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What We Talk About When We Talk About Co-translation: Mapping, Locating, and Translating

Linxin LIANG* and Yingbin SUN**

Looking back over the history of translation in the world, it can be stated that ‘co-translation’ is a common translation phenomenon. It is largely prevalent in translation and interpretation activities around the world, and not least in providing access to important texts for various purposes. After a long absence from the field of translation studies, co-translation has been the focus of increasing attention in recent years. This paper investigates how co-translation within translation studies has been mapped in the international community. It also draws on the notions of James S. Holmes’s (2000) “map” of translation studies presented by Gideon Toury (2012) and Jeremy Munday (2016) in an attempt to put forth an overall framework that describes the ground covered by co-translation studies. Finally, a comparative analysis of three English versions of Shen Fu’s *Fu Sheng Liu Ji* (*Six Records of a Life Adrift*) is discussed in order to illustrate the influence on proper English translation and target readers’ expectation of co-translation and to explore the implications of this influence. This paper aims to offer a review of the latest developments in co-translation studies, the insightful findings of which may help scholars, researchers, students, and practitioners to reflect upon the important issues in this field and search for possible directions in their future research.

Keywords: co-translation; mapping; locating; translating; *Fu Sheng Liu Ji*

1. Introduction

From the Tower of Babel to the digital age, ‘co-translation’ is largely prevalent in translation and interpretation activities around the world, and not least in providing access to important texts for various purposes. As international trade has grown, so has the importance of co-translation. “The days of the fiercely solitary translator working in splendid isolation are numbered,” according to many industry observers (Echevarria 2009). In particular, changing technology and markets are stimulating the traditional ways of working and creating new and favorable conditions along with rare opportunities for translators from across the globe, since

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translation is no longer a solitary business with only the notebook computer as a co-worker. More recently, the rise of the Internet has fostered a global market for translation services and has yielded some new types of co-translation.

There are various types of co-translation, which may continue to change and develop in the current era. Depending on the type of collaboration, different people may or may not be involved in different stages of the process. Drawing from historical cases of literary translation, it is possible to identify several steps in the entire process, including choice of the source text, comprehension of the original, drafting of the translation, circulation and discussion of the draft, revision of the translation, and final editing. While those steps may be accomplished by the translator, many of them may also be accomplished by someone else, including patrons, editors, friends, or members of a community (St. André 2017, 286). In a general context, co-translation is often divided into two broad categories: co-translation in a broad sense and co-translation in a narrow sense. The former refers to co-translation between translator(s) and non-translator(s), and the latter pertains to co-translation between two or more translators, including co-translator pairs and teams of co-translators. However, co-translations can differ in various types and levels, and it can be difficult to assess the part played by each participant accurately (Manterola Agirrezabalaga 2017, 196). Therefore, in this paper, we will pay more attention to the discussion about co-translation between two translators from the investigation of the co-translated work.

In today's globalized world, it is clear that the increased interest in co-translation has led to a growing recognition of its value and significance, primarily since the advent of the World Wide Web and the emergence of web-mediated collaborative practices, both professional and volunteer/nonprofessional. To address this issue, we investigate how, within translation studies, co-translation has been mapped in the international community and draw on the notions of James S. Holmes's (2000) "map" of translation studies presented by Gideon Toury (2012) and Jeremy Munday (2016) in an attempt to put forth an overall framework describing the ground covered by co-translation studies. Furthermore, in this paper, a comparative analysis of three English versions of Shen Fu's literary classic *Fu Sheng Liu Ji* (*Six Records of a Life Adrift*) is discussed in order to illustrate the influence of co-translation and to explore the implications of this influence. The paper aims to offer a review of the latest developments in co-translation studies, the insightful findings of which may help scholars, researchers, students, and practitioners to reflect upon the important issues in this field and

search for possible directions in their future research.

2. Mapping

Beginning with a presentation of co-translation activities, this section argues that co-translation has an active presence in the current day. In recent years, many relevant publications have quickly emerged as an important response to this issue. It is widely believed that it is time to consider what has been done in this field. Therefore, this section will consist of a literature survey in order to map the development of co-translation studies.

