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PROBLEMS OF TRANSLATING ‘HARRY PORTER’ FROM ENGLISH INTO CHINESE

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From the end of XX to the beginning of XXI century children's literature in England, and the whole world, marked itself by a series of fantasy novels (1997–2007) by British writer Joanne Katherine Rowling about Harry Potter.

The Harry Potter books drew an enormous worldwide attention, winning numerous awards. For example, the book "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire" (2001) received the Hugo Award, and JK Rowling herself became an officer of the Order of the British Empire (2001) and Knight Commander of the Order of the Legion of Honor (2009). The last four books in the series have been ever-fast-selling books in history, and the record is still held by the final book, "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows". The beginning of the XXI century is already well-established understanding that "Harry Potter" is a great book because it is read by millions, not only children but also adults. A series of seven books have been translated into more than 60 languages and have occupied the first place in the prestigious adult bestseller's lists. Thus, it has been an important and specific material for the study of linguistics, literature, sociology, etc.

One of its literature phenomena is fanfiction, i.e. literary creation of works of popular culture fans, created on the basis of these works within the framework of interpretive communities (fandom), an incredible sized daily published text production. Despite the fact that the very creative purpose here raises a number of interesting theories and history of the poetics issues and the number of texts for investigation grows every minute, fanfiction has not yet received a comprehensive explanation of any domestic or foreign literary criticism. Another aspect is to study "Harry Potter" as a bestseller. In Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English the term "bestseller" is defined as follows: "Bestseller, n.: A book, record, CD, or other product that has sold in great numbers, especially over a short period". In other words, bestseller is "the most tradable commodities, especially enjoying high popularity among the readers of the book, the most-selling movie, music CD, video game, etc." Most of the bestsellers are written in such a way to attract the largest audience as possible, such as detectives or melodrama. And in this way books are reproduced from year to year. So, reading demand creates books, which, on the one hand, describe the way of life of the masses, and on the other, serve as his model. From all these above, it can be concluded that "Harry Potter" is undoubtedly a specific literary phenomenon and a bestseller translating of which deserves special attention.

"Harry Potter" come out in the UK since 1997, and soon swept the world, sold in more than 30 countries in just three years, and won including the UK National Book Award Children's Prize for Fiction and lots of other prices, including the Si Madi Book Golden Medal awards. In July 2000, with the publication of the fourth book "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire", "Harry Potter" continues to heat up, with the first English edition of the book printing 5.3 million, and sold out within two day's weekend, creating a miracle in the history of publication of the world.

"Harry Potter" books 1-3 ("Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone", "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets", "Harry Potter and the Azkaban Prisoner") have been paid much attention by readers since they landed in China in October 2000. And within five months, about 1,000,000 books had been issued, which rarely happened in the Chinese publishing history. People's Literature Publishing House published the fourth one "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire" in June 2001, and will keep up with the pace of Rowling's writing, each year a book.

Generally, there are three main versions in China: Chinese Mainland's version, Chinese Taiwan's version and the version on the Internet by some amateurs. The Mainland one was translated and published by People's Literature Publishing House. When People's Literature Publishing House decided to publish "Harry Potter" series, the first volume "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" was translated by Cao Suling and Ma Ainong, the second one "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets" by Ma Aixin (sister of Ma Ainong), and the third one "Harry Potter and the Azkaban Prisoner" has two versions, one by Zheng Xumi(earlier), and one by Ma Ainong and Ma Aixin (later). The translation of the third book had been widely criticized for mistranslation, lack of fantasy and poor description. One of the main reasons is lack of time. Then first three books came into China together, and soon there would be the fourth one, so there wasn't enough time for translators to think about the wording and meaning again and again. Actually, there was only about two months for the translation of each book. It is undoubtedly a hard work to translate a huge novel in such a short time, even if it is a children's literature. Therefore, there were also some misprints in these books. Later, when the next four books came out, they were mostly translated by Ma Ainong and Ma Aixin. Because of different translators, the wording and style in the first three books are quite different. And in some extent, these differences confused readers and many of them felt uncomfortable while reading.

Comments on the translation of "Harry Potter and the Azkaban Prisoner" by Zheng Xumi are fierce. Many mistranslations in this book led to irreparable misunderstanding. For example: "Oliver Wood, Captain of the Gryffindor team, called a meeting on Thursday evening to discuss tactics for the new season." "一个星期二(Tuesday)晚上, 格兰芬多队的队长奥利弗·伍德召集了一次会议·讨论新赛季的战术."

Here is a mistranslation of data. "Who knows if my arm'll ever be the same again?" '如果我的胳膊再也不能恢复原状, 谁知道会怎么样啊?' (literally means "who knows what everything will be if my arms cannot return to the same").

Here is a misunderstanding of the original text. "He barely talked to her all through Herbology, even though he, Harry, and Hermione were working together on the same puffapod." "在整个草药课上，他几乎没有和赫敏说话，尽管他、哈利和赫敏是三个人一组进行实验的。" In "work on the same puffapod, "puffapod" is a made-up word. The translator just omits it, and translates the phrase as "work together in the experiment".

"Sit down," said Lupin, taking the lid off a dusty tin. "I've only got teabags, I'm afraid -- but I daresay you've had enough of tea leaves?" - '坐下，'卢平说，揭开垃圾桶的盖子，'我只有袋泡茶，恐怕——不过我敢说你对茶叶已经觉得够烦的了吧？'"Taking the lid off a dusty tin" is translated into"揭开垃圾桶的盖子" (taking the lid off a dust bin). It is a terrible mistranslation.

So in 2009, People's Literature Publishing House decided to retranslate all these seven books to reunite the language style and the main translators were Ma Ainong and Ma Aixin (assisted by Cao Suling in the first book, Cai Wen in the fifth and sixth books), because readers appreciate their language styles and their translations are more accurate.

The history of translation of this bestseller into Chinese has given a lot of examples of translators' losses and findings.

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