

Article

By the Translators' Discretion: A Study of *Xíngshì yán* into Hangeul

Jing YAN and Jieun KIAER



The Review of Korean Studies Volume 23 Number 1 (June 2020): 139-160

doi: 10.25024/review.2020.23.1.139

©2020 by the Academy of Korean Studies. All rights reserved.

www.kei.go.kr

Introduction

Novel Reading Culture in the Late Joseon Period

The Hangeul script had been invented in 1443 and promulgated in 1446. Since this point, classical Chinese script was no longer strictly necessary in the construction of literary texts. Despite this, Hangeul was despised by Joseon elites as ignoble and even barbaric, and they continued to favour classical Chinese writing. The Joseon scholar Choe man-ri is famous for writing a series of petitions to King Sejong to oppose the new alphabet. Consider one of his key arguments.

If we use Hangeul and abandon Chinese characters to willingly become like the barbarians at a time when China has applauded our civilization for being comparable to hers, how would that not be a backward step for our civilization?

At the time of its invention, Hangeul was known as Hunminjeongeum (the correct sounds for the instruction of the people 訓民正音). However, the intellectual class of Joseon often used derogatory names such *amkeul* (letters learnt by women). Indeed, Hangeul became the main medium of reading and writing for both women and commoners in late Joseon period. In a neo-Confucius hierarchical view, *yangban* men's medium of reading and writing was classical Chinese, which was considered incomparably superior to Hangeul in Joseon Korea. The scholar Chae Jegong (1720-1799) described the situation as follows. Below is from *Beonamjip*.

These days yangban wives are most competitive in obtaining the popular novels. There are thousands of them. Chaekkwé copy and lend those books to make money. Ignorant wives competitively lend out the books even by selling their own hair clips and precious jewelry. That is how they spend their spare time.

Initially, Hangeul novels were the translation of Chinese vernacular novels and were produced for royal and noble/gentry women. Later as the publishing technology developed, they also became available to commoners who could afford the books. Cho (2005) suggests the main reasons for Joseon women's

novel-reading were to study ethical codes and women's virtue as well as the pursuit of personal hobbies and self-entertainment.

At first, all novels were copied by hand of scribes. Later, following the importation of presses, stories were printed and the commercial book-lending businesses, or *sechaek*, became very popular. It was common for yangban women to sell their hair pins or jewellery in order to borrow novels. Many *yangban* and scholars, like Kim Manjung, specifically wrote novels for their mothers. Other *yangban* men, known as *po yangban*, wrote novels in Hangeul to earn money, although this was never societally encouraged. This culture of book lending was impossible in early Joseon, where the publishing industry was controlled by the central government. The new career of the book-lending merchant, or *chaekkwae*, began to flourish, with book lending being particularly prevalent in the 18th century.

In the 19th century, *banggakbon* novels started to appear. These were typed rather than handwritten. According to the recently discovered accounting records of book lenders, we can see that the readers included not only gentry women, but those from diverse classes including royalty. Even servants borrowed the books. This novel-loving culture is quite unique in the history of world literature.

Translation Literature in Joseon Korea

Novels from China were very popular, some comprising multiple volumes. For instance, *Sānguó yǎnyì* (*The Romance of the Three Kingdoms* 三國演義) had 69 volumes. The Hangeul translations of Chinese vernacular fictions contain a wide range of different genres, such as vernacular short story collections and novels, historical and martial romances, love stories, fantasy, and crime fiction (Pastreich 2015, 89-91). Nevertheless, translated Hangeul works were still widely perceived as inferior to the original text. Novels in particular were regarded as a somewhat unnecessary or harmful genre to the neo-Confucius mindset of Joseon Korea (Evon 2006).

The Nakseonjae collection was named after where it was stored, the Nakseonjae Palace, the house of the concubine Yun of King Cheoljong (r. 1849-1863) lived. The royal Nakseonjae collection contained both *eonhae* works and Chinese vernacular texts translated into Korean. As the books in the collection all contain Hangeul and were stored in a royal woman's palace, it is reasonable

to assume the main readers of this collection were royal and gentry women. Furthermore, as the collection contains *eonhae*, this suggests it also may have been used as classical Chinese learning material for royal women (Pastreich 2015).

Bilingual *eonhae* 諺解 works, where a classical Chinese text is presented alongside a Hangeul translation, started to appear in number following the promulgation of the Hangeul script (Pastreich 1998). The aim of *eonhae* is to explain the meaning of literary Chinese texts to those who are less familiar with classical Chinese than *yangban* men. In addition to *eonhae* versions of classical Chinese texts, some vernacular Chinese texts were translated into Korean without being presented alongside the original. These texts were intended not for educational purposes but rather for enjoyment as literature in themselves. Chinese literature has been incredibly influential throughout East Asia, including in Joseon Korea. Not only were Chinese literary works in the original language circulated widely among the literati, but most homegrown Korean literature were also composed in classical Chinese. In this way, domestic writing was deeply influenced by imported Chinese works (Kornicki 2018, 15-16; 203). In Joseon Korea, the circulation of literary works written in Chinese was primarily limited to members of the well-educated *yangban* class. However, the promulgation of Hangeul meant it was possible for the works to be translated into the vernacular, with the end product being understandable to both educated and less-educated alike. Accordingly, novels were commonly imported from China and translated into Korean so that they could reach a broader audience.

