「馬道長，『鉛汞謹收藏』，請問何解？」馬鈺順口答道：「鉛體沉墜，以比腎水；汞性流動，而擬心火。『鉛汞謹收藏』就是說當固腎水，息心火，修息靜功方得有成。」梅超風又道：「『三花聚頂』、『五氣朝元』呢？我桃花島師門頗有妙解，請問全真教又是如何說法。」 (pp. 241-242)

TT: “Elder Ma, could you explain to me what is meant by **Conserve the Lead and Mercury of Immortality?**”

“**Lead is solid like the kidneys,**” Ma Yu began, “and mercury flows like water, like the body’s internal heat. The principle of storing mercury and lead in the body in order to

achieve immortality essentially means consolidating the kidneys and extinguishing the fires of the heart-mind, that is to say pent-up anger or worry. This can be achieved through breathing exercises.”



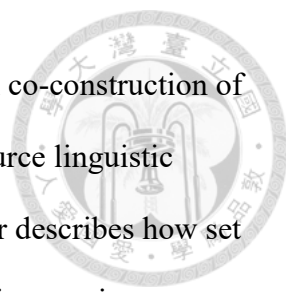
“And what about **Three Splendors Gather at the Crown, Five Forces to the Origin?** My master, Lord of **Peach Blossom Island**, gave the most beautiful explanations. I am wondering what the **Quanzhen Sect** says.” (pp. 235, Vol. 1)

Example 6

ST: 全真教創教祖師王重陽門下七子，武林中見聞稍廣的無不知名：大弟子丹陽子馬鈺，二弟子長真子譚處端，以下是長生子劉處玄、長春子丘處機、玉陽子王處一、廣寧子郝大通，最末第七弟子清淨散人孫不二，則是馬鈺出家以前所娶的妻子。(pp. 238)

TT: Central Divinity Wang Chongyang, founder of the Quanzhen Sect, was Master to seven of the greatest fighters of the *wulin*. **Ma Yu**, known by his Taoist name **Scarlet Sun**, was considered his first and best disciple. Then came **Eternal Truth Tan Chuduan**, **Eternal Life Liu Chuxuan**, **Eternal Spring Qiu Chuji**, **Jade Sun Wang Chuyi**, **Infinite Peace Hao Datong**, and finally **the Sage of Tranquility, Sun Bu'er**, who had been married to Ma Yu before he turned to a life of celibacy and meditation. (pp. 232, Vol. 1)

Examples 5 and 6 show that transfer is the most commonly adopted approach in the translation of genre-specific elements, such as appellations of characters or locations and jargon of martial arts. Just as we have seen in section 4.1.1, the translation team tends to uppercase genre-specific CSIs so that the target readers can discriminate and read in chunks, understanding that these linguistic items are particular to the genre of



wuxia novels. It is worth noting that what distinguishes transfer from co-construction of utterances is that the former foregrounds the representation of the source linguistic item's lexicogrammatical features in the target text, whereas the latter describes how set formal patterns are created in the target text for the readers to recognize varying genre elements of the same kind.

4.1.2 Code-switching

The code-switching approach is taken where an ELF user code switches into other languages to overcome limitations in their ELF use (Cogo & House, 2017: 218). In the English translations of *Legends of the Condor Heroes*, the translator often code switches into Romanized Chinese by converting the Chinese characters into Latin letters. In so doing, the phonological features of the linguistic item in Chinese are represented in English translations, but the Romanized Chinese language remains unintelligible to most English readers and so invariably requires further explanation, as mentioned in section 3.4.

Genre-specific elements

Example 7

ST: 怪不得師父非常愛她，常帶她出門。師母不會武功，但挺愛讀書寫字。(pp. 409)

TT: No wonder *Shifu* was so enamored, taking her on all his travels. *Shimu* was not trained in the martial arts, but, like *Shifu*, she had a great love for literature and calligraphy. (pp. 31, Vol. 2)

Example 8

ST: 這歐陽克內功精湛，說不還手真不還手，但借力打力，自己有多少掌力打到他身上，立時有多少勁力反擊出來，[……] (pp. 390)



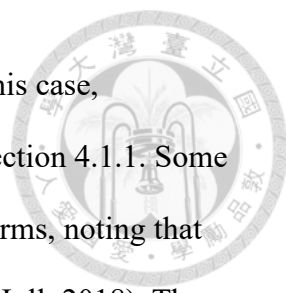
TT: His superior **neigong internal-strength training** bounced the force of her blows back at her. She was being attacked by her own inner energy. (pp. 5, Vol. 2)

Example 9

ST: 大違清靜無為之理，不是出家人份所當為 [……] (pp. 232-233)

TT: This is a violation of **the principle of *wu wei*, action through non-action**, and it is not behavior that behooves a monk. (pp. 225, Vol. 1)

As explained in section 2.4, the wuxia genre dates its origin back to more than a millennium ago and thus holds a reservoir of genre-specific language, most of which understandably does not have an equivalent in the English language. Examples 7-9 demonstrates how the translators as ELF users resolve these linguistic difficulties by adopting the code-switching approach. In Example 7, one can tell that the intercultural differences in the concept of interpersonal relationship drive the translators to render “師父” as “Shifu” and “師母” as “Shimu” using the strategy of orthographic adaptation. Sometimes “師父” is otherwise translated as “Master,” which nevertheless is also used to address an excellent martial artist. So despite the fact that the relationship between a martial student and their Shifu approximates that between an apprentice and their master in the Western culture, the Chinese term “師父” is translated as “Shifu” whenever the reference is made by a martial student to their own Master in the novel. In a similar vein, “師母” is code switched into Romanized letters and rendered as “Shimu,” which means “the wife of a Shifu” and finds no equivalent in the English language. Here one can see that the translator takes the approach of co-construction of utterances again to

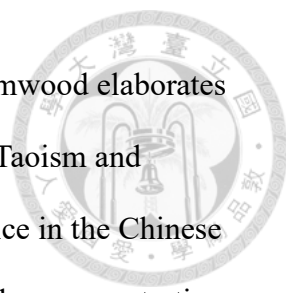


make genre elements of the same kind, namely Shifu and Shimu in this case, recognizable to an English reader in their ELF use, as explained in section 4.1.1. Some reviewers approve of this pinyin-style translation of genre-specific terms, noting that translations such as Shifu come across with more “Chinese flavor” (Hull, 2018). The translation of “Shimu” can be problematic, however, when a Shifu is not a man, as can be inferred from the passage:

“**She**’s not my *Shifu*! Not in a hundred years!” Lotus retorted. “It would be more accurate to say I’m *her* teacher.” (pp. 60, Vol. 2)

This is how Lotus, one of the main characters, replies when asked whether Cyclone Mei, a female martial artist, is her “Shifu.” We do not know how Mei’s disciple would address her husband in English because he passes away long before she starts her career as a Shifu. Considering that the husband of a female Shifu is called “師丈” in Chinese, it might be similarly translated as “Shizhang” using the strategy of orthographic adaptation. But whether this is the optimal translation and how much sense it makes to an English reader remain to be explored. Since the relationship between a martial student and their Shimu or “Shizhang” is not so significant as the relationship with their Shifu, I would suggest putting “師母” and “師丈” in plain translations such as “Shifu’s wife” and “Shifu’s husband” just to make life easier for the target readers and also the translators themselves.

Examples 8 and 9 proceed to show that the translators seek to reconstruct the wuxia culture in English using genre-specific coinages such as *neigong* and *wu wei*. In fact, the approach of code-switching is a convenient tactic for the translator as ELF user to emulate and exoticize the genre language of Chinese wuxia novels in the target text. The translation team can be observed to preserve and place an emphasis on these genre



elements by adopting the strategy of orthographic adaptation, as Holmwood elaborates in the novel's appendix on the relevance of ancient thoughts such as Taoism and traditional Chinese medicine to the martial arts philosophy and practice in the Chinese culture, with *wu wei* described as “non-doing” and *neigong* explained as concentrating “on mental strength and the movement of *qi* around the body” (pp. 382-383, Vol. 1). Additionally, it is worth noting that the translation team follows up the Romanized coinages with explanatory information using other translation strategies. In Example 8, *neigong*, the orthographic adaptation of “內功,” is followed by its linguistic translation “internal-strength,” whereas the orthographic adaptation of “無為,” *wu wei*, is followed by an intratextual gloss, “action through non-action,” in Example 9. These strategies are employed alongside the orthographic adaptation strategy noticeably to hammer home the connections between the Romanized coinages and their otherwise unintelligible meanings. This enhanced approach of code-switching is characteristic of the translator's ELF use, as will be further explored in following examples.

Martial arts moves

Example 10

ST: 這拳法以「靈、閃、撲、跌」四字訣為主旨…… (pp. 933-934)

TT: It encompassed four fundamental principles: *ling, shan, pu, die*. That is, alertness, timely avoidance, pouncing, and tumbling. (pp. 127, Vol. 3)

Example 11

ST: 「……他教了我十六字訣，說是：『空朦洞鬆、風通容夢、沖窮中弄、童庸弓蟲』。」洪七公笑道：「甚麼東弄窟窿的？」郭靖道：「這十六字訣，每一字都有道理，『鬆』是出拳勁道要虛；『蟲』是身子柔軟如蟲；『朦』是拳招胡裏胡塗，

不可太過清楚；『夢』是好像睡著了做夢一般。……」(pp. 914)

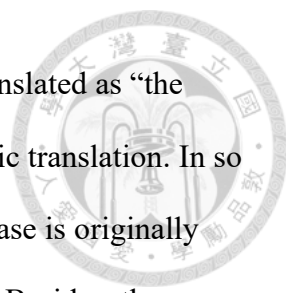
TT: "...He taught me the secret in sixteen characters: **kong meng dong song, feng tong rong meng, chong qiong zhong nong, tong yong gong chong.**"

Count Seven looked amused. It sounded like yet more nonsense.

"Let me explain. Each character has its own significance. **The fourth character, 'loose'**, means that the fist must be hollow—that is, lacking strength. **The last character, 'worm'**, refers to the body, which must be soft and supple. **The second, 'haze'**, tells you that the punches must be confused—foolish, even—to render your opponent unsure of their shape. **The eighth, 'dream'** I think means that you should fight as if in a dream. [...]"