2.1 The Active Presence of Co-translation

Abundant examples of co-translation can be found both in the West and in the East as well as both in the past and in the present. It has also been said that the oldest tradition of co-translation appears in *The Letter of Aristeas* (also called *The Letter to Philocrates*), which is a Hellenistic work from the second century BCE.¹ This tradition is explained below:

Three days later Demetrius took the men and passing along the sea-wall, seven stadia long, to the island, crossed the bridge and made for the northern districts of Pharos. There he assembled them in a house, which had been built upon the sea-shore, of great beauty and in a secluded situation, and invited them to carry out the work of translation, since everything that they needed for the purpose was placed at their disposal. So they set to work comparing their several results and making them agree, and whatever they agreed upon was suitably copied out under the direction of Demetrius.²

Although this work does not explain co-translation in a detailed way, the above passage is indeed a description of the co-translation activity. According to Aristeas's letter, Demetrius, Aristotle's student, gathered a group of translators together to carry out the translation work. The translators would read the text, offer possible translations to one another, and then, when an agreement was reached, the text would be copied down (Fournel and Zancarini 2017, 74–75). This is a tradition that exists even today under certain circumstances. Typical of this is translation crowdsourcing and online collaborative translations. Miguel A. Jiménez-Crespo (2017, 25) defines translation crowdsourcing as collaborative translation processes performed through dedicated web platforms that are initiated by companies or

¹ Wikipedia, s.v. "Letter of Aristeas," last modified April 8, 2022, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Letter_of_Aristeas.

² "The Letter of Aristeas," *Christian Classics Ethereal Library*, accessed September 16, 2018, <http://www.ccel.org/c/charles/otpseudepig/aristeas.htm>.

organizations and in which participants collaborate with motivations that are not strictly monetary—for example, translations on Facebook or Twitter. Online collaborative translations are also defined as collaborative translation processes on the web initiated by self-organized online communities in which participants collaborate with motivations that are not monetary—such as the subtitling of movies by fans.

The evidence of a long tradition of co-translation activity is visible all over the world, even in China. China's co-translation traditions can be traced back to the translation of Buddhist scriptures, a practice with over a thousand years of history. Initially, translations were done by foreign monks, and then the Chinese and foreign translators worked in tandem; finally, the Chinese translators took over the translation work (Luo and Lei 2004, 20). During this period, Xuan Zang (660–664 CE) was one of the most notable translators.

He assembled a team of some twenty eminent monks to take on the tasks of verifying interpretations and doctrinal issues, polishing the translations, standardizing terminology and checking the Sanskrit meanings. The team formed a well-organized Translation Assembly. The efforts of nineteen years saw the completion of the translation of seventy-five sutras and treatises, a total of one thousand three hundred and thirty-five fascicles in all. (Cheung 2006, 156–157)

This translation activity shows the organization of a translation team to share the work and cooperate with one another. The history of Chinese translation reveals five major and successive stages of translation activity, which in fact can be seen as a process of co-translation. Therefore, translation in Chinese history has often been a collaborative act (St. André 2010, 73). The same is true in the West. Please see table 1 for more information. In addition, co-translation has also appeared in the translation of the Four Great Classic Novels of Chinese literature. For example, *Hongloumeng* (*A Dream of Red Mansions*) was co-translated by Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang; *Shuihuzhuan* (*The Marshes of Mount Liang*) was co-translated by Alex and John Dent-Young.

The requirement that the translator should be an expert in both languages and be able both to understand the source and to explain it in a new language would today appear to be self-evident (Bistué 2017, 36). However, this requirement can also seem so harsh or strict that the translator cannot meet it. Moreover, an emotional recognition may affect the processes of cognition and decision-making. In this sense, emotional recognition is significant for a translated work, which is intended to strengthen and facilitate the satisfaction and gratification of the target readers to the source language and culture embodied in the original work for the

target readers. Therefore, in most circumstances, the translator may seek collaboration or cooperation through co-translation. This is done to ensure the adequate understanding and proper expression, which may optimize the effectiveness of the translation and the communication—especially in a world of modern communication and accelerated globalization.

