

# A Study on Translation of Jin Yong's Novels

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**Abstract:** *In recent years, translation has gradually become an important bridge for communication between China and the West, so it should take greater responsibility in the process of cultural dissemination. At the same time, as a unique Chinese novel genre, Jin Yong's martial arts novels are full of traditional Chinese cultural elements. The English translation of Jin Yong's novels has aroused more Westerners' interest in Chinese culture and found a new path for Chinese culture to go out. Based on this, the article takes the English translation of Jin Yong's novel *Legends of the Condor Heroes-A Hero Born* translated by Anna Holmwood as an example. The translation methods of words such as martial arts moves and special nouns summarize the translation strategies of Jin Yong's novels. According to the survey data, there are a total of 41 martial arts maneuvers in Chapters 11-30 of the English translation, with "transliteration" accounting for 14.63%, "literal translation" accounting for 9.76%, and "transliteration + literal translation" accounting for 56.10%. It can be seen that the proportion of translators using foreignized translation combined with domesticated translation to express the meaning of the original word is the largest, and its methods can be used for reference.*

**Keywords:** *Jin Yong, Translated Literature, Martial Arts Novels, Translation Skills*

## 1. Introduction

Jin Yong's martial arts novels have been translated into various languages since the 1970s, and have been translated and introduced in many countries [1-2]. His works are not only deeply loved by the Chinese public but also widely circulated in the world, which promotes the "going out of Chinese literature" [3-4]. As the most representative of Jin Yong's novels, *The Legend of the Condor Heroes*, it received a very enthusiastic response as soon as it was published. The translation study of Jin Yong's novels can not only enrich the results of Jin Yong's English translation studies, but also provide guidance for the future translation of martial arts novels [5-6].

Regarding the study of literary translation, many scholars at home and abroad have conducted multi-angle discussions on it. For example, Ruano studied the method of designing corpus in the study of literary translation [7]; Marin-Lacarta M explored the problem of non-profit literary translation in the digital initiative [8]; Kang-Sig W researches the symbolic meaning and influence of the narrative of Jianghu in Jin Yong's martial arts novels [9]. Therefore, taking Jin Yong's novels as the research object, exploring the strategies of English translation of Jin Yong's novels, hoping to provide some basic materials for the future English translation research of Jin Yong's novels.

This article takes the English translation of Jin Yong's novel *Legends of the Condor Heroes-A Hero Born* translated by Anna Holmwood as an example. First, it analyzes the changes in the structure of words, sentences, paragraphs, etc. between the translation and the original, and then investigates and analyzes the novel. The translation methods of words such as martial arts moves and special nouns that appeared in the article summarize the translation strategies of Jin Yong's novels.

## 2. A Study on Translation of Jin Yong's Novels

### 2.1 Translation Analysis of English Translations of Jin Yong's Novels

#### (1) Adjustment of the form of dialogue

The dialogue between characters often used in the original work is incorporated into paragraph-style writing techniques, while the English translation challenges this form of dialogue. Regarding the small number of separate character dialogues in the original text, the English version retains the paragraph format; however, for character dialogues embedded in paragraphs that are

commonly used in the original text, the translation generally divides the character dialogue into separate paragraphs. Regarding Guo Jing and Lotus Huang's plan to steal medicine for Wang's Chieftain, the dialogue between the two in the original book is placed in a paragraph. And the translator processed multiple dialogues into separate paragraphs, cleverly making the dialogue between multiple people clearer at the visual level, and the translation processing of separate paragraphs also made multiple rounds of dialogue clearer and easier to understand.

### (2) Adjustment of paragraph structure

On the one hand, the structure of the paragraph can be understood as: when the chapter is regarded as a whole, the paragraph is an independent part of it, and the content of this part integrates sentences with the same central idea. On the other hand, a paragraph is also an expression of the author's personal creative intentions. It can be seen whether the part of the content is the key content or the secondary information if it is formed separately or incorporated into the paragraph. The translator divides the sentences that reflect the main points of the story into different paragraphs by breaking apart the original paragraphs. Although this act of translation destroys the structure or integrity of the sentence to a certain extent, it also makes the relevant key content more attention to the readers due to the independent paragraph, and thinks and recollects the key content of the paragraph [10-11].