Examples 10 and 11 demonstrate how the translator, again, employs other translation strategies to complement the strategy of orthographic adaptation in their use of the code-switching approach. In Example 10, the four Chinese characters of the mnemonic phrase “靈、閃、撲、跌” are code switched into Romanized letters using the strategy of orthographic adaptation and then complemented by their linguistic translations in an intratextual gloss as “that is, alertness, timely avoidance, pouncing, and tumbling.” Without the orthographic adaptation of the Chinese characters, the meaning of each character still can be communicated through their linguistic translations, so it is not unreasonable to say that the use of the code-switching approach is an additional, purposeful act to retain the phrase’s exotic overtone. Similarly, in Example 11, the mnemonic phrase for a martial arts style, “空朦洞鬆、風通容夢、沖窮中弄、童庸弓蟲,” is first translated as “kong meng dong song, feng tong rong meng, chong qiong zhong nong, tong yong gong chong” using the strategy of orthographic adaptation before some of its components get further explained in later sentences. For





instance, the Chinese character “鬆,” translated as “song,” is later translated as “the fourth character, ‘loose’” using the strategies of addition and linguistic translation. In so doing, it straightforwardly reminds the reader that the mnemonic phrase is originally written in Chinese, as well as getting the character’s meaning across. Besides, the novel’s character Count Seven’s humorous reply also necessitates the translator’s use of the code-switching approach. To be more specific, Count Seven’s remark in Chinese, “東弄窟窿,” rhymes with the vowel sounds of each Chinese character in the mnemonic phrase and can be back translated as “dig a hole in the east.” That’s how it carries a note of humor to the Chinese readers. The translator successfully retains the sound effect using the code-switching approach, but the assonance of the Chinese pun “東弄窟窿” is difficult to represent either in a linguistic translation or in an invented English pun that is equally fun. So Count Seven’s reply “甚麼東弄窟窿的” is freely translated as “it sounded like yet more nonsense,” which apparently is how the orthographic adaptation of the mnemonic phrase sounds to an English language reader. The free translation of “東弄窟窿” as “nonsense” therefore proves to capture Count Seven’s confused and curious tone, though seemingly different in denotative meanings, creating a communicative effect similar to that of the source text.

Chinese characters

Example 12

ST: 我再想起南希仁只寫了三筆，一劃、一短豎，再是一劃連鉤，說是『東』字的起筆固然可以，是『西』字也何嘗不能？若非東邪，定是西毒了。(pp. 1449)

TT: And then **there were the three strokes** Woodcutter Nan managed to write on the ground—a **horizontal, a short vertical and an enclosing hook**. He could have been writing the character *dong*—east—for Eastern Heretic, but then it could also have



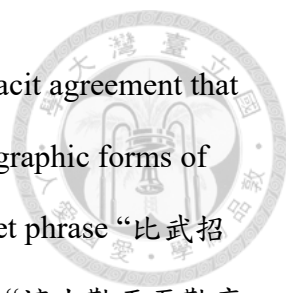
been the character *xi*—west—for Western Venom, couldn't it? (pp. 325, Vol. 4)

Example 13

ST: 「……這小鞋正面鞋底有個『比』字，反面有個『招』字，我總想不明是甚麼意思，那晚做夢，見到穆家姊姊在中都街頭賣藝，豎一面『比武招親』的錦旗，這一下教我豁然而悟，全盤想通了。」 (pp. 1450-1451)

TT: “[...] **The little shoe has the character *bi* on the sole and the character *zhao* carved on the heel.** I couldn't make any sense of it—they don't form any comprehensible sequence. But then, that night, when I dreamed of Sister Mu fighting in the marketplace, **that's when I saw the characters on a banner flapping by the stage. *Bi wu zhao qin. Duel for a Maiden.*** That was when everything became clear.” (pp. 327, Vol. 4)

The code-switching approach can be used not only to preserve the sound effect of Chinese characters, as explained in Example 11, but to signal their existence as well in the scenes of the story. In Example 12, part of a Chinese character's orthographic form is explicitly described in the narrative as “只寫了三筆，一劃、一短豎，再是一劃連鉤，” which is truthfully translated as “there were the three strokes [...] a horizontal, a short vertical and an enclosing hook,” conjuring up a visual image of the incomplete Chinese character in an English language reader's mind as the source text does for the Chinese readers. As a result, the later discussion of what the Chinese character might be requires the translator to provide the English readers with a translation that can reconcile itself with both the image of the partial character's image and the target narrative. The strategic combo of orthographic adaptation and linguistic translation, again, is favored and adopted where “東 [……] 東邪” is translated as “*dong*—east—for Eastern Heretic” and “西 [……] 西毒” as “*xi*—west—for Western



Venom.” It is clear that the translator and the reader have come to a tacit agreement that Romanized coinages to some extent can be associated with the orthographic forms of Chinese characters, despite their curious appearances. The Chinese set phrase “比武招親” in Example 13 is tackled along the same lines. The first sentence “這小鞋正面鞋底有個『比』字，反面有個『招』字” is translated as “the little shoe has the character *bi* on the sole and the character *zhao* carved on the heel.” Code-switched into Romanized characters, the two words *bi* (比) and *zhao* (招) may seem senseless to the target readers, but it is acceptable because at this moment, the riddle has yet been solved, either, in the source narrative. Later when it is revealed that, combined with two more words on the other shoe, the four words can form the Chinese set phrase “比武招親,” the translators use the orthographic translation “*Bi wu zhao qin*” along with an intratextual gloss “Duel for a Maiden” to represent the answer to the riddle. With this strategic combo, both the exotic overtone and the denotative meaning of the set phrase are conveyed to the target readers. It is noteworthy that in these situations of Chinese wordplay, the translation team still opts for Romanization instead of actual Chinese characters in their use of the code-switching approach, perhaps because the novel’s English version is also aimed at audiobook readers, as mentioned in section 3.2.

Representation of other languages

Example 14

ST: 他雙眼望著雙方兵馬交戰，口中傳令：「木華黎，你與二王子帶隊向西退卻。博爾朮，你與赤老溫帶隊向北退卻。忽必來，你與速不台帶隊向南退卻。〔……〕」 (pp. 112)

TT: He turned back to the battle field. “**Muqali**, accompany the Second Prince and his men back to the west. **Bogurchi**, you and **Tchila’un** go north. **Kublai**, you and **Subotai**,

south. [...]” (pp. 109, Vol. 1)

Example 15

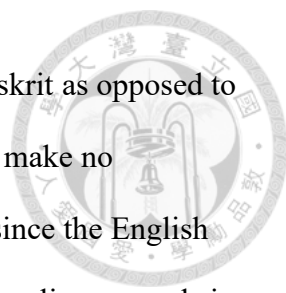
ST: 歐陽鋒道：「甚麼文字？」黃蓉道：「摩訶波羅，揭諦古羅，斯里星，昂依納得。斯熱確虛，哈虎文砵英。」 (pp. 1441)

TT: “What are you talking about?”

“*Mahaparas gatekras suryasanyanagha sirahstha hahoramanpayas* [...]” (pp. 314, Vol. 4)

Examples 14 and 15 illustrate how the code-switching approach can be taken to represent other languages in addition to Chinese. As discussed in section 2.2, the translator as ELF user has other languages coexisting with the English language in their repertoire as linguistic resources, which can be utilized to fulfill contextual needs. In Example 14, the translator uses the strategy of orthographic adaptation to deal with the names of the novel’s Mongolian characters, translating “木華黎” as “Muqali,” “博爾朮” as “Bogurchi,” “赤老溫” as “Tchila’un,” “忽必來” as “Kublai” and “速不台” as “Subotai.” This is a noteworthy translation choice because these Mongolian names are code-switched into Romanized characters according to Mongolian phonemes, despite its being written in Chinese. In a similar vein, the excerpt from a martial arts treatise in Example 15, “摩訶波羅，揭諦古羅，斯里星，昂依納得。斯熱確虛，哈虎文砵英” is code-switched into Romanized characters according to Sanskrit phonemes and translated as “*Mahaparas gatekras suryasanyanagha sirahstha hahoramanpayas.*” It might be far-fetched to say that the translator means to represent ethnic minority cultures like the Mongolians and the Indo-Iranians, but it is certainly a conscious attempt to reconstruct the novel’s culturally diversified world by representing the





phonological features of these linguistic items in Mongolian and Sanskrit as opposed to in Mandarin Chinese. On the surface, the translation choice seems to make no difference whether the phonological features are represented or not, since the English readers, using contextual cues, will know that the names refer to Mongolian generals in Example 14 and that the excerpt is written in a non-Chinese language unintelligible to the novel's characters, as they are construed in the source text by the Chinese readers. The translator's effort, however, still makes significant sense in creating the phonetic sensuality, which provides the English readers with a delightful experience of all these exotic cultures.

4.2 Multicultural resources

The domain of multicultural resources covers the approaches in which an ELF user draws on cultural resources from their lingua-cultural repertoire to facilitate ELF communications. Sometimes it can be difficult to distinguish between linguistic and cultural resource, since ELF in practice is never culturally neutral, as argued in section 2.1. Just as important, cultural resources can hardly be mobilized without languages as a medium in ELF communications, so it may seem that the linguistic and cultural resources are inseparable. But as explained in section 3.4, the domain of multilingual resources highlights the utilization of linguistic features such as syntax or phonology in translations, whereas the domain of multicultural resources foregrounds the cultural significance in the translator's ELF use.