Table 1. Historical landmarks in the history of co-translation

No.	Historical Landmarks in a History of Co-translation in the West		Historical Landmarks in a History of Co-translation in China	
	Period and Description	Example	Period and Description	Example
1	Translation in the Ancient Times from the End of Fourth Century BC	Septuagint co-translated by seventy-two translators	The Translation of Buddhist Scriptures from the East Han Dynasty (25–220) to the Song Dynasty (960–1279)	Prajñāpāramitā co-translated by Kumārajīva and his disciple Sengzhao
2	Translation in the Middle Ages from the End of Roman Empire to the Middle Ages (Fourth–Sixth Centuries)	Old Testament co-translated by St. Jerome and Jewish scholars	The Sci-tech Translation from the Late Ming Dynasty to the Early Qing Dynasty (1600–1644)	Euclid's <i>Elements</i> co-translated by Xu Guangqi and Matteo Ricci
3	Translation in the High Middle Ages from Eleventh to Twelfth Centuries	Solomon Ibn Gabirol's <i>Fountain of Life</i> co-translated by Johannes Hispanus and Dominicus Gundisalvi	The Translation of Western Learning from the Late Qing Dynasty to Early Republic of China (1840–1911)	Victor Hugo's <i>Les Misérables</i> co-translated by Su Manshu and Chen Duxiu
4	Translation in the Renaissance Period from Fourteenth to Sixteenth Centuries	The New Testament co-translated by Martin Luther and Philip Melancthon	The Translation of Literature and Social Science Since May Fourth Movement (1919)	Charles Dickens's <i>David Copperfield</i> co-translated by Lin Shu and Wei Yi
5	Translation in the Modern Times from the Later Half of Seventeenth to the First Half of Twentieth Century	Paul Scarron's <i>The Comical Romance and Other Tales</i> co-translated by Tom Brown and John Savage	Translation Since the Founding of the People's Republic of China (1949)	<i>A Dream of Red Mansions</i> co-translated by Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang
6	Translation Since the End of World War II	Leo Tolstoy's <i>War and Peace</i> co-translated by Lousie and Aylmer Maude		

2.2 Sketching the Landscape of Co-translation Studies

Co-translation is not new, but has been quite a ubiquitous translation activity. In the past few years, academia has paid increasing attention to this subject, and there has been an upsurge of co-translation studies. It is generally believed that it is time to consider what has

been done in this field and to render an up-to-date overview of the latest developments in this field. Accordingly, in this section, the landscape of relevant studies is sketched out.

A number of recent conferences focusing on co-translation are indicative of this trend: “La traduction collaborative. De l’Antiquité à Internet” (Collaborative translation. From the antiquity to the Internet) (Paris, 2014); “Translation as Collaboration: Translaboration?” (London, 2015); “Researching Collaborative Translation” (Hong Kong, 2016); “Collaborative Translation and Self-Translation” (Birmingham, 2016); and “TransCollaborate: A Symposium on Collaborative Translation” (Prato, 2017). On one hand, all these events have been conscious attempts to make the practice of collaborative translation more visible and to highlight the nuances of the phenomenon as well as to define co-translation as a subject of research and introduce it into the academic field (Manterola Agirrezabalaga 2017, 192). On the other hand, these conferences have contributed to the significant increase in the output of the related publications.

Naturally, the past few years have seen a flowering of academic research on co-translation. This is strongly evidenced, for example, by the recent special issues with the theme of “Community Translation 2.0” from *Linguistica Antverpiensia, New Series – Themes in Translation Studies*; “Translaboration: Translation as Collaboration” from *Translation and Translanguaging in Multilingual Contexts*; “TransCollaborate: Collaborative Translation, A Model for Inclusion” from *mTm: A Translation Journal*; and “Translaboration: Exploring Collaboration in Translation and Translation in Collaboration” from *Target: International Journal of Translation Studies*. Two recent pioneering publications, *Collaborative Translation: From the Renaissance to the Digital Age*, edited by Anthony Cordingley and Céline Frigau Manning (2017), and *Crowdsourcing and Online Collaborative Translations: Expanding the Limits of Translation Studies*, authored by Miguel A. Jiménez-Crespo (2017), also focus on co-translation. Notably, what deserves the most attention is Hanne Jansen’s (2019) survey entitled “Collaboration in Literary Translation,”³ focusing on “multiple translatorship,” that was conducted among literary translators in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden in 2015. What follows is a review of the current academic literature.