In this paper, we focus on a case study of the Chinese vernacular short story collection *Xingshi yan* 型世言, closely comparing the Chinese text with its Korean translation *Hyeongse eon* that was preserved in the Nakseonjae collection.

On *Xingshi yan*

Xingshi yan 型世言 is a collection of Chinese vernacular short stories compiled by brothers Lù Rénlóng 陸人龍 and Lù Yúnlóng 陸雲龍 in the early 17th century. Unfortunately, the text was lost soon after its publication, remaining unknown to modern scholars until it was rediscovered in Korea in 1987 by

France-based sinologist Chén Qínhào 陳慶浩. However, the temporary loss of the book did not prevent the dissemination of the stories within it. Some of the stories in the collection became the material of other literature collections and have been published and studied by later scholars, e.g., *Huànyǐng* (*The Illusions* 幻影); *Sānkè pāi'àn jīngqí* (*Slapping the Table in Amazement, Third Collection* 三刻拍案驚奇); and *Biéběn èrkè pāi'àn jīngqí* (*Alternative Edition of Slapping the Table in Amazement, Second Collection* 別本二刻拍案驚奇) (Jing 2008, 106-14; Chén 1993, 10-18). The entire collection contains 40 stories, each with a moral message, and thus they are normally regarded as moral preaching stories. As a typical work of Chinese vernacular narrative literature, the book exhibits features like the mixed use of classical Chinese and vernacular Chinese, the narrative style of “storyteller’s manner”¹ derived from storytelling performances, the flexible use of dialogue descriptions, and a large number of idioms and rhetorical devices. These narrative characteristics in the original work are an important key to comparing it with the translated work, since the preservation and adaptation of these features form an indispensable part of the translation process.

In the category of vernacular story collections of Chinese literature, *Xingshi yan* is less known than other famous collections, such as the influential *Sān yan* 三言 works of Féng Mènglóng 馮夢龍. However, during the two decades after the work’s rediscovery, numerous studies on the collection have been conducted both in China and in Korea. As *Xingshi yan* is like the *Sān yan* collections in terms of genre, story structure, and time of writing, they have often been compared in studies. Nonetheless, according to Liú (1997, 122), the main themes of *Xingshi yan* are quite different from the *Sān yan* collections: although both rely largely on contemporary social events and news, romantic and historical stories comprise a large proportion of the *Sān yan* collections, while they can hardly be found in *Xingshi yan*. Instead, *Xingshi yan* broadens the choice for vernacular short story topics by describing rural area realities, alongside the lives of slaves and maid-servants (Jiāng 1990, 39-40). Additionally, *Xingshi yan* emphasizes contemporary political issues and focuses more on social realities when building the story background. This provides us with a broader view of the socio historical context of the late Ming 明 dynasty (1368-1644)

1. A detailed explanation of storyteller’s manner has been provided in Section 3.

(Zhū 1995, 55-56). In other words, *Xingshi yan* is closer to reality in the choice of subject matter. However, a broadening of themes did not lead to a more open-minded approach to moral ideas. Indeed, *Xingshi yan* emphasises the retention of Confucian social ethics and traditional morality, using numerous positive and negative moral examples to reinforce the idea (Yan 2019, 48). This stands in contrast to the *Sān yan* collections, which express the idea of breaking free from the traditional social restraints of that time. Liú (1997, 120-21) argues that, whilst the *Sān yan* collections usually emphasise the freedom of the individual in both mind and behaviour by using the past to satirize the present reality, *Xingshi yan* focuses much more on setting positive examples for society and guiding readers to learn from the models.

Most scholars accept that the differences between *Xingshi yan* and its predecessors are due to intellectuals' shift away from *xīn xué* (the philosophy of mind 心學), which focuses on cultivating one's mind, to *shí xué* (practical learning 實學), which emphasizes putting knowledge into real use. Where the *Sān yan* collections were influenced by *xīn xué* to advocate for the emancipation of the individual, *Xingshi yan* returned to traditional Confucian ethical codes under the ideological trend of *shí xué* (Hú 2005, 373).

The focus on advocating ethics and virtues based on neo-Confucian ideas can be regarded as not only the most distinguishing feature of the *Xingshi yan* collection, but also an important reason why the work was chosen for translation into Korean over other more popular collections in China.² Most of the Chinese vernacular story collections contained ideas of breaking free from old Confucian ethical rules and negative characters such as rebels or outlaws, these works were usually considered morally harmful. Therefore, it must have been considered inappropriate to translate them within the neo-Confucian mindset of Joseon Korea (Kim and Lee 2003, 274). Unlike most collections, however, the *Xingshi yan* collection might be treated as an exception because of its distinctive moral preaching. The work's focus on the ethical codes exactly matched the neo-Confucian orthodoxy of Joseon Korea. The specific emphasis on moral preaching may have contributed for *Xingshi yan* to be chosen and

2. There are only two surviving vernacular short story collections translated into Korean, preserved in the Nakseonjae collection. Although there might be other collections that have been lost, it is reasonable to say that, compared to other genres like romantic long stories, short story collections were very rare in the Chinese literature works that were translated.

translated into Hangeul.

Interestingly, *Xingshi yan* only reached Joseon one and a half centuries after its compilation. The name of the book and the pictures were recorded in *Zhōngguó xiǎoshuō huimóběn* 中國小說繪模本, and it is said to have been read and circulated among both the royal elites and the common people in China (Kim 2015, 40).