4.2.1 Self-repetition

The translator adopts the self-repetition approach by repeatedly drawing on particular cultural resources in their lingua-cultural repertoire to facilitate communications with their readers. The semantic representation of the cultural

resources therefore is used as “a recurrent referential token,” as discussed in section 2.1, to foster the reader’s awareness of their insider status in the co-constructed discourse space of the wuxia story, thereby enhancing their understanding of the translations. The examples below demonstrate how the translator repeatedly taps into such referential tokens to reconstruct the world view of the novel.

steppe

Example 16

ST: 鐵木真眼瞧四下地形，已成竹在胸，說道：「今日叫大金國兩位太子瞧一瞧咱兄弟的手段！」 (pp. 133-134)

TT: Temujin had by now surveyed the terrain and concocted a plan. “Let’s show the Princes how we do things on the steppe.” (pp. 131, Vol. 1)

Example 17

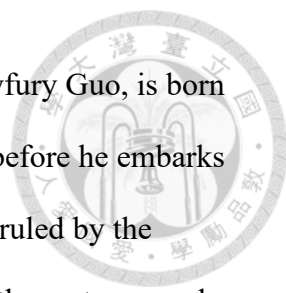
ST: 鐵木真單身去追，遇到一個青年在擠馬乳。鐵木真問起盜賊的消息。那青年就是博爾朮，說道：「男兒的苦難都是一樣，我和你結成朋友。」 (pp. 121)

TT: Temujin was giving chase when he encountered a young man, milking his horse. Had he seen where the thieves had fled? This was Bogurchi. “We both know the hardships a man faces in these grasslands. Let us be friends,” he said. (pp. 120, Vol. 1)

Example 18

ST: 郭靖聽到這裏，想起當年與義弟拖雷在沙漠中玩石彈的情景，不禁微笑。
(pp.710)

TT: Guo Jing smiled. He had played the same game when he was little, against his *anda* Tolui, **on the Mongolian steppe.** (pp. 375, Vol. 2)



The novel's protagonist Guo Jing, son of the Song patriot Skyfury Guo, is born and raised in the grassland steppe north of ancient China's territory, before he embarks on the adventurous journey into the south, the lush land of fecundity ruled by the Southern Song Empire. So the demarcation between the desolate northern steppe and the vibrant southern cities can also be viewed as a watershed in Guo Jing's life, dividing the nomadic life of his formative years from the later eye-opening experience of the broader martial world. The image of the steppe, therefore, evokes the ambience of the Mongolian lifestyle and Guo Jing's memories of his childhood. Examples 16-18 show how the translators use "steppe" or "grassland" as a referential token in their employment of the self-repetition approach to construct the story space and heighten the reader's impression about the Mongolian life and culture.

In Example 16, the steppe is used to symbolize the Mongolian way of life. The translator adopts the addition strategy to spotlight the scene, the steppe, translating “今日大金國兩位太子瞧一瞧咱兄弟的手段” as “let's show the Princes how we do things on the steppe.” The addition of “on the steppe” in the target text not only helps the readers picture the scene of the battlefield, but also emblemizes the indomitable spirit of the Mongolians, who are confident of their finesse and boldness as a warrior tribe. By the same token, Example 17 manifests the translators' intentional effort to depict the Mongolian way of life by building up the image of the grassland steppe. Though Bogurchi's reply, “男兒的苦難都是一樣,” would have been “the hardships a man faces are common” in back translation, it is translated as “we both know the hardships a man faces in these grasslands” using the addition strategy. With the addition of “in these grasslands” in the target text, the notion of men's hardships is confined to a less general sense, which specifically refers to “the Mongolian men's hardship.” The image of the grasslands, therefore, is for the reader to associate with the adversities and

struggles of the steppe living, similarly reflecting the undeterred spirit of the Mongolians as it does in Example 16.



So far it is clear that the translator, being ELF user, repeats themselves by using the image of steppe, a cultural resource from the source text, as a recurrent referential token to develop an English reader’s consciousness of the Mongolian values and cultures. Furthermore, the steppe as a referential token is also used to mark the protagonist Guo Jing’s childhood years spent in the desolate north, thereby making a stark contrast to his exciting adventures into the southern world. In Example 18, during his travels around the south, Guo Jing recalls playing marbles in the north with his sworn brother when they were kids. The source reference “在沙漠中,” which would have been “in the desert” in back translation, is translated as “on the Mongolian steppe” using the strategy of limited universalization. Although the idea of the desert is certain to be intelligible, the steppe is the immediately familiar image to the target readers nevertheless. So the translator replaces “the desert” with “the Mongolian steppe,” effectively summoning up the images of Guo Jing’s steppe living experience in the reader’s mind. It is important to see that the translator’s choice of word here is neither inadvertent nor inaccurate. The self-repetition of the steppe, of the grasslands, turns out to be a tactic for the translator to foster the reader’s awareness of the story space.

wulin, jianghu and martial Master

Example 19

ST: 楊康？楊康？倒不曾聽說有那一位英雄叫做楊康。可是若非英雄豪傑，又如何配用這等利器？(pp. 149)

TT: Yang Kang? Yang Kang? I don’t think I’ve ever heard of a martial arts master

named Yang Kang. But why would this Yang Kang possess such an exceptional weapon if he was not a **hero of wulin**? (pp. 145, Vol. 1)

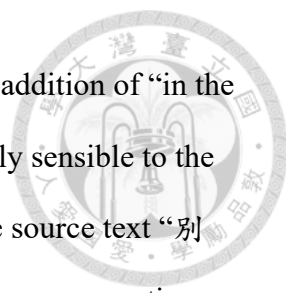


Example 20

ST: 又想二師父號稱「妙手書生」，別人囊中任何物品，都能毫不費力的手到拿來。(pp. 1377)

TT: Second Shifu was known in the *jianghu* as Quick Hands for his superb sleight of hand. He could empty any pocket and take any object from a person without being detected, and, over the years, even the most sensitive and guarded of martial Masters had been caught out. (pp. 228, Vol. 4)

In the genre of wuxia, the Chinese term “武林” refers to the martial arts community, often translated as “wulin” or “martial forest.” The translator opts for the first translation, using the strategy of orthographic adaptation to render “武林” as “wulin” throughout the novel. As mentioned by Holmwood in an interview, several genre-specific terms such as wulin and jianghu “have entered parlance through the gaming community” (Wang, 2018), so it would not alienate the target readers to leave them in pinyin. It is noteworthy that these key concepts of the wuxia genre are viewed and mobilized as cultural resources in the translators’ ELF use. Examples 19 and 20 demonstrate how these genre-specific terms are used as referential tokens to establish the reader’s awareness of the wuxia genre in the discourse space. In Example 19, the source linguistic item “英雄豪傑” would have been “great heroes” in back translation, but the translator employs the addition strategy and renders it as “a hero of *wulin*,” reminding the reader that the story progresses against the backdrop of the martial world. Likewise, the self-repetition of “jianghu” and “martial Master” in Example 20 signals the reader to notice the discourse space. The source text “號稱「妙手書生」” would



have been “known as Quick Hands” in back translation, but with the addition of “in the *jianghu*,” the once implicit sense of context has now become explicitly sensible to the target readers. Additionally, even with the linguistic translation of the source text “別人” as “a person,” the translator proceeds to use the strategy of autonomous creation and elaborate on Second Shifu’s finesse with an extra sentence—“even the most sensitive and guarded of martial Masters had been caught out.” It is noteworthy that in this sentence, the genre-specific CSI “martial Masters” is used as a referential token as well to raise the reader’s awareness of the broader discourse space, the martial world.

Example 21

ST: 老叫化縱橫江湖，數十年來結交的盡是草莽豪傑，一直沒跟婦人孩子打過交道，讓她這麼一哭，登時慌了手腳…… (pp. 867)

TT: He had spent decades **wandering the rivers and lakes**, but this was the first time he had consoled a crying maiden. (pp. 53, Vol. 3)

Example 22

ST: 柯鎮惡道：「聽來倒似不假，那麼便是黃河四鬼了。你們在江湖上並非無名之輩，為甚麼竟自甘下賤，四個鬥我徒兒一人？」 (pp. 256)

TT: “It appears you are telling the truth,” Ke Zhen’e said. “The Four Daemons of the Yellow River. With such a reputation in the wulin, why lower yourselves to fight four against one?” (pp. 250-251, Vol. 1)

Example 23

ST: 北方淪陷，你二人流落江湖，其後八拜為交，義結金蘭 (pp. 17)

TT: When the Jin army conquered the north, you began wandering the lakes and



rivers of the south, practicing your martial arts. It was then that you became brothers-in-arms. (pp. 10, Vol. 1)

Example 24

ST: 何況咱們大家都是為了救護忠義的後人，這是堂堂正正的大好事，江湖上朋友們知道了，人人要讚一個『好』字！(pp. 156)

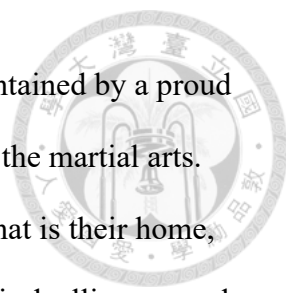
TT: And in any case, we are saving an honorable patriot's line of descent. There will be praise once **our friends in the south** find out. (pp. 152, Vol. 1)

It is not unreasonable to say that almost all Chinese wuxia novels base their worldview on the idea of wulin and jianghu. In fact, wulin and jianghu are such new and important concepts to the target readers that Holmwood offers her interpretation in the first volume's prologue, attempting to “evoke the unique linguistic and cultural meaning behind those words” (Wang, 2018), as she argues it:

They are not just their literal translations; these concepts contain a world of meaning. Their translation occurs over the course of the whole book, rather than as one word or phrase (Wang, 2018).

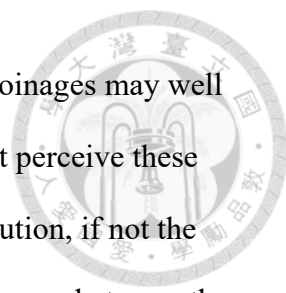
It can be seen from Holmwood's argument that she does not regard “wulin” and “jianghu” simply as equivalents of their Chinese counterparts. Instead, she finds it imperative to take into account their cultural meanings that may be non-existent or construed differently in the target culture, so she takes the accountability to provide the target readers with background knowledge of “wulin” and “jianghu” in the prologue, as shown below:

But for all its seeming lawlessness, the soils of the south have proved fertile ground for the fleeing Song Empire. [...] For while the Empire regards the south



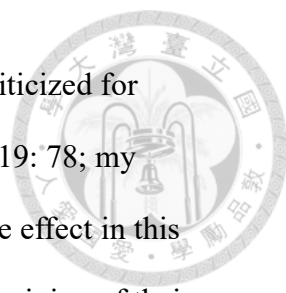
as unruly, law and order in this part of China is in reality maintained by a proud community of men and women who have trained for years in the martial arts. They name themselves for the landscape of rivers and lakes that is their home, the *jianghu*, or even the “martial forest,” the *wulin*, that is their duelling ground. Organised into sects, schools, clans and bands of sworn brothers, or even travelling as lone “wanderers of the lakes and rivers,” they live by a moral code they call *xia*. (pp. xviii, Vol. 1)