The online Web of Science (WoS) database indicates that most prior studies of collaborative translation focus on the area of specific case analysis rather than providing readers with a larger picture. For example, Ji-Hae Kang and Kyung Hye Kim (2020)

³ Quantitative data available at <https://engerom.ku.dk/collaboration-in-literary-translation/quantitativedata.pdf/>.

examined the ways in which collaboration in audiovisual translation was approached and portrayed by the different parties involved in the transnational distribution and consumption of cultural products based on the Korean translation of the film *Spy*. Chuan Yu's (2019) case study of Yeeyan's participatory mechanisms revealed the processes of online collaborative translation, focusing on the various roles that participants play through their mutual engagement. Hilary Brown (2018) focused on seventeenth-century Germany and proposed a re-evaluation of the phenomenon of collaborative translation in European cultural history. In addition, it is worth mentioning that with the increasing use of technology, a more detailed treatment of collaborative practices in terms of fan translation or "fansubbing," or the socio-cognitive research agenda, has been initiated by the works of Hanna Risku (Risku and Dickinson 2009; Risku, Rogl, and Milošević 2020; Risku, Rogl, and Pein-Weber 2016; Risku and Windhager 2015).

The China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) database reveals that, in China, previous studies that were written in Chinese are fewer and have a limited scope. Yu Hou and Kai Bao Hu (2019) investigated the co-translation style of Howard Goldblatt and his wife Lin Li-chun's co-translation style based on the Chinese-English parallel corpus of Goldblatt's English version of Chinese novels. LianXiang Tan and Hongjuan Xin (2017) focused their attention on the factors that shape co-translation by utilizing the English translation of *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung* as an example. Pui Yiu Martha Cheung (2003) adopted Foucault's theory of discourse to examine Wei Yi and Lin Shu's translation of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, specifically with regard to the translators' ideological manipulation of the religious material in the source text. Most studies that focus on analyzing specific texts tend to ignore the significant role of co-translation in this era of globalization; in other words, co-translation studies at the macro level have not yet been touched upon.

All in all, the implications of these studies, which analyze some aspects of co-translation studies or the development of its status, have proven to be significant. Although methodologically robust and applicable, they focused heavily on a limited or narrow perspective regarding case studies of co-translation, leaving a comprehensive analysis or a general picture of co-translation studies almost entirely unexplored. Furthermore, the previous studies paid little attention to investigating the pros and cons of co-translation and independent translation and putting forth an overall framework to describe the ground covered by co-translation studies, which may shed some light on multifaceted development of

translation studies.

3. Locating

Based on mapping co-translation and describing the current development of the field, this section first aims to offer an analysis of the use of the term ‘co-translation,’ as well as its features. A map will also be drawn of the main topics of co-translation studies inspired by Holmes’s (2000) map of translation studies presented by Toury (2012) and Munday (2016). This map is not intended to be exhaustive or definitive, but will instead present some issues that have gained wide attention over the past few years and provide some suggestions for any future research.

3.1 The Term Co-translation

As described above, although previous studies have made general references to the term co-translation, there is no consensus on the standard expression concerning this translation phenomenon. The use of the term ‘collaboration/collaborative translation’ is significant because it features the following dictionary definitions for ‘collaboration’ or ‘collaborative.’ Through reference to the definitions of collaboration in the online Collins English Dictionary, we find that as a noun, collaboration refers to “the act of working with another or others on a joint project,” “something created by working jointly with another or others,” or “the act of cooperating as a traitor, especially with an enemy occupying one’s own country.”⁴ The adjectival use of collaboration, per the online Collins English Dictionary, suggests “a collaborative piece of work is done by two or more people or groups working together.”⁵ Other terms, mainly used in different language contexts and their translations, include “cooperation/cooperative translation,” “collection/collective translation,” and so on (Cordingley and Frigau Manning 2017). These terms are sometimes confused and inconsistent; the word ‘collaboration,’ for example, is not a neutral term, and it oscillates between positive and negative, openness and oppression (Mason 2020). Regarding the word ‘co-translation,’ its prefix ‘co-’ is used to form verbs or nouns that refer to people sharing things or doing things together.⁶ Furthermore, as a derivative term, co-translation is much more concise than the alternatives, which may help to avoid the ambiguous use and negative connotations of the

⁴ Collins Online, s.v. “collaboration,” accessed October 16, 2018, <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/collaboration>.

⁵ Collins Online, s.v. “collaborative,” accessed October 16, 2018, <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/collaborative>.

⁶ Collins Online, s.v. “co-,” accessed October 16, 2018, https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/co_2.

abovementioned terms.

3.2 The Features of Co-translation

Co-translation should be considered as distinct from independent translation. Its relevant features are described as follows:

3.2.1 Single-handed versus Many Hands. One of co-translation's basic distinctions involves the actual number of translators. In the world of translation studies and in actual practice, some translators have completed their translation tasks single-handedly, while more often than not others have joined hands with others, knowingly or unknowingly, and accomplished prodigious feats by cooperative methods and intellectual synergy (Jeong 2009, 110). Put simply, when working alone, all the steps of the entire translating process are carried out by a single person, while in a teamwork situation, tasks are shared (Manterola Agirrezabalaga 2017, 193).