Xingshi yan's focus on moral preaching was not only retained but reinforced in its translation into Hangeul Korean. Indeed, the Hangeul translations found in the Nakseonjae collection, the fifteen existing translated stories, have been neatly re-categorised as follows: (i) *uisaryu* (Righteous Man 義士類); (ii) *uinyeoryu* (Righteous Woman 義女類); (iii) *paehaengnyu* (Immoral Behaviour 悖行類); and (iv) *myeongjangnyu* (Famous General 名將類). It seems the clear classification is meant to highlight the moral examples for target readers, enhancing the morally educational aspect of the work.

Compared to other vernacular short story collections, the study of *Xingshi yan* started relatively late due to the loss of the book for hundreds of years. Since the re-discovery of the collection, several studies of the Chinese version focusing on its historical background, literary value, and linguistic analysis have been done in China. Similarly, studies more specifically interested in the Hangeul text have been conducted in Korea from the perspectives of literary content, linguistics, and historical and social value (Kim 2015, 37-40). However, the comparative study of both the Chinese original version and the Hangeul translation has been rare. This paper aims to provide a translational analysis by comparing the original text with the Hangeul translation. Through this process, the study seeks to further explore the translation culture of the late Joseon dynasty.

Hangeul Translation of *Xingshi yan*: A Case Study of Chapter 13

Xingshi yan, the primary text under discussion in this paper is typical of Chinese vernacular short stories translated into Korean in the 18th century. Translating *Xingshi yan* into Hangeul involves several questions about the theory and practice of translation. In the specific time period of the late Joseon dynasty, where vernacular translation was in the early stages of its development, translators had little precedent on challenges like how to balance between the

target language/text and source language/text, how to deal with the differences in cultural backgrounds, and how to accept or adapt the original text. The translators' decisions could greatly influence the translation result and reading experience. As a result, the translation strategy of the Korean translation of *Xingshi yan* and the role of its translator played an important role in the making of Hangeul translation of *Xingshi yan*.³

We chose Chapter 13 in this paper as it includes different levels of language use, including classical Chinese, vernacular Chinese, and a hybrid language between the two. This provides us with a representative example of the language used in Chinese vernacular writing. Additionally, although the story itself is not complicated, it constitutes a complete structure with all the essential composing elements of Chinese vernacular short stories (*huàben* 话本). The chapter provides a typical example of the plot settings and narrative styles of Chinese vernacular fiction. The summary of Chapter 13 is as follows:

Chapter 13 of *Xingshi yan* is entitled “xì háo qiáng tú bào shī ēn dài chéng yù dì tuō xiōng nán” (Student Returning the Teacher's Favours by Taking Down the Bully Squire, the Younger Brother Saving the Elder by Replacing Him in the Jail 繫豪強徒報師恩 代成獄弟脫兄難) in the original Chinese version. In the Hangeul translation, the chapter is presented as “Yo geoin jeon” (The Story of Yáo Jūrén 요거인천) after the main character of the story. This chapter tells the story of the Yáo 姚 brothers, Jūrén 居仁 and Lírén 利仁, who lived in Zhèjiāng 浙江 province in the Xuāndé 宣德 period (1426-1435). Both brothers were students of the teacher Fāng Fāngchéng 方方城. They studied alongside three other students: Hú Xínggǔ 胡行古, Fù Ěrgǔ 富爾谷, and Xià Xué 夏學. After the death of the teacher, Fù Ěrgǔ and his sidekick, Xià Xué, tried to force the teacher's daughter to marry Fù Ěrgǔ as his concubine. As the teacher's wife and daughter needed money to prepare the funeral urgently, Fù Ěrgǔ and Xià Xué pretended to lend them some money, but then after the funeral they claimed the money was betrothal gifts for marrying the daughter. The Yáo brothers could not bear to see the teacher's family being bullied, so they stopped Fù Ěrgǔ and Xià Xué and offered to pay back the money on behalf of the mother and daughter. Failed in marrying the daughter, Fù Ěrgǔ was angry and made a

3. Some of the examples and English translation of the primary texts in this paper are derived from the MPhil Dissertation Yan 2019; otherwise are authors' own works.

plan with Xià Xué to frame the elder of the two Yáo brothers for murder, in which they succeeded. As the two brothers were identical in appearance, the younger Yáo insisted to go to prison in the place of his elder brother. After a few years, the truth came out, the brother was relieved, and Fù Ěrgǔ and Xià Xué were punished for their evil tricks.

In the following sections, we will focus on the roles of the translator of Chapter 13 of *Xingshi yán*: that of text moderator and moral editor.

Translator's Role

According to Catford (1965, 20), translation is the act of transforming text written in one language into a text with another different language, while maintaining the meaning and function of the original text. In this sense, the balance between conveying the original content of the source text and transferring it in a suitable way to the target language becomes the key point of evaluating a successful translation. For translators dealing with languages that have divergent cultural backgrounds and linguistic characteristics, finding the balancing point is never an easy task. According to Baker (2011) and Kiaer (2017), the criteria to measure the suitability of translation can be divided into two groups:

- a. Source Language friendly translation values: accuracy, formal equivalence, semantic translation, literal translation, foreignisation, alienation
- b. Target Language friendly translation values: naturalness, dynamic equivalence, communicative translation, free translation, domestication, naturalization.