Holmwood asserts that this extra information helps “set the scene” (Wang, 2018), meaning for it to equip an English language reader with the wuxia novel’s world view. Her resolution to the intercultural disparity, however, is criticized by some researchers for confusing “wulin” with “jianghu.” Tsai (2019: 78) points out that the notion of jianghu “does not confine itself to the region south of the Yangtze River, nor does it correspond exactly to the notion of wulin. While wulin refers to the community of martial artists, jianghu is a broader term that includes non-martial artists such as peddlers and footmen” (my translation, 2023). Additionally, Tsai (2019: 79) observes that the translation team’s use of “the rivers and lakes of the south” to refer to both “江南” (the region south of the Yangtze River) and “江湖” (jianghu) confuses the two different concepts, too, so Tsai suggests that future translators be cautious to “coin genre-specific terms of wuxia novels step by step” (my translation, 2023). According to Tsai, “wulin,” “jianghu” and “the rivers and lakes of the south” are three different concepts and should be matched to three separate translations in English. I agree to the extent that, admittedly, the translation approach deserves careful thinking because these concepts are not equal to one another. But I still have trouble accepting this proposition that genre-specific terms can only be rendered as their equivalents in another language. Since the wuxia novel is a highly culture-bound genre as explained in section 2.4, the



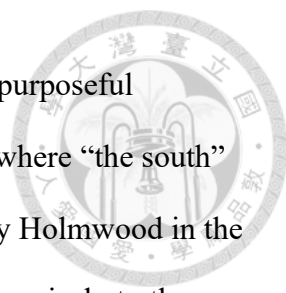
background information required to comprehend the genre-specific coinages may well be insufficient in the target culture. That is, the target readers may not perceive these coinages the same way as the source readers do, and one possible solution, if not the only one, is for the translator to intervene, making a path to bridge the gap between the two cultures. Accordingly, Examples 21-24 demonstrate how the novel's translators "make a path" by employing these genre-specific coinages as multicultural resources in their ELF use.

In Example 21, the phrase “縱橫江湖” is translated as “wandering the rivers and lakes” using the strategy of linguistic translation. What interests us here is that the translator chooses “rivers and lakes” over “jianghu” to render the genre-specific term “江湖,” so too is the translation of “流落江湖” as “wandering the lakes and rivers of the south” in Example 23. This is a different choice from what we have seen in Example 20. Although it might be dismissed as a rash decision on the part of the translators, I find it evident that they vary their word choice on purpose. As I read it, “lakes and rivers” is applied where “江湖” connotes the geographical landscape, especially that of the southern China in the translator's interpretation, while “jianghu” is employed where “江湖” refers to the conceptual community that includes people from all walks of life. In a nutshell, the translation team discriminates between different contextual needs when they tap into different cultural resources to render the same source CSI. The translation of “江湖” as “wulin” in Example 22 is made along the same lines. In this scene, Ke Zhen'e condemns The Four Daemons of the Yellow River for collectively bullying Guo Jing, “你們在江湖上並非無名之輩,” which in back translation would have been “the four of you are not nobodies in the jianghu.” Having translated this sentence as the prepositional phrase “with such a reputation in the wulin,” the translator notably replaces “jianghu” (江湖) with “wulin” (武林), a more specific term that refers



to the community of martial artists. Although this decision may be criticized for “overlooking the difference between ‘wulin’ and ‘jianghu’” (Tsai, 2019: 78; my translation, 2023), I still think that it produces a better communicative effect in this context. Ultimately, what The Four Demons would care about is the opinion of their fellow martial artists rather than that of any regular man. It is acknowledged that jianghu does not equal wulin in every way (Tsai, 2019: 78), but that also indicates the two concepts can overlap. While the source readers can perceive “江湖” to be “the jianghu that refers mainly to the community of the martial artists” in Chinese, the target readers, who lack the same cultural understanding of the wuxia genre, may not grasp the figurative meaning as readily. So the self-repetition of “wulin” in this case actually helps the target readers develop clear concepts of different genre-specific terms, despite the subtle connotative meanings of ambiguous linguistic items, such as jianghu, can be compromised.

Examples 23 and 24 continue to illustrate how the translator adopts the self-repetition approach to construct the novel’s world view, using the directional word “south” as a recurrent referential token to heighten the reader’s awareness of the discourse space. In Example 23, the source phrase “流落江湖” is translated as “wandering the lakes and rivers” and followed by the additional prepositional phrase “of the south,” indicating that the lakes and rivers, or the jianghu, in this case refers to the southern land ruled by the Song Empire, as opposed to the northern area occupied by the Jin Empire. Besides, the translator uses the strategy of autonomous creation to incorporate the participial clause “practicing your martial arts” into the translation of “流落江湖.” This self-repetition of “martial arts,” once again, direct the readers’ attention to the otherwise implicit martial world. In Example 24, the source phrase “江湖上朋友們” is translated as “our friends in the south,” though it could have been



simply translated as “our friends in the jianghu.” This is obviously a purposeful translation decision that is meant to develop the novel’s world view, where “the south” can sometimes represent the community of martial artists, as noted by Holmwood in the prologue (pp. xviii, Vol. 1). Moreover, the “江湖” in this case refers precisely to the community of martial artists who are also Song patriots, or they would not even care about whether the child of “an honorable patriot” would be saved. So one has to agree that the self-repetition of “the south” here is a proper translation that help establish the readers’ spatial awareness at the expense of the equivalent translation.

4.2.2 Self-initiated repair

When the translator adopts the approach of self-initiated repair, they take creative license to initiate pre-emptive repairs to where there is potential miscommunication in English translations. In view of the vast differences in genre understanding of wuxia novels between the Chinese-reading and English-reading communities, as explained in section 3.2, this approach is indispensable for the translator to construct readable narratives. Below are examples that exemplify how the translation team employs multicultural resources to initiate repairs to the target narratives.

The appropriation of cinematic language

Example 25

ST: 郭嘯天厲聲道：「快讀！」把弓扯得更滿了。那武官無奈，拿起公文大聲讀道：…… (pp. 36)

TT: “Read it now!” Guo pulled the arrow all the way back.

Glancing at the other man on horseback, he rolled out the document and began

reading. (pp. 31, Vol. 1)

Example 26

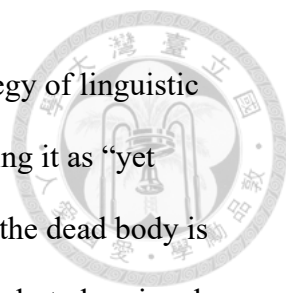
ST: 她拉開供桌後的帷幕，露出亡母的玉棺，走到棺旁，不禁「啊」的一聲，只見韓寶駒與韓小瑩兄妹雙雙死在玉棺之後。韓寶駒半身伏在棺上，腦門正中清清楚楚的有五個指孔。(pp. 1377)

TT: Lotus left him to it and went to seek solace from her mother. She parted the drapes behind the offering table and made for the sarcophagus, only to find—*ah!*—**yet another grisly tableau displayed before her.**

Ryder Han was slouched over the far end of the casket, facedown. **Five bloody holes in the crown of his head, dug by human fingers, yawning at her.** (pp. 228, Vol. 4)

As explained in section 3.2, the translator purposefully appropriates the cinematic language as multicultural resources to construct readable narratives that engage the target readers. This appropriation of the cinematic language prominently manifests itself as the approach of self-initiated repair, as demonstrated in Examples 25 and 26. The source linguistic item “無奈” in Example 25 would have been “at his wit’s end” in back translation, a description of the character’s mental attitude, but the translators use the strategy of compensation to render it as the participial clause, “glancing at the other man on horseback,” which instead is a description of the character’s visible behavior. This emphasis laid by the translator on the visuals in their appropriation of the cinematic language is evidenced as well in Example 26. In this scene, one of the main characters Lotus suddenly discovered the corpses of Guo Jing’s Shifus, as the source narrative goes, “只見韓寶駒與韓小瑩兄妹雙雙死在玉棺之後,” which in back translation should have been “only to find Ryder Han and his sister Jade





Han lay dead behind the sarcophagus.” But instead of using the strategy of linguistic translation, the translator opts for the compensation strategy, translating it as “yet another grisly tableau displayed before her.” In this way, the view of the dead body is reframed as a “grisly tableau,” which not only evokes an eerie feeling but also signals for the reader to prepare themselves for a striking picture that approximates a cinematic scene. In a similar vein, the translator adopts the approach of self-initiative repair to present the next “shot” in the novel’s narratives. As the source narrative proceeds to describe the appearance of the corpse and goes, “腦門正中清清楚楚的有五個指孔,” which could have been “with five holes dug by human fingers in the crown of his head” in back translation, the translator, again, taps into the cinematic language as multicultural resources and brings up a vivid image for the reader, translating it as “five bloody holes in the crown of his head, dug by human fingers, yawning at her.” More specifically, the translator adopts the strategy of autonomously creation to add the adjective “bloody” and the participial phrase “yawning at her” to produce a spookier visual effect. With these details added to the picture, the target readers experience the narratives as if watching a film close-up of a death scene.

The explication of the mentalities of the characters

Example 27

ST: 黃蓉笑道：「我爹爹命我在此相候歐陽伯伯大駕，你們大驚小怪的幹甚麼？」

(pp. 1440)

TT: “Papa sent me to wait for Uncle Ouyang here. Why are you all so on edge?” **She sounded unfazed. There was even a hint of amusement in her tone.** (pp. 313, Vol. 4)

Example 28

ST: 黃蓉道：「南四俠平時不大說話，為人卻十分機伶。我苦苦思索韓小瑩在我媽玉棺上所寫的那個小『十』字，到底她想寫些甚麼字。只因我想這位小王爺武藝低微，決沒本事一舉殺了江南五怪，是以始終想不到是他。」楊康哼了一聲。
(pp. 1450)

TT: “Master Nan was a man of few words, but he noticed everything.” **Although Lotus and the Freaks had not got along at first, she had always had genuine respect for those upright heroes, since they were Guo Jing’s teachers, and as such, her seniors too.** “I spent a lot of time wondering about the little cross Jade Han wrote on my mother’s sarcophagus, trying to work out what the character could be.