Independent translation is a type of translation, and just as its name indicates, it is a translatorial activity undertaken by an individual. The independent translator is solely responsible for his or her translation work. By contrast, co-translators are two or more privileged translators who enjoy a certain degree of collaboration/cooperation often lacked by an independent translator. Therefore, the act of co-translation can help establish a natural interaction between the translator and anyone else involved in the translation, offering them opportunities to more deeply explore the source text and make important decisions about the presentation of the target text.

3.2.2 Simple Process versus Complex Process. Translation is a complex communication act in multiple modes that is increasing in frequency and significance within our contemporary globalizing world (Folaron 2018, 130). The types of translation are properly classified into independent translation and co-translation. Nevertheless, in general, the independent translator, having more freedom or liberty, follows a conventional translation procedure when carrying out the translation, including when and how to add, omit, explicate, implicate, and tone down. After all, independent translation is less hampered by any external noise or other distracting influences.

However, in a shared translating process, there will inevitably exist an additional task to perform: to discuss and reach agreement on the process and the final product, concerning

the major decisions as well as the small details. Such decisions about the process include details of sharing the work among the team members, the deadlines for different translating phases (first draft, correction, proofreading, release), and the language or the tonality of the text (Manterola Agirrezabalaga 2017, 193). Therefore, the co-translation process is a negotiated process that requires an agreed translation procedure, which is negotiated in practice as co-translators constantly create the integrating and concordant conditions of their coordination.

3.2.3 Unidirectional Translation versus Bidirectional Translation. In most European translator-training institutions, the general perception is that translation into the mother tongue is the “normal” direction—a stance promoted by international translation associations and enshrined in UNESCO’s recommendations (Hatim 2013, 176). Therefore, translation out of one’s native language is regarded as the inverse translation. Nevertheless, with the surge of national pride and economic globalization, there is a pressing demand for translating from one’s native language (e.g., Chinese) into a global lingua franca (e.g., English).

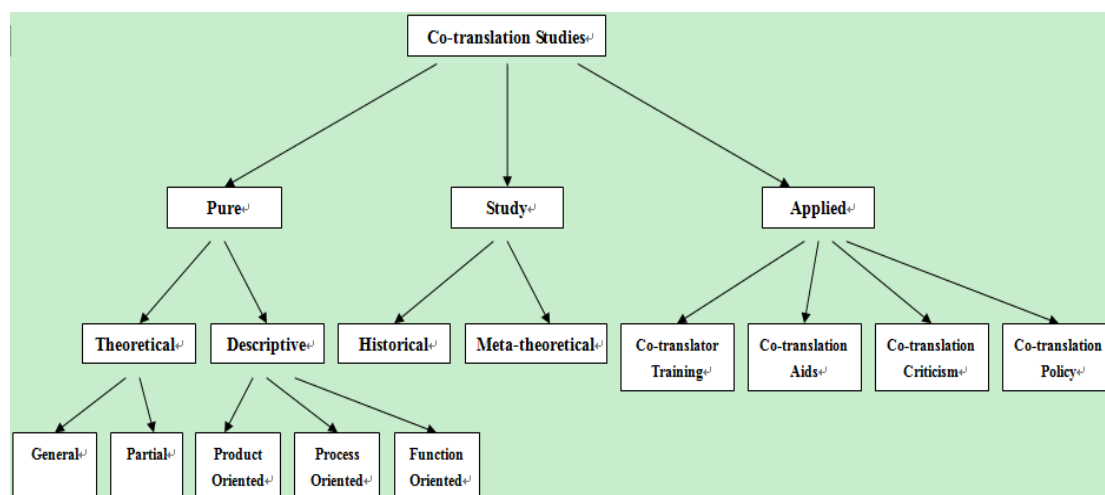
Taking China as an example, a large number of Chinese-to-English translations are undertaken by Chinese translators adopting a second language as the target language. As usual, the kind of translation produced by a non-native speaker of the target language is less likely to be more accessible by the target readership. One of the prime reasons for this is insufficient consideration of how the target language is presented. Therefore, to assure maximum accuracy of the original work and to convey a high-quality translation, it is wise to seek a co-translation done by native translators in both the source and target languages—which may also circumvent the inverse translation.