In Jin Yong's novels, there are often very long paragraphs used to describe fighting scenes or to tell readers the background information of the incident. If these long paragraphs are directly translated into English and cause a long story, it is easy for readers to feel tired and lose interest in reading. the translator re-divided these long paragraphs and re-divided the ten chapters of the first volume of the original into nine chapters. Each chapter is divided into 2-11 sections according to the storyline, and each section is divided into several subsections. At the same time, the translator also reorganized a large number of sentences or paragraphs in the translation, splitting long paragraphs into shorter paragraphs with stronger dialogue, which not only facilitates readers' reading and comprehension, but also enriches the content of the story.

For example, the original description of the Seven Freaks of the South when they first discovered Cyclone Mei in the desert is completed in a long paragraph. However, in the translation, the content that everyone approached after hearing the sound is separated into one paragraph, and then the description of the skull is divided into another paragraph. The former is a description of the background, and the latter is for the purpose of the skull is not a child's stuff, indirectly the description of Cyclone Mei's storyline is nearby. At the same time, it pushes the overall atmosphere to a climax and attracts readers to continue reading.

### (3) Compression and omission of translation

In addition to revising certain contents of the original work to a certain extent, for various reasons, the translator also compressed and omitted a lot of the original contents during the translation process. When a sentence has no substantial meaning to the original content, the translator chooses to omit it during the translation process, which can ensure the fluency of the translation, reduce the reading obstacles of the target reader, and improve the readability of the translation.

## ***2.2 Analysis of Translation Strategy of Legends of the Condor Heroes-A Hero Born***

### (1) Use translation strategies skillfully to bring readers closer

Factors such as the differences between Chinese and Western cultures and the thinking of translators will have a profound impact on readers' understanding during the reading process [12]. In the translation process, the translator uses a variety of translation strategies to help readers overcome cultural barriers in the text. At the same time, she created brand-new semantics, allowing readers to take the initiative to approach the original works with exotic colors, creating a strange and distant sense of foreign rivers and lakes for readers, attracting readers to explore exotic fantasy literature, and encouraging readers to be more different from them.

### (3) Reorganize sentences and paragraphs

When translating, the translator should not only respect the division between sentences and paragraphs of the original text, but also consider the habits of the target language. However, there are certain differences in paragraph organization and chapter behavior habits between English and Chinese languages. If one-to-one corresponding paragraph literal translation is performed in the Chinese-to-English translation without appropriate adjustments, the textual effect of the translation will

be compromised. Therefore, in the Chinese-English translation, it is necessary to split and merge the original paragraphs flexibly.

#### (4) Simplify cultural specific items

Jin Yong's novels contain a wealth of knowledge of Chinese history and culture, which is difficult for foreigners to understand and may become a major obstacle in their reading. In order not to affect the reader's reading experience, the translator simplified or deleted many background knowledge that is not strongly related to the storyline. In addition, the translator continuously guides readers into the exotic fantasy world constructed by Chinese martial arts through a variety of translation methods and techniques such as literal translation, free translation, transliteration, parody translation, additional translation, and conversion.

### 3. Research and Design of Jin Yong's Novel Translation

#### 3.1 Research Objects and Methods

There are a large number of Jin Yong's novels, including the original, translation, and the scope of research. Therefore, this survey narrows the scope and digs into the research topics from a small scope. The subjects of this survey are as follows:

##### (1) Text source

The object of text research is Jin Yong's martial arts novels and their English translations. Through the study of the source text and English translation of *Legends of the Condor Heroes-A Hero Born* (Volume 1), the logical thinking of Holmwood's translation of *Legends of the Condor Heroes-A Hero Born* is analyzed with the proper nouns from Chapters 11 to 30 as the research focus. It also aims to explore the influence of its translation behavior and summarize the relevant translation strategies.

##### (2) area

This survey selects the original and translated chapters 11 to 30:

1) This part describes the important process of Guo Jing from birth, growing up, martial arts, and getting to know Lotus Huang. It can be said to be the subject of the novel;

2) For text research, the proper nouns appearing in this chapter, such as martial arts moves, proper nouns, etc., are the most novel, core, full, and characteristic. Most proper nouns appearing in part of the content after the novel are repetitive.

#### 3.2 Cross-Language Correlation Detection

In order to detect the text relevance of the Chinese and English *Legends of the Condor Heroes*, that is, to measure the similarity between texts described in different languages. Using a grammar-based cross-language relevance detection algorithm, it can be used for cross-language keyword retrieval and detect cross-language text similarity with good results.