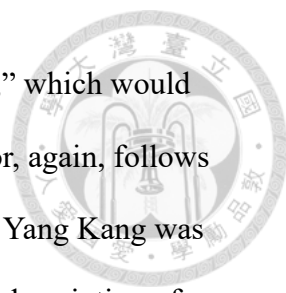
“I know the young Prince is still a novice in all things martial, and he doesn’t have the skill to have finished off the five Freaks by himself, so I never suspected him.” **She spoke as if Yang Kang was not there and took no notice of his indignant grunt.** (pp. 326, Vol. 4)

Chang notes in an interview that an English language reader is not so familiar with “tropes from Chinese literature and period drama” as their Chinese counterparts, so they might not comprehend what is going on along with the plot development; as a result, the translation team was compelled to “put a spotlight” on the twists and turns of the plot (Chen, 2021: 6). Examples 27 and 28 accordingly show how the translator adopts the approach of self-initiated repair to explicitly reveal the emotional changes of the characters. In Example 27, Lotus sneers at the villains in the novel by saying “你們大驚小怪的幹甚麼,” which is translated as “why are you all so on edge.” Nevertheless, the translator proceeds to use the strategy of autonomous creation to describe her offhand tone: “She sounded unfazed. There was even a hint of amusement in her tone.” It is apparent that the translator initiates this repair in case the reader misunderstands

Lotus' tone. While the source readers can grasp the sense of ridicule based on their experience with Chinese literature and period drama, as observed by Chang, the target readers might interpret Lotus' reply as out of pure curiosity.



In Example 28, Lotus' remark that “南四俠平時不大說話，為人卻十分機伶” is translated as “Master Nan was a man of few words, but he noticed everything.” Then the translator proceeds to explain her unexpectedly respectful attitude towards Woodcutter Nan, Guo Jing's Shifu, by following the strategy of autonomous creation, as shown by the first sentence in bold. Understandably, the Confucian thinking and Chinese socio-culture embedded in the source narrative may puzzle the target readers, so the explanation is added to justify why Lotus speaks of Woodcutter Nan (南希仁) using the honorific title “Master Nan” (南四俠) instead of his name. The pecking order of elders and the youth is a crucial part of Chinese social fabric. It is thus natural for the Chinese readers to understand Lotus' respectful attitude towards someone who is senior and virtuous, even though her relationship with Guo Jing has turned sour due to the suspicious death of his Shifus, including Woodcutter Nan, at her father's island. But one cannot expect the English readers to have the same level of cultural understanding. In the next paragraph, Lotus scorns Yang Kang by noting that “只因我想這位小王爺武藝低微，決沒本事一舉殺了江南五怪,” which is translated as “I know the young Prince is still a novice in all things martial, and he doesn't have the skill to have finished off the five Freaks by himself.” Here the linguistic item “武藝低微,” an insulting remark, would have been “has poor martial arts skills” in back translation, but the translators use the attenuation strategy to reframe it as “still novice in all things martial” In so doing, the intensity of the insult is toned down in the target narrative. If it were rendered as the back translation, Lotus would have come across rude, instead of cleverly aggressive, to an English language reader. Then the source narrative proceeds to describe the Prince



Yang Kang's response to her remark in the sentence “楊康哼了一聲,” which would have been “Yang Kang grunted” in back translation. But the translator, again, follows the strategy of autonomous creation, translating it as “she spoke as if Yang Kang was not there and took no notice of his indignant grunt.” Specifically, the description of Lotus' attitude and behavior spotlights her contempt for Yang Kang, and the additional adjective “indignant” spotlights the Prince's bitter anger. It is now clear that the tones of the characters have been such a concern that the translation team finds it imperative to initiate the repairs over and over throughout the narratives.

4.2.3 Specification

The specification approach is taken to fulfill one of the semantic possibilities of the source linguistic item in its translation, as mentioned in section 3.4. The translator employs non-existent information to explicitate extralinguistic culture-bound references, as explored in section 3.4. Actually, these culture-bound references can be understood as the translator's multicultural resources as well, existing as semantic possibilities in the translator's lingua-cultural repertoire.

koumiss

Example 29

ST: 酒到半酣，…… (pp. 140)

TT: The *koumiss* skins were now half empty. (pp. 135, Vol. 1)

Example 30

ST: 王罕的親子桑昆在旁聽了，很不痛快，不住大杯大杯的喝酒。(pp. 140-141)

TT: Senggum, a son born of Ong Khan's own loins, was sitting nearby and did not take

kindly to this remark. He downed yet another cup of *koumiss*. (pp. 135, Vol. 1)

Examples 29 and 30 show how the translator uses “koumiss” as a cultural resource from the source culture to add an exotic overtone in the target narratives. The source phrase “酒到半酣” in Example 29 would have been “they were delighted drinking half of the booze” in back translation, but it is translated as “the *koumiss* skins were now half empty.” In this way, the ambiguous source word “酒” (booze) is explicitly translated as “koumiss skins.” Noteworthy, the word “koumiss” (酒) is followed by “skin” using the addition strategy, which highlights not just the Mongolians’ signature alcoholic beverage in question, but its skin-made container as well. The focus accordingly shifts from the good mood of the drinking hosts and guests to these things of cultural significance, evoking an exotic feel that most target readers expectedly will welcome. Then the translator adopts the specification approach to translate the source linguistic item “酒” in Example 30 as “koumiss” along the same lines. Although “馬乳酒”, the back translation of “koumiss” in Chinese, occurs only once in the source text (pp. 129, Vol. 1), it is translated as koumiss in the target text whenever it is the Mongolians getting together and drinking. In fact, the translation team puts such an emphasis on “koumiss” that they use the strategy of extratextual gloss to give a description of the term in the appendix:

Koumiss is a mildly alcoholic fermented drink traditional to the Central Asian steppes, made from sheep’s milk. (pp. 391, Vol. 1)

Contrarily, the novel’s author Jin Yong reduces the use of “koumiss” to almost the minimum, let alone an extratextual gloss. It is clear that the translator intends to use “koumiss” as a cultural resource by means of the specification approach to bring about an exotic ambience of the Mongolian lifestyle in the target narratives.



Other CSIs

Example 31

ST: 那小紅馬伸出舌頭，來舐他的手臂，神態十分親熱，眾人看得都笑了起來。

TT: The **auburn horse** stuck out its tongue and tenderly licked Guo Jing's hand. The crowd laughed. [...]

“From now on, you will be called **Ulaan**,” Guo Jing whispered. (pp. 211, Vol. 1)

Example 32

ST: 今年正月裏，我逃出桃花島道北方去玩，就扮了個小叫化兒。(pp. 870)

TT: **Just after Spring Festival this year**, I escaped Peach Blossom Island and wandered the country, dressed as a beggar. (pp.56, Vol. 3)

Examples 31 and 32 continue to illustrate how the translator adopts the specification approach to leverage other multicultural resources. In Example 31, the source linguistic item “小紅馬” is the name of Guo Jing's personal mount, as well as a description of its appearance. So it is at first translated as “auburn horse” using the strategy of linguistic translation, and then translated as “Ulaan,” which refers to the horse's name, using the strategy of autonomous creation. More specifically, one can see that the translator autonomously creates a whole new sentence: “From now on, you will be called Ulaan,” Guo Jing whispered. This sentence does not exist in the source text, but apparently the translator finds it imperative to take creative license and supply the target readers with extra information. It is noteworthy that the translation “Ulaan” reminds us of Mongolia's capital city, “Ulaanbaatar,” which literally means “red hero” in Mongolian (Kao, 2019). So the horse's name “Ulaan” actually means “red” in



Mongolian, as noted by the translation team using the extratextual gloss in the appendix (pp. 391, Vol. 1). This adoption of the specification approach, again, attests the translators' intention to mobilize their multicultural resources in their ELF use.

Similarly, in Example 32, the source phrase “今年正月裏,” which would have been “in this year's first lunar month” in back translation, is translated as “just after Spring Festival this year.” More specifically, “first lunar month,” the back translation of the CSI “正月,” is replaced by “Spring Festival” using the strategy of limited universalization. The CSI “Spring Festival” is thus leveraged by the translator as a cultural resource. With the jubilant vibe conjured up by the image of “Spring Festival,” the reader can be expected to find the narratives more readable.

Example 33

ST: 黃蓉驚懼未息，道：「不管他是人是鬼，咱們轉舵快走。」

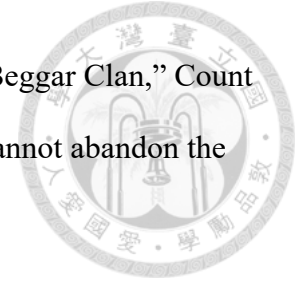
……洪七公道：「不是鬼。」黃蓉道：「是人也不該救。」洪七公道：「濟人之急，是咱們丐幫的幫規。你我兩代幫主，不能壞了歷代相傳的規矩。」黃蓉道：「丐幫這條規矩就不對了，歐陽鋒明明是個大壞蛋，做了鬼也是個大壞鬼，不論是人是鬼，都不該救。」……

……黃蓉道：「有了，靖哥哥，待會兒見到歐陽鋒，你先一棍子打死了他。你不是丐幫的，不用守這條不通的規矩。師父，丐幫規矩是濟人之急，卻沒『濟鬼之急』這一條，他變成了鬼，就不用濟他了。」洪七公怒道：「乘人之危，豈是我輩俠義道的行徑？」黃蓉兀自強辯：「乘鬼之危，那總可以吧？」 (pp. 922-923)

TT: “I don't care if it's a man or a ghost, let's get far away!” Lotus said.

... “It's not a ghost.”

“I don't care; we can't save him.”



“Helping others in their time of need is one of the principles of the Beggar Clan,” Count Seven said. “We represent two generations of Clan leadership. We cannot abandon the customs that have been passed down to us from our ancestors.”

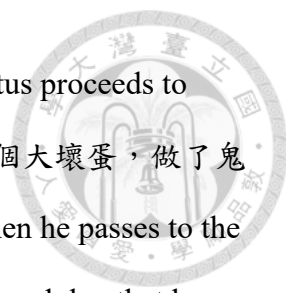
“But the custom isn’t right,” Lotus said. “Viper Ouyang is evil, and when he passes to the other side and becomes a ghost, he will be an evil spirit. Either way, he doesn’t deserve our help.”

... “Guo Jing, wait until you have Viper in your sights and then strike him dead with the bamboo cane. You aren’t a member of the Beggar Clan; You don’t need to live by this ridiculous rule. *Shifu*, the Beggar Clan believes in helping people in need, not devils in need.”

“Striking someone when he’s down... Is that the righteous behavior of someone who follows the code of xia?”