Based on these categories, we can roughly divide common translation strategies into two types according to their relation to source and target languages. One of these can be called a foreignisation strategy, which focuses on keeping the accuracy of information in the original text and can be characterised by its strong sense of loyalty to the source text (ST). On the other hand, there is the domestication strategy, which pays more attention to adapting the original text and messages to the target language (TL) in a natural and comfortable way. The readability and suitability of the text in the TL distinguishes the domestication from the foreignisation strategy. In reality, the two strategies are often combined.

It is the translator's choice to balance between the two sets of values and sacrifice some of them for the others. The original contents, contexts, and style of the ST can be changed or altered during the translation process according to different translation strategies. In this way, the involvement of the translator's initiative throughout the process makes the translator an indispensable part of the recreation of a text. Indeed, Kiaer (2019) has argued that translators should be viewed as co-authors of a target text alongside the author of the original source text. Based on an analysis of the Korean language, Kiaer (2019) argues translators of Korean texts have to contend with a range of highly distinctive features like speech styles and kinship terms and come up with innovative ways of reflecting these in the target language. As a result, translators have a large amount of creative freedom in dealing with these "invisibles" and can be seen as authors in their own right.

In the next part of the paper, we demonstrate the translator's role as a crucial contributor of the text with examples from Chapter 13 of *Xíngshì yán* from three aspects: (i) the narrative style of the text; (ii) the use of lexical items; and (iii) the speech style (or more precisely, the honorific system).

Narrative Style

As a typical vernacular Chinese short story written in late Ming China, the original Chinese text of *Xíngshì yán* undoubtedly preserves the distinctive narrative characteristics of the specific literature genre. In Chapter 13, three main features of narrative style are observed in the ST:

- a. The storyteller's manners, referring to features derived from storytelling performances. A typical feature of storyteller's manners is a short poem or narrative at the very beginning of the text as an opening of the text. Additionally, there are the author's comments on the characters or main themes in the beginning and at the end of the story. Furthermore, fixed phrases are used to connect different scenes and plots or to introduce the next episode of the story, such as: *huà shuō* ("the story goes..." 話說), *zhǐ jiàn* ("it can be seen that..." 只見), and *zhèng shì* ("it is just that..." 正是), etc. (Idema 1974, 23-25).
- b. The heavy use of rhetorical devices. The most frequently used rhetorical devices are allusions to Classics and famous historic stories or examples, use of idioms, locations, and metaphors.

- c. The large amount of dialogue. Instead of pure narratives, conversations and dialogues have been used a lot in the original text, which helps to create and shape the characters in a more efficient and vivid way.

In the Hangeul text, not all these characteristics have been preserved. Some of them have been kept and can be traced in the translation, while the others have been adjusted or omitted to suit the TL.

First of all, the story teller's manners, the defining characteristics of Chinese vernacular narratives, have been omitted completely in the Korean translation. The Korean text only preserves the main storyline from the ST. The poems and comments written at the beginning and the end to indicate the start of the story or to express the opinions of the authors, as well as the fixed phrases used to connect different parts of the article, all disappear in the Korean translation. These features, especially the author's comments, are thought to be an important method to realize the preaching idea of the work, since they usually point out the main ethical codes of the story quite directly (Liú 1997, 126).

Mainly omissions were made for Korean readers who are unfamiliar with Chinese story-telling performances to help their understanding. However, the moral preaching has hardly been omitted in the process of transmission and translation. Although the other parts could be easily deleted and adapted, the moral content has hardly been cut down, rather was reinforced.

Secondly, in the case of rhetorical devices, many have been omitted or freely translated. On the whole, the Korean translation has not been conducted in a strict word-by-word manner. Citations of Classics and well-known stories have been omitted completely, since these citations were too alien to the non-male *yangban* readers with relatively limited knowledge of Chinese history and literature. Some idioms have been omitted, such as the phrase “*nàn xiōng nàn dì*” (fellow sufferers 難兄難弟), which was used to refer to the Yáo brothers who suffered together. On the other hand, there are also idioms that have been preserved yet through somewhat literal translation. Some metaphors have disappeared in the Korean text. For example, the metaphor used to depict the clownishness of Fù Ěrgǔ, “*shuāng zhī yǎn zhí shè sì páng xiè*” (staring at her with his eyes, just like a crab 雙隻眼直射似螃蟹), has been translated simply as “looking around” (*nun eul durumyeo* 눈을 두루며). On the other hand, some of the metaphors have been preserved, such as the metaphor of “water and fire” used to describe the incompatibility of the five students (“*yì qì yóu rú shuǐ huǒ*”

意氣猶如水火). This particular metaphor has been translated directly based on its literal meaning in the Chinese text: “just like water and fire” (*subwa gatdeora* 수화 갖더라).

Finally, a large proportion of dialogue has been kept in the Korean translation. However, the dialogues are seldom translated literally; most have been broadly adjusted, simplified, and paraphrased, although the main content and ideas of the conversations have been kept. These adjustments might have been done to make the whole story more succinct and enjoyable to readers (Yan 2019, 58). In other words, the dialogue-filled narrative style of the ST has been preserved, but actual dialogue has been translated in a way more suitable to the target audience of royal and gentry women.

Lexical Choice

Chinese words are translated or transliterated in Hangeul translation. For *yangban* males, who are familiar with classical Chinese literature, the use of Chinese words is not a problem. But for those who are unfamiliar with classical Chinese literature and history, those words can hinder their understanding. Hence, another important task of the translator is to balance the Chinese words and native Korean words in a way to help the readers' comprehensibility of the text (Yan 2019, 85). Of course, native Korean words were not always the preferred choice. Particularly for royal and gentry women readership, they had a good exposure to Chinese culture and Sino-Korean words (i.e., Chinese words used in Korean) was a part of their cultural capital. Hence, translators had to combine words with different origin in order to make the text efficient and enjoyable to the readers.

