Leiden University

Faculty of Humanities

Master Thesis

Figures of speech in translation

A comparison of three Chinese translations of Dante's *Inferno*

Submitted by Chiara Vezzaro

Student number: s2081822

MA Asian Studies: Chinese Studies

Academic year 2018/2019

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. R.P.E. Sybesma

Word count: 14.677 words (excluding appendices and Chinese characters)

1 July 2019

Leiden

Table of Contents

Introduction

This research originates from the combination of three of my interests: Italian poetry, the Chinese language, and translation. This work of text analysis falls in the field of translation studies – more specifically, in the branch of *translation and poetics* – and touches upon the field of metaphor studies. The goal of the research is to investigate the translation techniques adopted by three Chinese translators of the *Inferno* part of the poem *Divine Comedy*, by Dante Alighieri (1265-1321). To make the research more specific, I chose a translation problem: the translation of figures of speech related to the meaning of words, namely: metaphor, simile, metonymy, synecdoche, personification and synaesthesia. The research question addressed in this study is: which translation techniques are employed when translating figures of speech related to meaning in *Inferno*, and which conclusions can be drawn about them? The first step is to define which figures of speech are part of the study. I chose to investigate those who are related to meaning because they present a variety of possibilities for their translation, and are quite accessible, if compared – for example – to figures of sound or prosody. I decided to examine only the Chinese translations that are complete and translated directly from Italian to Chinese (see Chapter 1.2). In order to answer the descriptive part of the question, i.e. which translation techniques are used, I used text analysis. I identified the figures of speech in the source text, and in the corresponding passages in the translations. All 34 *canti* (chapters) and 4,720 lines are examined. No complete list is available of all the figures of speech in the poem; therefore, I relied on my own analysis, plus different websites for reference, mainly dantelab.darmouth.edu, containing a commentary by Nicola Fosca.[1] For similes, I drew important suggestions from the work by Esposto.[2] After individuating the figures of speech, I identified which of the translation techniques was used for each occurrence, by each translator. I labelled each translation according to the techniques I had defined (see Chapter 3). I analysed all the data through an excel spreadsheet, and, through inductive reasoning, I commented on it primarily from the point of view of each figure of speech, but also from the perspective of the translation techniques, and looking for differences among translators.

This study mainly builds on theories developed within translation studies (see Chapter 3). Other scholars have carried out similar works. Fadaee, for example, compares the

[1] Accessible at http://dantelab.dartmouth.edu/reader
[2] Esposto, 2017

translation techniques used for simile and metaphor translation in three Persian versions of George Orwell's books *1984* and *Animal Farm*.[3] In this research, the author concentrates only on simile and metaphor; she presents a classification for different types of metaphors, and introduces different collections of possible techniques for translating these two figures. She selects translation techniques for metaphors by Newmark[4] and translation techniques for similes by Larson (see Chapter 3).[5] She classifies each occurrence of metaphor and simile in the three translations according to these classifications. The conclusions drawn from this research consist of remarks about the use of different techniques in relation to the type of figure, and their more or less wide application by each translator. Masroor conducts a similar work, with the goal of identifying translators' problems in translating figures of speech from English into Persian.[6] The figures investigated are simile, metaphor, personification, metonymy, synecdoche, hyperbole, rhetorical question, oxymoron and figures of sound. She applies theories by Newmark, Larson and Nolan, and focuses on translation problems and wrong translations mainly due to cultural differences. Although I found some wrong translations myself, the focus of my research is not on investigating mistakes, but on analysing the use of different translation techniques. There is a partial overlap in both the figures of speech she and I investigate, and in the translation strategies considered. Almost all the work in this field deals with English language material. In contrast, the present study takes into consideration Italian and Chinese, which is a far less investigated combination of languages. In addition to techniques previously formulated in the literature, I take into consideration new ones.

The outline of this thesis is as follows. After the introduction, Chapter 1 outlines the features of the *Divine Comedy* and introduces the selected Chinese translations and their authors. Chapter 2 presents the figures of speech examined in this study and the relevant literature. Chapter 3 introduces the translation techniques investigated, and the relevant literature. Chapter 4 presents the findings of the research treating each figure of speech separately, commenting on the use of each technique, and highlighting the differences among

[3] Fadaee, 2011
[4] Newmark, 1988
[5] Larson, 1984
[6] Masroor, 2016

the three translators. Finally, a conclusion summarizes my findings and suggests possible directions for future research.

Chapter 1: The *Divine Comedy*

1.1 About the poem

The *Divine Comedy* (*Divina Commedia* in Italian) was written at the beginning of the Fourteenth Century by the Florentine poet Dante Alighieri. The original title was *Comedìa* (pronounced [komeˈdiːa]), from the Greek *κώμη* 'village', and *ᾠδή* 'song', literally 'song of the village'. This word in the Tuscan dialect was later changed to the Italian *Commedia*, and the adjective *Divina* was added about two centuries later. The work is an allegoric-didactic poem, which consists of three *cantiche* (sections, singular *cantica*): *Inferno* (Hell), *Purgatorio* (Purgatory) and *Paradiso* (Heaven). The numerology in the structure of the poem is based on the Christian symbolism attributed to the number three (symbolizing the Trinity) and its multiples, number one (symbolizing the only God) and 100, symbolizing the maximum expression of the perfection of God. Number three is found in the number of *cantiche* and their length, as well as in the interlocking rhyme scheme used, called *terza rima*. This scheme arranges the lines in tercets: aba bcb cdc ded ... yzy, z, with the last, single line rhyming with the middle line of the preceding tercet. From the point of view of prosody, this scheme gives the poem "interlocking unity, in which lines […] echo each other within each tercet".[7] Every line consists of eleven syllables, and is therefore referred to as hendecasyllable. Each of the three *cantiche* contains 33 *canti* (chapters, singular *canto*), plus an introductory canto referred to as *proemio* at the very beginning, with 100 canti in total. Symbolism and allegory are fundamental elements throughout the poem.