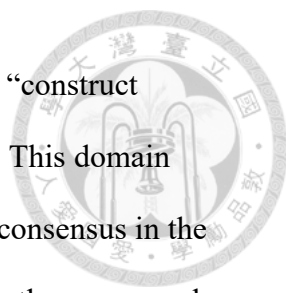
“And yet, striking a devil when he’s down...” (pp. 114-115, Vol. 3)

Previously in Examples 29-44, we explored how the translator taps into cultural references that originally are latent in the source text as resources. These resources so far come from the Mongolian or Chinese culture, but in fact, there are cultural resources for the translators to utilize in the English-speaking culture, too. Example 33 illustrates how the translator taps into cultural resources from the target culture to vary the English translations of the source linguistic item “鬼.” In this scene, Lotus and her Shifu Count Seven were arguing about whether they should save the villain Viper Ouyang. At first, Lotus suspects that the voice they hear might be from a specter, and Count Seven assures her that it is a human. Their utterances “是人 是鬼” and “不是鬼” are translated separately as “it’s a man or a ghost” and “it’s not a ghost,” where the linguistic item



“鬼” are equally rendered as “ghost” as its back translation. Then Lotus proceeds to advance her argument, as the source narrative goes, “歐陽鋒明明是個大壞蛋，做了鬼也是個大壞鬼” which is translated as “Viper Ouyang is evil, and when he passes to the other side and becomes a ghost, he will be an evil spirit.” Using the wordplay that has a sound effect, Lotus reasons that since Viper Ouyang is a “大壞蛋,” which could be back translated as “bad guy”, his death will make him a “大壞鬼,” which could be back translated as “bad ghost.” One can see in this instance, however, that only the first “鬼” in the phrase “做了鬼” is translated as “ghost,” and the second “鬼” in “大壞鬼” is translated as “evil spirit,” which echoes the former translation of “大壞蛋” as “evil.” In so doing, the translator adopts the specification approach to selectively communicate different connotative meanings of the same source word. Furthermore, Lotus continues to produce wordplay for two Chinese idioms, adapting “濟人之急” into “濟鬼之急” and “乘人之危” into “乘鬼之危.” The source phrase “是濟人之急，卻沒『濟鬼之急』這一條” is translated as “helping people in need, not devils in need,” and the idiom “乘鬼之危” is translated as “striking a devil when he’s down,” with “someone” replaced by “a devil.” In both cases, the source linguistic item “鬼” is rendered as “devil.” While in Chinese, the same word “鬼” connotes differently in different contexts to the source readers, more specific expressions are needed in English to achieve similar communicative effects for the target readers. So the translator taps into various cultural resources from the target culture, such as “ghost,” “spirit” and “devil,” to foreground different cultural implications of the same source linguistic item according to the context. To put it another way, the translator uses the specification approach to make extralinguistic culture-bound references more specific in the target text, as explained in section 3.4.

4.3 Negotiation of meaning



Negotiation of meaning occurs when an ELF user attempts to “construct meaning” or “solve non-understanding” (Cogo & House, 2017: 212). This domain comprises ELF pragmatic approaches that aid the “demonstration of consensus in the face of marked cultural differences” (House, 2010: 375). That is, with these approaches, the translator as ELF user drives a CSI to evolve interculturally by negotiating the English linguistic norms or the Chinese semantic content to reach a consensus about an accessible English version of the Chinese CSI.

4.3.1 Co-construction of utterances

We know from section 2.4 that wuxia novels are laden with genre elements, some of which, in fact, are distinguishable expressions that follow a set formal pattern, such as the names of martial arts moves and pressure points. This type of genre element can occur at various points throughout the narratives. For the Chinese readers, it is virtually effortless to recognize those patterns and catch up with what is going on during the reading process because these genre languages of the wuxia culture are “part of their consciousness” (Cathy, 2021a). It means difficulties with linguistic comprehension, however, for the English readers, if the Chinese lexicogrammatical features are to come intact into English in accordance with Venuti’s (2013: 72) so-called “abusive fidelity,” as explored in section 2.3. To resolve this discrepancy, the translator co-constructs the genre-specific utterances with the reader by establishing equivalent set formal patterns in the target text.

Names of martial arts moves

Example 34

ST: 剛才這一手顯然是江湖上相傳的「空手奪白刃」絕技，這功夫只曾聽聞，可



從來沒見過，[……] (pp. 20)

TT: Guo knew **the move** was the legendary **Bare Hand Seizes Blade**, but he had never actually seen anyone perform it. (pp. 16, Vol. 1)

Example 35

ST: 四五名兵丁一擁而上。楊鐵心倒轉槍來，一招「白虹經天」，把三名兵丁掃倒在地，又是一招「春雷震怒」，槍柄挑起一兵，攢入了人堆，[...] (pp. 34)

TT: Four men ran toward him. Yang twirled his spear in a **Rainbow Crosses the Sky**, and swept three of the soldiers to the ground. He followed this with a **Deafening Spring Thunder**, picking up one of the soldiers with the shaft of his spear and throwing him into two other men. (pp. 30, Vol. 1)

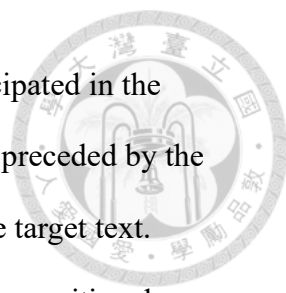
Example 36

ST: 韓小瑩心想：「這時我發一招『電照長空』，十拿九穩可以穿她個透明窟窿。」 (pp. 163)

TT: If I were to use **Lightning Ignites the Sky** now, I could probably spike my sword right through her, Jade Han said to herself. (pp. 159, Vol. 1)

The translator adopts the strategy of direct translation to tackle the names of martial arts moves, meaning they are translated word for word. Each word in English is capitalized, indicating that they are jargon pertinent to the world of wuxia stories.

Example 34 shows how this set formal pattern is introduced into the English translations. The translator explicitly specifies that Bare Hand Seizes Blade is a legendary “move” so that the reader can understand what it denotes in their first encounter with the syntactically disruptive phrasing. Example 35 illustrates how the



reader's understanding of this set formal pattern is assumed and anticipated in the context of fight scenes. While both “白虹經天” and “春雷震怒” are preceded by the quantifier “一招” (a move) in the source text, it is not specified in the target text. Instead, the translator naturally deploys these linguistic items using prepositional phrases, with their connotations implicitly intelligible using the contextual cues from the scene of a gang fight. What's more, Example 36 exemplifies the successful accomplishment of the translator's effort to co-construct the utterances with the reader. The name of a martial arts move, Lightning Ignites the Sky, which is used here as the direct object of the verb in the subordinate clause, precedes real fight scenes in the narrative. So an English language reader is expected to readily understand the expression, with the description of Jade Han's planned action as the only contextual cue. It is not unreasonable to say that the translator has reached the consensus about rendering martial arts moves in this set formal pattern with the reader through the approach of co-construction of utterances.

Names of pressure points

Example 37

ST: 歐陽克出手迅捷之極，見她轉身欲逃，左臂連身，已將她左足踝上三寸的「懸鐘穴」、右足內踝上七寸的「中都穴」先後點中。(pp. 873)

TT: Gallant had reached out and pressed on her **Suspended Bell pressure point, three inches above her left ankle, then the Central Metropolis, seven inches above her right ankle, on the inside of her leg.** (pp. 60, Vol. 3)

Example 38

ST: 朱聰一見大驚，鐵骨扇穿出，疾往丘處機「璇璣穴」點去〔……〕(pp.87)

TT: Zhu Cong tapped his metal fan at Qiu Chuji's **Jade Pivot pressure point just below the collarbone**, [...] (pp. 88, Vol. 1)



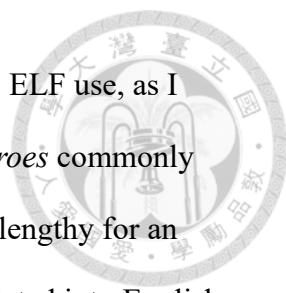
Example 39

ST: 陸莊主手肘突然下沉，一個肘槌，正中他「**肩井穴**」。(pp. 559)

TT: Squire Lu dipped his elbow and knocked the bony joint into the young man's **Shoulder Well pressure point, just above the collarbone**. (pp. 197, Vol. 2)

Similarly, the translator adopts the strategy of direct translation for the names of pressure points. The idea of pressure points in wuxia novels derives from the theory of acupuncture points in the traditional Chinese medicine, and so is readily accessible for the Chinese readers. But for the English readers, the expressions of pressure points interspersed throughout the narratives of fight scenes may demand more mental effort to comprehend. Sometimes the exact location of the pressure point is described in detail in the source text, and the translator simply translates the description into English, as shown in Example 37, where “懸鐘穴” (the Suspended Bell pressure point) is located at “左足踝上三寸” (three inches above her left ankle), for instance. In addition, one can see that the translator uses the strategy of addition to pinpoint the location of a pressure point in Examples 38 and 39, following the names of the pressure points with participial phrases “just below the collarbone” and “just above the collarbone,” even when it is not mentioned in the source text. The following addition of location makes such an expression immediately intelligible and the scene of a fight imaginable. In this way, the translator has negotiated a tacit agreement with the reader by establishing a set formal pattern of the names of pressure points in English translations.

4.4 Deletion



Deletion is an approach particular to the case of translation as ELF use, as I argued it in section 3.4. The translators of *Legends of the Condor Heroes* commonly take this approach, mainly because it would have been unacceptably lengthy for an English novel if the total three million Chinese characters were translated into English, as explained by Chang in an interview (Cathy, 2021a). More importantly, as mentioned in section 3.3, source narratives that indicate “problematic” ideologies also compel the translation team to resort to the deletion approach. Below are examples that illuminate these difficult translation decisions.

4.4.1 For fluency purpose

As explained in section 3.2, the translation team values the novel’s readability in its source language and seeks to recreate a comparable page-turner for the target readers. Additionally, the English version is due to be published as audiobook, too, whereby its readers would prefer the target narratives to keep moving forward without requiring them to flick back the pages. For these reasons, deletion becomes one of the most commonly adopted approach in the novel’s translation for the translator to produce a fluent reading experience.

Example 40

ST: 博爾朮心想：「我有箭而他無箭，到現下仍打個平手，如何能報大汗之仇？」焦躁起來，連珠箭發，颼颼颼的不斷射去，眾人瞧得眼都花了。(pp. 123)

TT: Bogurchi was growing uneasy and increasingly impatient. He fired a blur of arrows. (pp. 121, Vol. 1)

Example 41

ST: 朱聰仗著身形靈動，於千鈞一髮之際倏地竄出，才躲開了這一抓，驚疑不



定：「難道她身上沒穴道？」(pp. 165)

TT: Zhu Cong avoided her talons only at the last moment.