Sino-Korean words are indeed frequently observed in Chapter 13. In this chapter, Sino-Korean words have mainly been used when translating three specific items: names, Chinese set phrases or idioms, and sections written in classical Chinese.

Firstly, in the case of names, Sino-Korean words are used in a transliterated form. Those words include personal names, place names, job titles, address terms, and certain objects that could only be found in China. Examples include: Yo-si 요씨 姚氏 (“Yáo,” personal name); Jyeolgang 절강 浙江 (“Zhejiang province,” place name); Yo 요 堯 (“King Yáo,” historical character); *hyeongggwan* 형관 刑官 (“punishment officer,” job title); *hyeongdye* 형제 兄弟 (“brothers,”

address term); and *geumbang* 금방 金榜 (“Golden List—a list for successful candidates in the Imperial Examination,” objects peculiar to Ming China).

Secondly, the Sino-Korean words used in translating set phrases include not only nouns but also adjectives. For example, the Chinese phrase “*qì dù wēn yǎ*” (one’s personality is gentle 器度溫雅) has been translated as “*guidoe onahada*” 기되 器度 온아 溫雅 하다, which is a combination of Sino-Korean words. Similarly, the phrase “*yì qì yòu jī liè*” (one’s personality is unyielding 意氣又激烈) has been straightforwardly translated as “*uigui gyeongnyeolhada*” 의기 意氣 격렬 激烈 하다. There are also Chinese idioms that have been translated directly into Sino-Korean words. For example, the saying “*nǚ zhōng zhàngfū*” (as a man amongst womenfolk 女中丈夫) used by Xià Xué to describe and praise the teacher’s wife, has been kept and translated directly into Sino-Korean as “*nyedyungdyangbwi*” 녀등당뷔. Additionally, “*tóng chuāng zhī jiāo*” (the friendship of fellow students 同窗之交) has been translated as “*dongchangjigyo*” 동창지교. The Sino-Korean words used here not only convey the semantic meanings precisely, but also add a more literary flavour to the translated work. Also, as many of these phrases are used to describe the personality of the main characters, who have been set as positive moral examples in the story, the Chinese-vocabulary may indicate the commendable values of the characters due to the high prestige of the Chinese language at the time.

Finally, Sino-Korean words have been used most intensively in the sections that were originally written in classical Chinese. For instance, the Korean translation of the memorial speech, originally written in classical Chinese, consists of nearly one third Sino-Korean words (Yan 2019, 84). Most of the phrases in this part have been translated by combining Sino-Korean words with native words. For example, the phrase “*bàn shēng jiào shū*” (having been teaching students for half of his life 半生教書) has been translated as “*bansaeng eul geul eul gareuchini*” 반생을 글을 가르치니, in which *bansaeng* 반생 半生 is a Sino-Korean word and the rest are native words. Likewise, “*dú shū jiǎng jīng*” (reading books and expounding the classic text 讀書講經) has been translated as “*geul nilgeusimyeo gyeongseo reul uinonhasida*” 글 닐그시며 경서를 의논하시다, in which *gyeongseo* 경서 經書 and *uinon* 의논 議論 are Sino-Korean and the rest are native.

To summarise, we can see that the translator tried to balance the use of Sino-Korean words and native words to a certain extent in the translation. This keeps the cultural flavour of the Chinese background to the story whilst also

making it as comprehensible as possible to the readers who are less familiar with classical Chinese literature. Yan (2019) shows however that in the struggle to balance Sino-Korean and native words, the translator(s) of *Xingshi yan* use more native words than Sino-Korean words, if possible.

Honorifics and Address Terms

Korean is well-known for its highly hierarchical and structuralised honorific system. As the honorific systems of the Chinese and Korean languages are distinct, the translator's strategy in this regard may be reflected in how the Chinese system has been translated into Hangeul.

In the Chinese source text, we can see that the honorific system is mainly based on lexical usage. There are mainly five categories of honorific words in the Chinese written language of that time: three variants of address terms (self-abasing address terms, respectful address terms, and disrespectful address terms) and two types of verbs (self-depreciatory expressions and polite expressions) (Yan 2019, 73-74). In the Korean language, honorific system is much more complicated and fine-grained.

In the Korean translation, two main methods have been used to deal with the difference in honorific system. The first is the direct translation of address terms with Sino-Korean words or a combination of Sino-Korean words with native words (Yan 2019, 76). Examples of this strategy can be found in Table 1:

Table 1. Honorific Terms in Chinese and Korean Texts (Yan 2019, 77)

Chinese expression	Korean expression	English translation
<i>lǎofù</i> 老富	<i>hyeong</i> 형	brother Fu; brother (respectful address term)
<i>shīmǔ</i> 師母	<i>samoe</i> 사모	teacher's wife (respectful address term)
<i>dàgē</i> 大哥	<i>oraboni</i> 오라보니	big brother (respectful address term)
<i>fùjiā</i> 富家	<i>igok</i> 이곡	family Fu; Ergu (respectful address term)
<i>fùxiōng</i> 富兄	<i>buhyeong</i> 부형	brother Fu (respectful address term)
<i>húxiōng</i> 胡兄	<i>hohyeong</i> 호형	brother Hu (respectful address term)
<i>chùshēng</i> 畜生; <i>núcai</i> 奴才	<i>tyuksoeng nom</i> 투쇠놈	brute (disrespectful address term)
<i>xiǎorén</i> 小人; <i>xiǎode</i> 小的	<i>syoin</i> 쇼인; <i>syoja</i> 쇼자	base person (self-abasing address term)
<i>gēge</i> 哥哥	<i>geoge</i> 거계	brother (respectful address term/kinship term)