3.3 The Map of Co-translation Studies

Maps are used for establishing borders to indicate when or where an object or a concept starts being something else (Echeverri 2017, 522). Translation studies is the established academic discipline related to the study of the theory, practice, and phenomena of translation (Munday 2016, 1). Therefore, co-translation studies, as a field of scholarly research (or a subbranch of translation studies), may also involve the study of the theory, practice, and phenomena of co-translation that the translation studies research community has to deal with. Accordingly, we may draw on the notions of Holmes’s (2000) map of translation studies presented by Toury (2012) and Munday (2016) to put forth an overall framework,

describing the ground covered by co-translation studies.

Figure 1. The map of co-translation studies



The ‘pure’ research of co-translation studies is divided into the ‘theoretical’ and the ‘descriptive’ branch. The theoretical branch of co-translation studies focuses on the general principles, theories, and models which will serve to illustrate what co-translating and co-translations are and will be:

(1) General co-translation theories refer to the generalized explanations which may describe or explain every type of co-translation.

(2) Partial co-translation theories touch upon one or some of the aspects of co-translation theory.

The descriptive branch of co-translation studies, known as descriptive co-translation studies (DCS), deals with the product, the process, and the function of co-translation:

(1) Product-oriented DCS explores existing co-translations. This may involve the description or analysis of the source text and the co-translated text or a comparative analysis of several co-translated texts from the same source text or an independently translated text and co-translated text of the same source text.

(2) Process-oriented DCS relates to the process or act of co-translation, mainly covering the complex mental process or directly observable and measurable action involved in co-translation.

(3) Function-oriented DCS probes into the contexts—including co-translated text selection and its influences—while placing great emphasis on the function in the target

situation.

The ‘study’ research of co-translation studies looks at the examination of co-translation studies itself. (Note: Such research as ‘study of translation studies’ has been neglected in Holmes’s (2000) map of translation studies presented by Toury (2012). We thus add the ‘study of co-translation studies’ to the map of co-translation studies with a closer reference to Holmes’s 1972 seminal paper.)

(1) Historical branch: the histories of pure co-translation studies, applied co-translation studies, etc.

(2) Meta-theoretical or methodological branch: the problems of the methods and models used, of the discipline itself, etc.

The ‘applied’ research of co-translation studies, known as applied co-translation studies (ACS), is concerned with the methods applied to the practice of co-translation:

(1) Co-translator training: teaching methods, testing techniques, methods of assessment, curriculum design, acquisition of co-translation competence, criteria of co-translator selection, etc.

(2) Co-translation aids: translation tools and resources, such as software, reference tools, the professionals/experts, etc.

(3) Co-translation criticism: the evaluation of co-translation, including editing and revising, quality assessment, reviews, etc.

(4) Co-translation policy: the place and role of translators, translating, translations in society, etc.

[Luc] Van Doorslaer acknowledges that any mapping exercise has risks and pitfalls, but argues that this should not prevent such an exercise from being carried out, provided the map remains ‘descriptive’ and ‘open’, so that ‘new terms and concepts can be added in the future, existing concepts can be displaced, and that new relationships can be established.’ (Zanettin, Saldanha, and Harding 2015, 170)

As such, this map offers an expanded understanding and a consideration of some of the prospects of co-translation studies.

4. Translating

This section serves to provide a descriptive case study on the differences and similarities of co-translation and independent translation in three English versions of *Fu Sheng Liu Ji*, a classical Chinese literature of less than 40,000 words. The reason for selecting

Fu Sheng Liu Ji and its three English versions for comparison is threefold.

First, the work is deemed as a piece of classic literature all over the world. It is commended by Chaoying Fang as “a literary masterpiece, beautifully written, and permeated with deep emotion” (Hummel 2010, 642). It has been translated into multiple languages such as English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Russian, Spanish, and Swedish. In English alone, there are four different versions, with three of them being complete translations. Second, the English version from Leonard Pratt and Chiang Su-hui was included in Penguin Classics and the English version from Graham Sanders was included in Hackett Classics, thus making the works available to greater international readership. Moreover, the Penguin Classics list has been regarded by critics as indicating the boundaries of the Western canon (Qian 2017, 296), which to a certain extent reveals the recognition of the work’s literary merit in the realm of world literature. Third, the work has been translated by a native Chinese translator, a pair of transnational marital translators, and an Anglophone translator, respectively. When reading these versions, one can get the most apt examples in which to discuss the features and advantages of co-translation and to reflect its role in ensuring the proper English translation and securing the target readers’ meaningful access. See table 2 and the following example.