Doesn't she have any vital points? He asked himself, shaking. (pp. 161, Vol. 1)

Example 42

ST: 「誰充字號來著？他是大師兄斷魂刀沈青剛，這是二師兄追命槍吳青烈，那是三師兄奪魄鞭馬青雄，我是喪門斧錢青健。」(pp. 256)

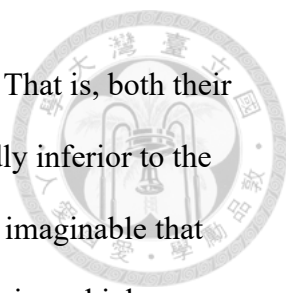
TT: “That man you dare to chastise is **Shen the Strong**. This is my second brother, **Wu the Bold**, and my third brother, **Ma the Valiant**. And I am **Qian the Hardy**.” (pp.250, Vol. 1)

It is observable that the portrayals of the novel's secondary characters are considerably reduced in the English translations due to the translator's use of the deletion approach, as demonstrated in Examples 40-42. In Example 40, the Mongolian general Bogurchi's soliloquy “我有箭而他無箭，到現下仍打個平手，如何能報大汗之仇，” which in back translation could have been “I got the arrows while he didn't. But for now it's still a draw. How could I avenge the Khan's war loss then,” is completely deleted. In so doing, the reason that Bogurchi grows uneasy and impatient in this duel becomes unknown to the target readers. Similarly, in Example 41, the source phrases “仗著身形靈動” and “條地竄出，” which could be back translated separately as “used his agility” and “dashed his way out in a split second,” are depictions of Guo Jing's Shifu Zhu Cong's finesse in martial arts. But again, these depictions are removed by means of the deletion approach. Since the way of performing martial arts is reflective of the character's traits and temperaments in wuxia novels, as mentioned in section 2.4, these deletions result in the target readers being less informative of Zhu Cong's

personality.



Example 42 continues to exemplify the depletion of the portrayals of secondary characters like Bogurchi and Zhu Cong in the target narratives. This scene features the first presence and self-introduction of “黃河四鬼,” which is translated as “The Four Daemons of the Yellow River,” as mentioned in Example 22. The members of this group consist of “斷魂刀沈青剛,” “追命槍吳青烈,” “奪魄鞭馬青雄” and “喪門斧錢青健,” whose titles and names in back translation should have been “Spirit Cleaver Shen Qinggang,” “Dispatcher Spear Wu Qinglie,” “Soul Snatcher Whip Ma Qingxiong” and “Great Reapers Axes Qian Qingjian,” with the weapons carried by these characters indicated in their titles. In the target text, however, one would notice that both the weapon-related titles and the given names are removed using the deletion approach, and new titles that are inspired by the last word of their given names, “剛” (Bold), “健” (Strong), “雄”(Valiant) and “烈” (Hardy), are added using the strategy of autonomous creation. So the first presence of these characters in the target narratives is rendered as “Shen the Strong,” “Wu the Bold,” “Ma the Valiant” and “Qian the Hardy.” In fact, the translators use the strategy of extratextual gloss as well to present the translations of their full names as “Shen Qinggang the Strong,” “Wu Qinglie the Bold,” “Ma Qingxiong the Valiant” and “Qian Qingjian the Hardy,” alongside a description of their respective weapons, as displayed in the character profiles in the novel’s English version (pp. xv, Vol.). A full translation of each member’s title and name understandably would have made the target narratives look much lengthy and thus slowed down the reading pace. So the translator adopts the deletion approach to increase the fluency of the narratives. Moreover, compared to the translations for the Seven Immortals of Quanzhen Sect, whose names and titles come intact in the target narratives, as explored in Example 6, it becomes further clearer that the deletion approach is applied to the Four



Daemons due to the fact that they are even less important characters. That is, both their accomplishments in martial arts and prestige in the wulin are decidedly inferior to the Seven Immortals, and they do not gain as much presence, either. It is imaginable that full translations of their names and titles would make them seem to enjoy a higher position than they actually do in the martial world. For this reason, the translation decision in this context proves to be effective.

4.4.2 For euphemism purpose

As demonstrated by the data, it is obvious that the deletion approach is adopted where the translation team finds it inappropriate to represent the source expressions in the target narratives. This finding corroborates Bryant's remark that we have seen in section 3.3, that some of the novel's content is "already problematic in Chinese" (Cathy, 2021b). As far as the novel is concerned, most of the "problematic" narratives in question are actually racial issues in nature, as shown in the below examples.

Skin colors

Example 43

ST: 朱聰道：「銅屍是男的，名叫陳玄風。他臉色焦黃，有如赤銅，臉上又從來不露喜怒之色，好似殭屍一般，因此人家叫他銅屍。」韓小瑩道：「那麼那個女的鐵屍，臉色是黑黝黝的了？」朱聰道：「不錯，她姓梅，名叫梅超風。」 (pp. 161)

TT: "Copper Corpse is otherwise known as Hurricane Chen. **His cheeks are scorched brown**, hence the name, his expression always deathly still."

"And Iron Corpse?"

"Her name is Cyclone Mei." (pp. 157, Vol. 1)



Example 44

ST: 韓小瑩見她臉色雖略黝黑，模樣卻頗為俏麗，二十幾歲年紀。臉上微有笑容，然絲毫不減其狠毒戾氣。(pp. 162)

TT: She turned and Jade Han caught sight of her face: gruesome but rather beautiful. It was a hideous smile. (pp. 159, Vol. 1)

Examples 43 and 44 demonstrate how the descriptions of the character's skin color concern the translator insofar as they are removed using the approach of deletion. In Example 43, the source description of the female character Cyclone Mei's appearance, "臉色是黑黝黝的," could have been "the complexion of her cheeks must be dark" in back translation, but it is completely absent in the target narrative. In a similar vein, the source description of Mei's skin color, "臉色雖略黝黑," in Example 44 could have been "though she has a swarthy face" in back translation, but the translator, again, chooses to leave it totally out of the target narrative. So it is not unreasonable to say that the translator seems to intentionally delete the source references to skin colors in the target narratives. However, it is observable that the source description of Mei's husband Hurricane Chen's complexion in Example 43 comes intact in the target narrative. The source sentence "他臉色焦黃，有如赤銅" is translated as "his cheeks are scorched brown." The translation team decides to retain the description "scorched brown," perhaps because it indicates that the brown skin is a suntan instead of an inherited physical feature. So this reference would not be considered a discriminatory remark. As one can observe from these two examples, it is certain that the translator intentionally dodges the references to the dark skin color, and this is understandable, for racial issues have been a longstanding sensitive topic in the American culture, as well as in many Western countries.



Ethnic stereotypes

Example 47

ST: 其時蒙古人質樸無文，不似漢人這般有諸般不同的恭敬稱謂，華箏雖是大汗之女，眾人卻也直呼其名。(pp. 192)

TT: **Mongolians did not bother with fancy titles**, so his use of the Khan's daughter's given name caused no offense. (pp. 187, Vol. 1)

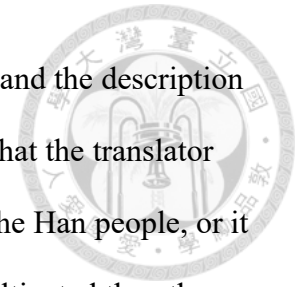
Example 48

ST: 郭靖想不到中原人士打石彈還有這許多講究，蒙古小孩可就不懂了〔……〕
(pp. 711)

TT: Guo Jing was impressed. These techniques were certainly not familiar to the Mongolian children he knew, [...] (pp. 376, Vol. 2)

Examples 47 and 48 show how the translator adopts the deletion approach to tone down the stereotypical ideologies indicated in the source narratives. In Example 47, the source sentence “蒙古人質樸無文，不似漢人這般有諸般不同的恭敬稱謂” could have been back translated as “Mongolians were rustic and unaffected, so they don't use so many fancy titles as the Han people did,” but it is translated as “Mongolians did not bother with fancy titles” using the deletion approach. More specifically, both the description of the Mongolians as “rustic and unaffected” and the comparison between the Mongolians and the Han people are removed from the target narrative. Likewise, the source sentence “中原人士打石彈還有這許多講究，蒙古小孩可就不懂了” in Example 48 could have been “the Mongolian children are ignorant of the Han people's sophisticated techniques in marble games” in back translation, but the translator decides to render it as “these techniques were certainly not familiar to the

Mongolian children.” In this way, the reference to “the Han people” and the description of the Mongolian children as “ignorant” are deleted. It is clear now that the translator intends to avoid making comparisons between the Mongolians and the Han people, or it would have reinforced the racial stereotype of Mongolians as less cultivated than the Han people. So the deletion approach is adopted despite a slight loss of the source content in translation.

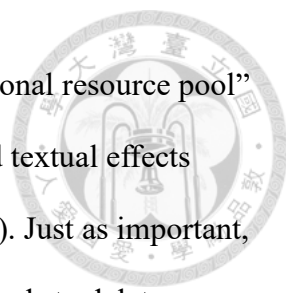




5. Discussion

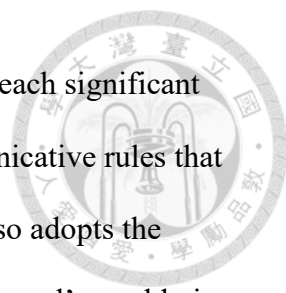
This study aims to explore the functions of ELF and its influence on the translation of the wuxia novel *Legends of the Condor Heroes* from Chinese into English. Based on prior studies in ELF and translation, I proposed the hypothesis that the translation of highly culture-bound genre such as wuxia novels is essentially a distinguishing ELF use, with the translator operating as creative ELF user. Accordingly, two sets of research questions have been posed in the Methodology for this study to answer. First, to what extent can the act of translating into English be viewed as ELF use, and how does the translator function as ELF user to achieve particular communicative purposes? Second, does this case study corroborate previous findings that ELF as a global phenomenon exerts a homogenizing influence on English translations? And what insights can an ELF perspective offer us into the nature and implications of the translator's work?