<i>bóji</i> 薄祭	<i>bakdyeon</i> 박던	modest sacrifice (self-depreciatory expression)
<i>wēi</i> 微	<i>mihan</i> 미한	humble (self-depreciatory expression)
<i>jīn</i> 謹; <i>biǎo</i> 表	barageondae 바라건대	sincerely hope (self-depreciatory expression)

Among these translations, most of them have been translated with Sino-Korean words directly. However, the word *chùshēng* (brute, disrespectful address term 畜生) has been translated by combining the Sino-Korean word *tyuksoeng* 특생 with the native word *nom* 놈 which means “bastard” as *tyuksoeng nom* 특생 놈. Another method frequently adopted in Hangeul translation of *Xíngshì yán* is to replace an honorific address term with an honorific verbal ending. For example, in Chinese text, when Fù Ērgǔ asks the county magistrate to send the Yao brothers to prison, he starts calling the magistrate *dà ye* (your honour 大爺) to show respect. In the Hangeul translation, the address term has been omitted and the ending particle *-syo syeo* -쇼셔 has instead been inserted. This ending particle belongs to the *hasyo syeoche* 하쇼셔체 register of Korean which is used to honour the addressees. Even when the address terms in the original Chinese text are translated, the respectful verbal endings are also added.

Through the discussion above, we have seen that the result of the translation process largely hinges on the deliberate choices of the translator. The narrative style, vocabulary usage, and speech style all contribute considerably to the overall literary sense of the work. In the translation process, the translator chooses to use different translation strategies—foreignisation or domestication—according to different language contexts and translation purposes. In this way, the translator is able to create a target text natural to the Hangeul readers while also indicating the original Chinese background of the work. Overall, in the weighing of accessibility to readers and loyalty to the original work, the former seems to have been viewed as more important. This indicates an overarching preference towards the strategy of domestication than foreignisation.

Translator as Text Moderator/Editor

Translators in the late Joseon dynasty not only participated in the translation process as co-creator of the target text, but also played the role of text moderator or editor, adapting the source text to better fit the target audience. Within the field of translation studies, there is an approach called Skopos theory. Skopos theory regards translation as an act with a specific goal. The approach used to

conduct the act, as well as the result of the act, is determined by the goal (Nord 2001). Under this theory, the same source text can be translated into different kinds of target texts according to the actual goal of the translation. Certain contents might be omitted to form an easily understandable text in order to fulfil the goal of the translation work to introduce the original text to a specific audience. However, Skopos theory has been the subject of fierce debate because it challenges the primacy of equivalence. The target text could potentially have great differences in content compared to the source text (Kiaer 2019, 7).

Skopos theory may account for the omissions and adaptations of the source text present in premodern Korean translation works. An important and distinguishing feature of the Korean translation of *Xingshi yan* is the large degree of adjustment made to the original work. The Korean text of Chapter 13 of *Xingshi yan* in the Nakseonjae collection is much shorter in length than its source text, and not just because of the change in language. Rather, the huge difference in length is because many of the contents have been omitted, summarised, or changed. These adaptations may reflect the translator's editing of the source text to better suit the target audience.

Two types of adaptations have been made to the Korean version of *Xingshi yan*. One is the simple omission of parts of the original text, and the other is adjustment of the source text through simplification, summarisation, and re-composition. Both strategies preserve the main content of the source text. Therefore, although the translation result differs from the original literature, it is still reasonable to consider the target text as a translation with deliberate editing rather than an entirely different work.

The first type of adaptation, the direct omission of the original text, is common across the whole translation. In the Nakseonjae version of *Xingshi yan*, the completely deleted parts are mostly those related to “storyteller's manners” and those written in classical Chinese. In the Korean translation of Chapter 13, the prologue, author's comments at the beginning of the main story, and all poems have been entirely deleted. The introductory comments of the author contain references to similar stories of fraternal love from history and thus point to the core ethical and moral values in the story. The poems used in the middle of the narrations usually serve as a brief conclusion of the previous plot and transition into the next episode of the story. Finally, the poem written at the end provides a short summary and comment of the main characters and their story.

Although these comments and poems are one of the most distinctive

constituent parts of Chinese vernacular fiction, translating them faithfully into Hangeul might have caused difficulty for readers in understanding the content. These poems and comments are usually written in classical Chinese and contain many references to Chinese Classics or legends, which would have been unfamiliar to most Hangeul readers. The purpose of the translation itself was not to create a serious literary work but intended as popular leisure material for an audience who were less familiar with classical Chinese literature. The translator hence must have deliberately cut these parts in order to make sure the text is easy to read and entertaining enough for the audience. In the Hangeul version, the core moral values and ethical rules are conveyed through the example stories rather than relying on preaching comments and narrations by the author. In this way, the translator accelerates the narrative speed of the literature and make it more enjoyable for Korean readers (Yan 2019, 60).

