OF AUTHOR AND CHARACTERS: LANGUAGE DIFFERENCES AND THEIR REFLECTION IN TRANSLATION - A SURVEY OF THUNDERSTORM

ABSTRACT

Whether an author's language is totally distinguished from the language of the characters is the main exploration in this dissertation. This concern to find out the author's influence in the characters' language stems from the suspected Europeanized grammar and expressions found in Thunderstorm. The English translation of Thunderstorm is contrasted and compared against the original text to support this hypothesis.

The europeanised language in Thunderstorm is classified according to: the use of 'de', the sentence structure similar to that of English, the unusual use of 'zhe' with regards to the '-ing' form of English, repetition of personal pronouns and the use of mid-branching long sentences which bear resemblance of the subordinate clauses in English. These stylistic markers are found to be existing in the author's language. The characters' language, after being contrasted against the author's language, vary in resemblance to the author's. However, it is asserted that these characteristics serve only as one of many tools that we can use to gauge the language difference and that these are considered under the constraints of surveying only the language of four characters in Act Two and Act Three.

Computational results show that repetition of personal pronouns is a prominent europeanised characteristic found in the characters Zhou Fanyi (occurring in 13 out of 178 sentences) and Lu Ma (occurring in 20 out of 209 sentences). This is a distinct characteristic because repetition of the pronouns is not a major europeanised characteristic in the author's language (occurring in 1 sentence out of 418 sentences).

Sentence structure analysis has shown that the author's language influences Zhou Chong's language in the form of mid-branching sentences, implying certain authorial intentions such as expressing ideals through the author's favourite character, for instance Zhou Chong. As for Lu Gui, a servant, supposedly not to have said any europeanised language as he is not educated, has also a few lines that contain such stylistic markers.
This makes the exploration of language differences meaningful as the findings have shown signs that the author's language has some influence on the characters', even for those who seem to have no similar education background as the author. Further survey can be done to the rest of the playscript and language of other characters, as well as other works of the author, in order to reveal more concrete findings on the differentiation between the language of the author and the characters.