The analysis of results demonstrates the nature of most translation strategies as ELF pragmatic approaches, indicating that the translator does in fact function as ELF user in the translation of highly culture-bound literary genres such as wuxia. More specifically, the translator taps into their linguistic and cultural resources to negotiate the meanings of the text between the author and the target reader. ELF's openness to foreign forms (House, 2018: 99) manifests itself in the translator's adoption of the co-construction of utterances, transfer and code-switching approaches, and the self-initiated repair and specification approaches exemplify the translator's deployment of cultural resource from both the source and target cultures, as demonstrated in the Analysis of Results. From this view of the translator as ELF user, the translator is linguistically creative in communicating the source text to the target readers (Rossi, 2018: 385).



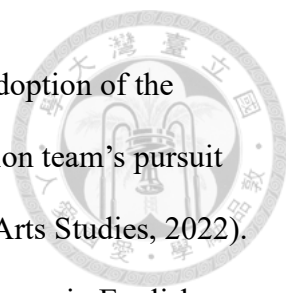
Different linguistic and cultural resources converge to form “a situational resource pool” in the translator’s lingua-cultural repertoire for them to create desired textual effects (Holmström, 2007: 41; Hülmbauer, 2009: 325; Seidlhofer, 2011: 112). Just as important, the analysis also evidences that the translator working into English tends to delete undesired or unimportant source content to create a smooth reading experience, despite the reduction of character portrayals. The heterogeneous textual elements of the source text are eliminated to accommodate the target readers (Bellos, 2011: 169). This elimination of source content therefore inevitably homogenizes the novel’s English translations to some extent, echoing the proposition in previous research that ELF’s communicative function manifests itself in the homogenization of English (Kung, 2021: 95). That is, the translator’s ELF use tends to follow a plain style that is digestible to the target readers (*ibid.*), and so the novel’s English translations are rendered illusionarily transparent (Venuti, 2013: 71).

In line with the hypothesis that the translation of Chinese wuxia novels is distinguishing ELF use, the translator functions as ELF user to bridge the intercultural gap between the author of the source text and the reader of the target text. The translator, being intercultural mediator with bi-cultural vision, proactively negotiates the meanings of the source text to build a consensus between the author and the audience (Katan, 2004: 20-21; Scarino, 2016: 473), attempting to engage both sides as a discourse community. As observed by Hüllen (1982: 86, as cited in Meierkord, 2012: 14), the use of English as a mediating language prompts this discourse community to establish their roles and rules to achieve mutual understanding. In practice, the translator uses the approach of co-construction of utterances to help the reader grasp established formal patterns of genre-specific elements such as the names of martial arts moves and pressure points. For instance, linguistic items like “Lightning Ignites the Sky” (電照長



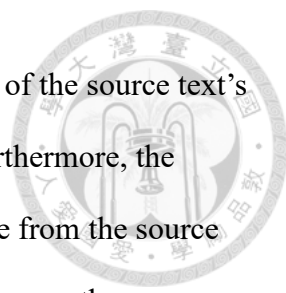
空) and “Shoulder Well pressure point” (肩井穴) are translated with each significant word uppercased, signaling for the reader to note the novel’s communicative rules that are under construction, as explored in section 4.3.1. The translator also adopts the approach of self-repetition to heighten the reader’s awareness of the novel’s world view by using cultural resources as referential tokens, as demonstrated in section 4.2.1. For example, the image of the steppe is repeatedly used as a referential token to help develop the reader’s awareness of the Mongolian values and cultures. In addition to the self-repetition approach, the translator also adopts the approaches of self-initiated repair and specification to leverage their cultural resources for communicative purposes. As illustrated in section 4.2.2 and 4.2.3, the cinematic language is appropriated as a cultural resource to make self-initiated repairs, and culture-specific items, such as “koumiss” and “Ulaan”, are employed to increase the readability of the translations. Besides, the translator taps into their linguistic resources by adopting the approaches of transfer and code-switching, as exemplified in section 4.1.1 and 4.1.2. In so doing, the linguistic features of the source expressions can be retained, paralleling what Venuti (2013: 78) terms “abusive fidelity”. For example, the lexical and syntactical features of appellations and idiomatic phrases can be transferred to the target text, and the sound effect of mnemonic phrases can be represented by using the code-switching approach.

Evidently, the translator creatively deploys linguistic and cultural resources as ELF user to realize the “meaning potential” inherent in the English language (Seidlhofer, 2011: 96). Through the agency of the translator, the semantic resources in their lingua-cultural repertoire can be mobilized to create communicative effects in the translation of Chinese wuxia novels into English. This indication of the translator’s creative agency resonates with Rossi’s (2018: 385) argument that the literary translator’s literary creativity is partly reflected in their ability to be linguistically innovative.

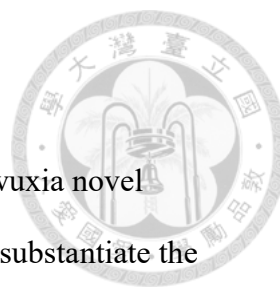


Furthermore, the translator's ELF use is also characterized by their adoption of the deletion approach, which goes hand in hand with the novel's translation team's pursuit of recreating the "fun and unstoppable" reading experience (Martial Arts Studies, 2022). This pursuit of readable translations results in the illusion of transparency in English translations (Venuti, 2013: 71). Admittedly, the revision or even reduction of the source content can be viewed as a loss to the target readers, but the importance of the target text's readability can never be underrated. Ultimately, reader consumption plays a pivotal role in defining the translated work as world literature (Trivedi, 2019: 15). International readers begin to acknowledge foreign works as world literature only when they get published in translations (Venuti, 2013: 208), and the easy way to cast international spotlight on books of less dominant languages is for them to be translated into English, the pivot tongue (Bellos, 2011: 212). So it is justifiable, as I would argue, to opt for the smooth reading pace over unnecessary narrative details. Depictions of secondary characters and discriminatory remarks are attenuated or eliminated for the good of the reading experience, as shown in section 4.4. The readability of an English translated book actually has the potential to open the door to its international visibility and worldwide readership (Kung, 2021: 97). Considering the vastness of the English readership, the homogeneity of English translations is inevitable for the sake of clarity and comprehensibility (Bellos, 2011: 191-192).

Last but not least, it might be contended that the novel's translators should employ the foreignization strategy as much as possible to represent the source culture in the target text, for instance by means of code-switching and transfer, instead of bending the source content to their will by adopting the approaches like self-repetition, self-initiated repair and deletion, which either yield new narratives in the target text or leave out part of the source narratives. But as shown in the Analysis of Results, the translators



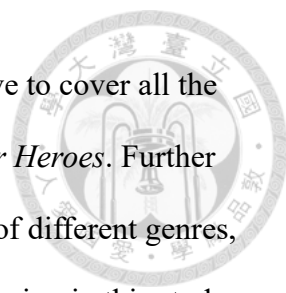
endeavor to help the target readers gain understanding of the transfer of the source text's discourse conventions by means of co-construction of utterances. Furthermore, the specification and self-repetition of cultural resources, especially those from the source culture, such as "Ulaan" and "wulin", also attest their intention to preserve the source text's cultural images and connotations in the target text. In other words, the translator's creative use of ELF helps reconstitute the wuxia culture in English translations despite its deviation from the source narratives, and hence, should not be construed simply as "ethnocentric violence" against the source text as criticized by Venuti (2017: 24). Rather, the translator's creativity in ELF use is in fact indicative of their literary competence as literary translator. The translator's "creative exploitation of the language system's capacity" embodies their command of the literary language (Snell-Hornby, 1988: 52). It is through these "cultural innovations" that the novel's heterogeneous nature can be intelligibly represented to the target readership (Venuti, 2013: 192).



6. Conclusion

This study sets out to explore the English translations of the wuxia novel *Legends of the Condor Heroes* from an ELF perspective. The results substantiate the hypothesis that the translator functions as creative ELF user in the translation of highly culture-bound literary genre such as wuxia novels, with lingua-cultural resources from both the source and target cultures at their disposal. The use of miscellaneous linguistic and cultural resources underlies the literary creativity of literary translators (Rossi, 2018). Besides, it is indicated that the dominance of ELF works in favor of the reduced and homogenized form of English in translations, as observed in previous research (Kung, 2021). The translators opt for a fluent reading pace insofar as it dilutes cultural references and simplifies the characterization. As Homel & Simon (1988: 99) puts it, nevertheless, “translation begins with convergence, but it thrives on difference.” This study argues that the translator’s creative deployment of linguistic and cultural resources for readability, despite its resultant deviations from the source narratives, actually appeals to a worldwide readership and increase the novel’s international visibility as part of world literature (Venuti, 2013: 208; Kung, 2021: 97). The translator, being intercultural mediator with bi-cultural vision (Katan, 2004: 20-21), can be viewed as ELF user who draws on the linguistic and cultural resources at their disposal to “play the English game” (Seidlhofer, 2011: 119).

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to explore English translations of different genres other than wuxia novels, so the generalizability of the results is limited by the chosen textual type. Although it is observed in this study that the translator functions as resourceful ELF user in the translation of Chinese wuxia novels into English, this proposition cannot necessarily be generalized to the translation of all types of source



text. With limited time, the examination in this thesis is not exhaustive to cover all the culture-specific items and narrative devices in *Legends of the Condor Heroes*. Further investigation is therefore advised to explore the English translations of different genres, or address the genre-specific elements of the wuxia novel that are missing in this study, so that the generalizability of viewing the translator as ELF user can be further established. Additionally, the novel's translators mention that the fluent reading pace is upheld partly because the translations are destined for audiobook readers, too. So on the basis of this study, future research is recommended to take into account the role of ELF in the translation of textual books into audiobooks.

Despite the research limitations noted as above, this thesis nevertheless makes a concerted attempt to integrate current findings in ELF research into translation studies. With the understanding of the translator as ELF user and ELF's influence on translation activities, researchers and practitioners in the translation field may well be more perceptive of the difficulties inherent in the translator's work and seek informed solutions. Overall, this thesis brings the literary creativity of literary translators into focus, as well as surfacing the real-world challenges facing translators, hoping to convince its readers of the nature of the translator's role as proactive user of linguistic and cultural resources in intercultural communications.



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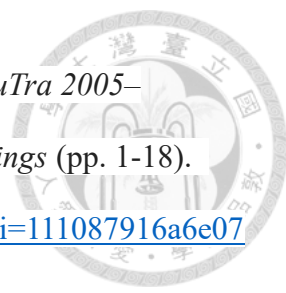
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