The second kind of adaptation—adjustment through simplification, summarising, and reordering of the content—is found in the Hangeul translation from beginning to end. The adapted content can be broadly divided into four different categories: introduction of the background story, conversations between characters, description of the story details, and description of character's psychological processes (Yan 2019, 58-60).

In the original Chinese work, the main characters have been introduced in vivid detail. The Korean translation keeps the main features in the description but summarises parts like the introduction of the Yáo brothers with a more concise wording. With regard to dialogue, although the conversation-centred writing style has been kept in the target text, the conversations themselves have been simplified: the number of conversation rounds has been reduced and the speech content has been summarised (Yan 2019, 58-59). Some minor plot details have also been changed. For example, in the original text, Yáo Jūrén's wife is asked to pawn her jewellery before her husband quarrels with Fù Ērgǔ, but this happens after the quarrel in the Korean translation. Such changes in the plot order are frequently found in the Hangeul translation of *Xingshì yán*. It seems that as long as the overall meaning is kept, the translator exercised his literary liberty and creativity in making the Hangeul version of *Xingshì yán*. Notice that the translation of literature into Hangeul was at its very initial stage without any notable precedent. Hence, it was still unclear how much freedom the translator can have in this process of literary transmission. Finally, details of characters' psychological status have also been significantly simplified. Such

simplifications do not affect the main message of the story but help to make the text more succinct and easier to read.

Overall, in the case of Chapter 13 of *Xingshi yan* and its Hangeul translation, we see that the translator rather freely and flexibly edited the text for his audience. That said, the target text has been consistently re-constructed according to the translator's discretion. Although it is not clear in the case of Chapter 13, it is also worthwhile to mention that despite the moral preaching, *Xingshi yan* is still a highly commercialized literature of Ming China, and some of the contents might not have been easy to understand or be accepted in neo-Confucius ideology of Joseon Korea. The Joseon translator was aware of this reality and moderated the text and its selection by reinforcing neo-Confucius values yet at the same time by excluding any content that he thought could harm or trouble his readers.

Conclusion

In this paper we show the transmission of *Xingshi yan* in Joseon Korea and the roles of the translator in late Joseon literary culture. Through a comparative study of the Chinese vernacular short story collection, *Xingshi yan*, alongside its Korean translation, we show how the translator in question went further than simply transferring the text from Chinese to Korean. Rather, the translator also acted as text moderator and editor, domesticating the text for its mainly royal and gentry women.

First of all, the translator exerts creative input through reconstructing the narrative style as well as the use of diverse lexical choices and speech styles. As a text moderator and editor, the translator has omitted many parts that relate to “storyteller's manners” and the parts which are written in classical Chinese, which would have made difficult reading for those who are less familiar with classical Chinese literature. Additionally, the translator has adapted parts of the text that relate to the introduction of the story background, conversations between characters, description of the story details, and description of character's psychological processes. Across both roles as co-creator and editor, the translator has sought to produce a reader-oriented target text that is highly accessible to a Korean audience—mainly palace and gentry women. Compared to the source text, the Korean translation of the story is much more straightforward

in storytelling style, considerably faster in narrative speed, and more compact in plot structure, whilst maintaining the core ethical and moral messages of the story. The choice of domestication strategy also enabled the readers' accessibility and readability of the text.

Overall, it appears that the involvement of translators in the late Joseon dynasty may have gone beyond merely transmitting one language text into another. Instead, translators seem to have had a high level of freedom in choosing the translation strategy, changing the style of the text according to the requirements of the target readers and their personal preferences. Therefore, we propose that the case study of the Korean translation of *Xingshi yan* indicates how translators may be viewed as important contributors to the making of translated novels.

References

- Baker, Mona. 2011. *In Other Words: A Course Book on Translation*. 2nd edition. London; New York: Routledge.
- Catford, John Cunnison. 1965. *A Linguistic Theory of Translation: An Essay in Applied Linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Chén, Qìnghào 陈慶浩. 1993. "Dǎoyán—yībù yìshìle sībǎiduōnián de duǎnpiānxiǎoshuōjí 'Xíngshì yán' de fāxiàn hé yánjiū" 導言—一部佚失了四百多年的短篇小說集《型世言》的發現和研究. In *Xíngshì yán* 型世言, edited by Lù Rénlóng 陸人龍 and collated and commented by Chén Qìnghào 陳慶浩, 1-33. Nanjing: Jiāngsū gǔjí chūbǎnshè 江蘇古籍出版社.
- Cho, Haeran 조혜란. 2005. "Hangukui dokseomunhwa; Joseon sidae yeoseong dokseoui jihyeongdo" 한국의 독서문화: 조선 시대 여성 독서의 지형도. *Hanguk munhwa yeongu* 한국문화연구 8: 29-59.
- Cho, YunHyeong 조윤희. 2007. "Gosomeol ui dokja yeongu" 고소설의 독자(讀者) 연구. *Dokseoyeongu* 독서연구 17: 331-58.
- Chung, Kwang 정광. 2014. *Joseonsidae ui oegugeo gyoyuk* 조선시대의 외국어 국역. Seoul: Gimyeongsa 김영사.
- Evon, Gregory N. 2006-2007. "Chinese Contexts, Korean Realities: The Politics of Literary Genre in Late-Chosŏn (1725-1863) Korea." *East Asian History* 32/33: 57-82.