When the algorithm is used, the values of alphabet  $\sum$  and  $n$  (Calculate the similarity of words in the document. For example, when  $n=3$ , it means that when calculating the similarity, 3 consecutive words between document  $d$  and document  $d'$  are calculated at one time) need to be predefined. Since only a small part of the meta-combination may exist in the document, vector  $\vec{d}$  is sparse, and the weights of feature items in vector  $\vec{d}$  can be calculated using standard weighting methods, such as weights, so the similarity between cross-language text and Use cosine similarity to express, as shown in formula (1):

$$s(d, d') = \frac{\vec{d} \cdot \vec{d'}}{|\vec{d}| |\vec{d}'|} \quad (1)$$

In the algorithm, the unary language model can also be used to estimate the similarity of cross-language texts. The calculation method is as shown in the formula (2):

$$s(d, d') = P(d' | d) = \prod_{q \in d_q} [\alpha P(q | d') + (1 - \alpha) P(q | C)] \tag{2}$$

In formula (2), 1 represents the probability of feature word q in document 2, C represents the full set, and 3 is a smoothing parameter.

**4. Investigation and Analysis of the Translation of Jin Yong’s Novels**

**4.1 Analysis of the Translation Method of Martial Arts Moves in the English Version of *Legends of the Condor Heroes-A Hero Born***

The essence of foreignization translation lies in the original flavor. The translation and the original information are unchanged in terms of word meaning, structure or rhetoric. Foreignization translation includes transliteration and literal translation methods. The English translation of *Legends of the Condor Heroes-A Hero Born* chapters 11-30 has 41 martial arts move words, and the specific translation methods used are shown in Table 1: There are 3 words translated by domestication (free translation), accounting for 7.32%; There are 6 words in foreign translation (transliteration), accounting for 14.63%; 4 words in literal translation, accounting for 9.76%; 23 words in “transliteration + transliteration”, accounting for 4.88%; “transliteration + literal translation”, accounting for 56.10%; there are 2 words of “transliteration + free translation”, accounting for 7.31%; there are 3 words of “transliteration + free translation”, accounting for 7.31%.

Table 1: Martial arts skills moves translation method

Translation method	Number of words	Percentage (%)
Free translation	3	7.32
Transliteration	6	14.63
Literal translation	4	9.76
Transliteration + free translation	3	7.31
Transliteration + literal translation	23	56.10
Transliteration + retranslation	2	4.88

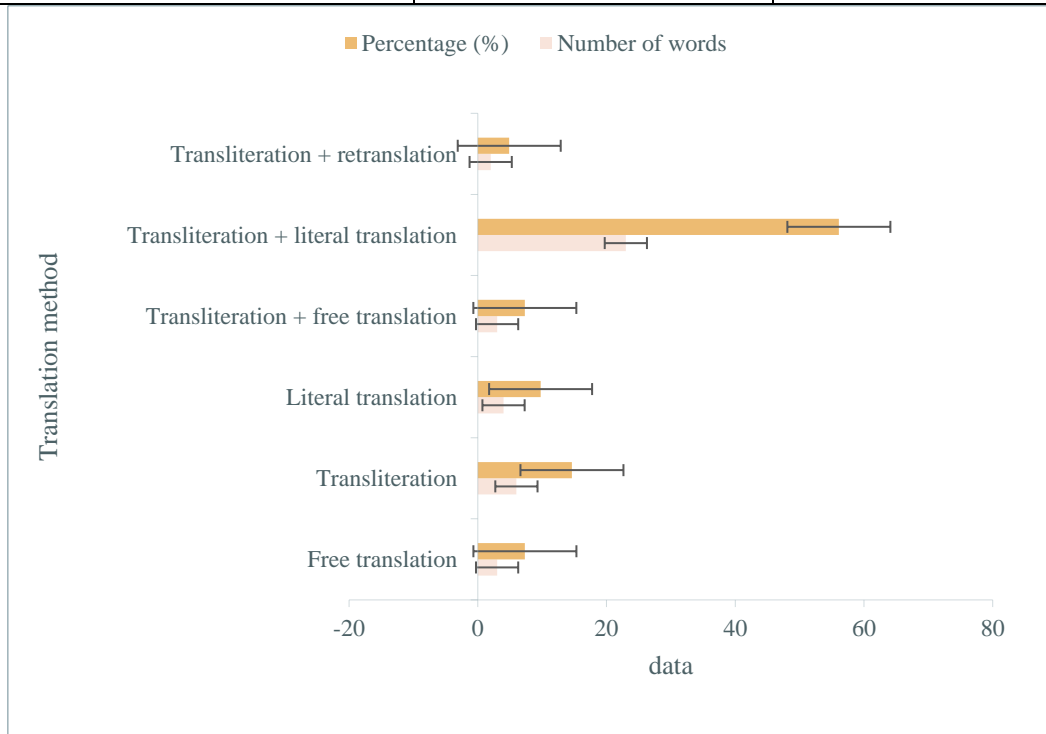


Figure 1: Martial arts skills moves translation method

It can be seen from Figure 1 that in the English translation of martial arts moves in *Legends of the Condor Heroes-A Hero Born*, the foreignization translation (transliteration + literal translation) accounts for the largest proportion of translation rules. It can be seen that the language in the original

work is incommensurable and untranslatable, and the translator's use of foreignized translation combined with domesticated translation to express the original content has a certain effect.