Table 2. An overview of the complete translation of *Fu Sheng Liu Ji* in English

No.	Translators	English Version	Publication	Note
1	Lin Yutang	<i>Six Chapters of a Floating Life</i>	Shanghai: Shanghai Hsi Feng/Westwind Press, 1939	Independent translation from a Chinese
2	Leonard Pratt and Chiang Su-hui	<i>Six Records of a Floating Life</i>	New York: Penguin Classics, 1983	Co-translation from a transnational couple (China and the US)
3	Graham Sanders	<i>Six Records of a Life Adrift</i>	Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2011	Independent translation from a Canadian

Source Text:

时当六月，内室炎蒸，幸居沧浪亭爱莲居西间壁，板桥内一轩临流，名曰“我取”，取“清斯濯缨，浊斯濯足”意也。(Lin 1939, 16, 18)

(Shi dang liu yue, nei shi yan zheng, xing ju Cang Lang Ting Ai Lian Ju xi jian bi, ban qiao nei yi xuan lin liu, ming yue “wo qu”, qu “qing si zhuo ying, zhuo si zhuo zu” yi ye.)

Lin's Translation:

It was in the sixth moon, then, and the rooms were very hot. Luckily, we were next door to the Lotus Lover's Lodge of the Ts'anglang Pavilion on the east. Over the bridge, there was an open hall overlooking the water, called "After My Heart"—the reference was to an old poem: "When the water is clear, I will wash the tassels of my hat, and when the water is muddy, I will wash my feet." (Lin 1939, 17, 19)

Pratt and Chiang's Translation:

It was then the sixth month, and steamy hot in our room. Fortunately we lived just west of the Pavilion of the Waves' Lotus Lovers' Hall, where it was cooler. By a bridge and overlooking a stream there was a small hall called My Desire, because, as desired, one could "wash my hat strings in it when it is clean, and wash my feet in it when it is dirty."

Endnote: From an ancient Chinese fable about a fisherman, that is here quoted from Mencius. Arthur Cooper explains the reference as meaning that while one cannot escape from the everyday world, one should still retain a portion of oneself unsullied by it (*Li Po and Tu Fu*, trans. Arthur Cooper, Penguin, 1974). A later version of the story from the *Odes of Chu* gave the Pavilion of the Waves its name. (Pratt and Chiang 1983, 30, 150)

Sanders's Translation:

The heat indoors was stifling in July. Luckily, our home was next to the Pavilion of Azure Waves, just west of the Lotus Lover's Abode. By a wooden bridge overlooking the water, there was a banquet hall called My Choice after the song that says you can choose to rinse your cap strings when waters run clear or to rinse your feet when waters run muddy.

Footnote: "Fisherman's Song" (Yu ge) is an ancient folksong cited in the Confucian classic *Mencius* (Mengzi) (4A.8) that speaks of suiting one's actions to the tenor of the times: "If azure waters run clear, they may serve to rinse my cap strings; if azure waters run muddy, they may serve to rinse my feet." In times of peace one serves a capable ruler by wearing the cap of an official; but in times of chaos one retreats into reclusion. The Pavilion of Azure Waves is also named after this passage. (Sanders 2011, 7–8)

From the above three translated versions, it is not difficult to find that there exist some obvious differences, especially in the translation of cultural items in the source text. Through searching for 'sixth moon' in the Corpus of Global Web-based English (GloWbE),⁷ we find that it only has two results, one of which indicates it is named for the Hawthorne and signifies

⁷ <https://www.english-corpora.org/glowbe/>.

cleansing and finding balance. It is obvious that this English meaning differs in the linguistic system from the source meaning, which actually refers to the sixth month of the year. It shows that Pratt and Chiang's translation, instead of Lin's translation, has accurately converted this date into its specific Western equivalent. For his translation, Sanders has converted dates from the lunar calendar traditionally used in China to the Gregorian calendar in use today (Sanders 2011, xvi).