- Hú, Liányù 胡蓮玉. 2005. “Xíngshì yán yánjiū píngshù” 型世言 研究評述. *Xīnán mínzú dàxué xuébào (rénwénshèkē bǎn)* 西南民族大学学报(人文社科版) 12: 371-74.
- Idema, Wilt L. 1974. *Chinese Vernacular Fiction: The Formative Period*. Vol. 13 of *Sinica Leidensia*. Leiden: Brill.
- Jiāng, Shǒupéng 姜守鵬. 1990. “Sānkè pāiàn jīngqí fǎnyìng de míngdài shèhuì shēnghuó” 《三刻拍案驚奇》反映的明代社會生活. *Dōngběi shìdà xuébào (zhéxué shèhuì kēxué bǎn)* 东西北师大学报(哲學社會科學版) 3: 39-43.
- Jǐng, Yuguī 井玉貴. 2008. *Lu Renlong, Lu Yunlong xiaoshuo chuanguozuo yanjiu* 陸人龍、陸雲龍小說創作研究. Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe 中國社會科學出版社.
- Kiaer, Jieun. 2017. *The Routledge Course in Korean Translation*. London: Routledge.
- _____. 2019. “Translating Invisibility: The Case of Korean-English Literary Translation.” In *Translation and Literature in East Asia*, edited by Jieun Kiaer, Jennifer Guest, and Xiaofan Amy Lee, 81-117. London: Routledge.
- Kim, H., and P. H. Lee. 2003. “Choson Fiction in Korean.” In *A History of Korean Literature*, edited by P. H. Lee, 273-87. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kim, Suyeon 김수연. 2015. “Myeongmal sangeopjeok gyubeomsosol ui hyeongseong gwa Joseon wang ui soseol dokseo-gyujanggakbon [Xíngshì yán (hyeongseon)] eul jungsim euro” 명말 상업적 규방소설의 형성과 조선 왕의 소설 독서-규장각본 [型世言 (형세언)]을 중심으로. *Gojeon munhak yeongu* 고전문학연구 47: 35-63.
- Kim, Yeong 金瑛, and Jaeyeon Bak 朴在淵. 2012. “[Zhūxiān zhuàn], Myeongdae uihwabon soseol [Xíngshì yán] ui beonyeok” [朱仙傳], 명대의화본소설 [型世言]의 번역. *Junggugeo munhank norjip* 중국어문학논집 73: 431-56.
- Kornicki, Peter Francis. 2018. *Languages, Scripts, and Chinese Texts in East Asia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Liú, Xīnghàn 劉興漢. 1997. “Xíngshì yán’ yǔ “Sānyán” de bǐjiào yánjiū” 《型世言》与“三言”的比较研究. *Shèhuì kēxué zhànxiàn* 社會科學戰線 4: 120-27.
- Lù, Rénlóng 陸人龍, ed. 1993. *Xíngshì yán, Collated and Commented by Chén Qīnghào* 型世言. Nanjing: Jiāngsū gǔjí chūbǎnshè 江蘇古籍出版社.
- _____, ed. 1995. *Hyeongseon Collated and Commented by Bak Chae-yeon* 형세언.

Seoul: Hakkobang 학교방.

- Nord, Christiane. 2001. *Translating as a Purposeful Activity: Functionalist Approaches Explained*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.
- Pastreich, E. 1998. "The Reception of Chinese Vernacular Narrative in Korea and Japan." PhD diss., Harvard University.
- _____. 2015. "The Transmission and Translation of Chinese Vernacular Narrative in Chosŏn Korea: Han'gŭl Translations and Gentry Women's Literature." *Korean Studies* 39: 75-105.
- Yan, J. 2019. "The Transmission of Chinese Vernacular Narratives in Chosŏn Korea: A Case Study of *Xingshi yan*." MPhil diss., University of Oxford.
- Zhū, Chéngróng 朱成蓉. 1995. "Xingshi yan de xùshù yǔ shěnměishì jiǎolùn" 《型世言》的敘述與審美視角論. *Xīnán mínzú xuéyuàn xuébào* (zhéxué shèhuì kēxué bǎn) 西南民族学院学报(哲学社会科学版) 2: 53-59.

Jing YAN (deborah950103@hotmail.com) holds a Master of Philosophy degree in Traditional East Asia, University of Oxford. Her academic interests are in East Asian comparative literature, especially with focus on traditional Chinese and Korean literature.

Jieun KIAER (jieun.kiaer@orinst.ox.ac.uk) is Young Bin Min-KF Associate Professor of Korean Language and Linguistics at the University of Oxford.

Abstract

This paper examines the transmission of *Xingshi yan* in Joseon Korea and the roles of the translator in late Joseon literary culture. Through a comparative study of the Chinese vernacular short story collection, *Xingshi yan* 型世言, alongside its Korean translation, we show how the translator in question went further than simply transferring the text from Chinese to Korean. Rather, the translator also acted as a text moderator and an editor, domesticating the text for its readers, mainly royal and gentry women. In the capacity as a text-moderator, the translator made a creative contribution in reconstructing the narrative style and in the use of lexical items and speech style. Simultaneously, as an editor, the translator omitted parts of the text that required an advanced contextual knowledge of Chinese language or culture to comprehend, while also adapting parts of the text that relate to story background, conversations between characters, description of story details, and characters' psychological processes. Drawing upon Skopos theory, we argue that the act of translating *Xingshi yan* was motivated by the goal of presenting the story to a new audience, that is royal and gentry women.

Keywords: translation, late Joseon, *Xingshi yan*, vernacular literature, Hangeul