#### 4.2 Idioms and Proper Nouns

The imitation translation will translate the key information of the original work by deleting, condensing, or adding and expanding. The modified translation is to use alternative translations to translate the original text into content that the reader can understand. The English version of *Legends of the Condor Heroes-A Hero Born* chapters 11-30 contains 113 words and expressions of idioms and special names, and the translation methods used are shown in Table 2: There are 20 words of domestic translation (paraphrase), accounting for 17.70%; there are 13 "interpretation" words, accounting for 11.50%; there are 23 "parody translation" words, accounting for 18.58%; "retranslation" accounts for 30.09%, and transliteration accounts for 4.42%. Literal translation accounts for 12.39%.

Table 2: Idioms and specific name word translation methods

Translation method	Number of words	Percentage
Free translation	20	17.70
Transliteration	5	4.42
Literal translation	14	12.39
Parody translation	23	18.58
Retranslation	38	30.09
Interpretation	13	11.50

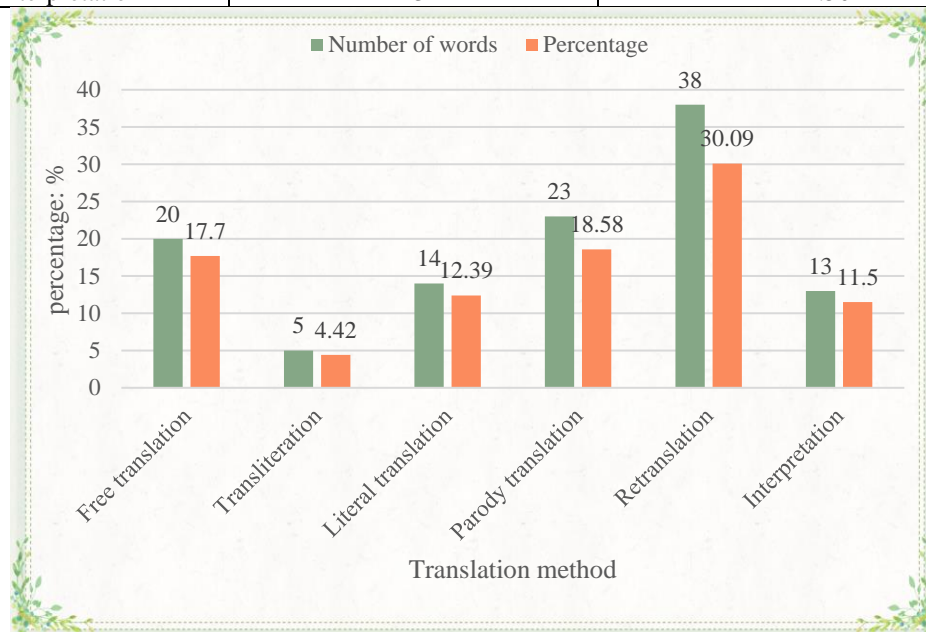


Figure 2: Idioms and specific name word translation methods

In combination with Figure 2, it can be found that Jin Yong's novels use idioms more in word expression. Moreover, in the English translation of martial arts moves in *The Legend of the Condor Heroes*, the translation method that accounts for the largest proportion is retranslation.

#### 5. Conclusions

Jin Yong's novels have been loved by all walks of life for their unique style and narrative form. Therefore, the translation studies on Jin Yong's novels have received great attention from the translation community, and his works have also been translated into multiple languages and are widely circulated around the world. This article studies the translation of Jin Yong's novels. Taking Anna Holmwood's translation of Jin Yong's novel *Legends of the Condor Heroes-A Hero Born* as an example, it analyzes the changes in the structure of words, sentences, and paragraphs between the translation and the original. Then it investigates the translation methods of the martial arts moves, special nouns and other words in the novels, and summarizes the translation strategies of Jin Yong's novels.

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