For the allusion of “清斯濯纓, 濁斯濯足” (qing si zhuo ying, zhuo si zhuo zu), Lin's translation does not include explanatory notes. In Pratt and Chiang's translation, as well as Sanders's translation, however, there is the use of endnotes and footnotes, respectively, revealing they were more demanding of their target language expressions. This means that they were aware of the Sino-Western gap between the amount of information and the cultural and world knowledge. In order to provide the target culture with this “missing something,” the translator needs to be a bicultural expert and employ the necessary translation strategies if the cultural transfer is to be functional and successful (Bedecker and Feinauer 2006, 135). Yet, in this endnote of Pratt and Chiang's translation, Pratt and Chiang have cited a reference from Arthur Cooper, which may provide more convincing evidence in support of their explanation. Moreover, when the endnotes in Pratt and Chiang's translation are compared to the footnotes in Sanders's translation in regard to the number of notes, one may notice the slight tendency to use a greater number of notes in Pratt and Chiang's translation—221 endnotes versus 151 footnotes in Sanders's translation.

Also, through searching the frequency information for the use of the particular words in the GloWbE, we may observe that there exists a significant difference in the usage frequency of the particular words. Please see table 3.

Table 3. Distribution of usage frequency of the particular words in twenty countries or regions

No.	Version	Word	Total Frequency
1	Lin's translation	clear water	1264
		wash	38405
		tassel	297
		muddy	7675
		hot	164993
		luckily	24537
		lodge	32530

No.	Version	Word	Total Frequency
2	Pratt and Chiang's translation	clean water	6192
		wash	38405
		string	43430
		dirty	47796
		hot	164993
		fortunately	30684
		hall	96296
3	Sanders's translation	clear water	1264
		rinse	5872
		string	43430
		muddy	7675
		heat	116179
		luckily	24537
		abode	6028

From the three English versions, we selected seven particular words that were translated to different words in the target language. The results show that the number of high-frequency words used by Pratt and Chiang is greater than that of Lin and Sanders, indicating that the co-translators tend to use high-frequency words. For example, for the translation of “爱莲居” (Ai Lian Ju), the translators translated it into “Lotus Lover's Lodge,” “Lotus Lovers' Hall,” and “Lotus Lover's Abode,” respectively. Through searching the words ‘lodge,’ ‘hall,’ and ‘abode’ in the GloWbE, we find that ‘lodge’ from Lin's translation attains 32,530 results, ‘hall’ from Pratt and Chiang's translation attains 96,296 results, while ‘abode’ from Sanders's translation attains 6,028 results, which reveal that the word ‘hall’ has a higher frequency than the word ‘lodge’ and the word ‘abode’ in twenty different English-speaking countries or regions. Due to their higher proficiency in their native language and culture, the co-translators can perform their translation in a more natural and habitual way, thus circumventing the capacity limitations that typically constrain the independent translator. In addition, Lin's translation is comprised of 76 English words; Pratt and Chiang's translation features 70 English words; and Sanders's translation has 66 English words, indicating that the word count of Pratt and Chiang's translation is neither too long nor too short and is in fact between the two independent translated texts.

A comparative analysis conducted for *Fu Sheng Liu Ji* and its English versions has suggested that Pratt and Chiang's translation displays a much higher level in terms of the target reader's reading expectations through concerted efforts when compared to the

independent translators' translation. For this outcome, the co-translators used endnotes to provide background information about some of the cultural-loaded or unfamiliar words and phrases; they also utilized high-frequency words and phrases to fulfill the norms or rules of the target language and culture.

5. Conclusion

The goal of this paper was to address the consolidation of co-translation as a subbranch of translation studies as well as to answer the calls for further research related to the theory, practice, and phenomena of co-translation. This paper presents an overview of the existing research on co-translation accompanied by an illustrative account of the use of the term co-translation and its features and the map of co-translation studies. This was followed by a quantitative and qualitative examination of the co-translation and independent translation of the three English versions of *Fu Sheng Liu Ji*. The results show a promising trend in the development of co-translation studies with a proliferation of books, journal articles, and conferences in recent years. Moreover, co-translation studies deserve more attention, specifically in terms of the comprehensive and systematic study of the subject. It is also worth locating or identifying the use of the term co-translation and its features, and mapping an overall framework presenting the ground covered by co-translation studies, which may serve as a reference for future research. Finally, the investigation into *Fu Sheng Liu Ji* and its three English versions has identified the differences and similarities—or the pros and cons—of co-translation and independent translation, which may be useful for everyone concerned in their future work. Future studies can be carried out to analyze co-translators' style and the features of co-translated work at syntactic and textual level by corpus methodology. More efforts have to be made to improve the co-translation studies.

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