The *Divine Comedy* is written in the first person and narrates the story of Dante's journey to the three realms of the dead (Hell, Purgatory and Heaven). Allegorically, it represents the soul's journey of redemption towards God. In Hell and Purgatory, Dante is guided by the Roman poet Virgil, while in Heaven he is guided by Beatrice, Dante's ideal woman. Religious and moral themes are present throughout the poem, alongside with political, historical and philosophical ones. Most of the events and circumstances narrated in the poem can be read in an allegorical way. For example, light symbolizes the presence of God; therefore Hell is described as dark, and Heaven as full of light. The physical collocation of Hell at the bottom, Purgatory in the middle and Heaven on top is also a symbol of the soul's journey towards redemption. For further reading about the *Divine Comedy*, I suggest *In*

[7] Wong, 2008, p. 210

Cammino con Dante by Franco Nembrini (in Italian) and *The Complete Danteworlds: A Reader's Guide to the Divine Comedy* by Guy P. Raffa, in English.

1.2 The Chinese translations and their authors

There are seven Chinese translations of the *Divine Comedy*, six of which are complete, and one only featuring some parts. These were written between the 1950s and the early 2000s. The first translator of the poem into Chinese was Qian Daosun (钱稻孙, 1887-1966). He translated directly from the Italian original text, and – interestingly – he used classical Chinese as his medium, and *Chǔ cí* (楚辞) as inspiration for his textual form. *Chǔ cí*, translated as "Verses of Chu" or "Songs of Chu", is an anthology of Chinese poetry written in Classical Chinese during the Zhou dynasty. Qian's translation is not complete, since it features only selected passages of the *Inferno* part. Other translations were made from French by Wang Weike (王维克, 1900-1952), from English by Zhu Weiji (朱维基, 1904-1971) and by Zhang Shuguang (张曙光, 1956-). There are three complete translations from Italian: by Tian Dewang (田得望, 1909-2000), by Huang Wenjie (黄文捷, 1929-), and by Laurence Wong (黃國彬, 1946-). This research does not take into consideration the translation by Qian because it is incomplete, nor the translations by Wang, Zhu and Zhang because they are indirectly translated through French or English. It is likely that the French and English translators made changes to the figures of speech, therefore analysing these indirect translations would not be insightful. Only complete translations from Italian are taken into consideration, i.e. the translations by Tian, Huang and Wong. Interestingly, these three translations each appear in a different textual form: prose, non-rhymed verse and rhymed verse respectively.

The earliest translation of the three is the one by Tian Dewang (1909-2000). He graduated from the Foreign Language and Literature Department at Qinghua University in Beijing, and obtained a PhD at the University of Florence, in Italy. He also studied in Germany, and, once he got back to China in 1940, he was a professor in Zhejiang University, Wuhan University and Peking University. He started translating the *Divine Comedy* in 1982, in a discontinuous manner until 2000, when his translation of all the three volumes was finally complete. Two months later, he passed away. *Inferno* was published in 1990, *Purgatorio* in 1997, and *Paradiso* in 2001. In the preface to his translation, he explains the historical context of the time when the poem was originally written, as well as Dante's life, the relevance of the poem for his contemporaries, from a political and cultural point of view, and he introduces

some fundamental concepts that the reader should have in mind in order to understand it. Moreover, he comments on Dante's use of metaphor and simile. It is noteworthy that he does not make a distinction between the two, and makes them both fall under the general term (比喻 *bǐyù*). He writes: "When Dante describes characters or sceneries, he excels in using metaphors/similes drawn from real life and the natural world. […]. The more an object or scene is unusual, the more familiar are the terms used as comparison."[8] He also praises Dante's ability of making vivid comparisons, as though he was a painter who is able to depict the strangest images as if they were in front of the reader's eyes. Tian then explains the decision he took – after reflecting on the matter for quite some time – of writing in the form of prose rather than in verse. The first reason that made him take this decision, is that he is not a poet himself, thus fearing that his work would not do justice to the original. The second reason is that the original text is embedded within an extremely fixed structure, following the rhyme scheme of *terza rima*. This scheme, invented by Dante and made popular by his work, has no counterpart in Chinese poetry. In acknowledging the limitations of this approach, he states that the goal of his translation is merely to let Chinese readers understand the plot of the story and the ideological connotations, even if this means that they are not able to enjoy the beauty of the intricate rhyme scheme. For that, they would have to learn Italian and read the original text. Tian also states that his translation and annotations are based on several editions he consulted. The division into paragraphs of his text follows the English translation in prose published in 1891 by Charles Eliot Norton (1827-1908), an American author, social critic, and professor of art.

The second translation investigated is by Huang Wenjie. Born in 1929, he is a graduate from Peking University with a specialization in Italian language. His Chinese translation of the *Divine Comedy* was published in 2000. He adopts poetry as his textual form. The preface to his translation is not written by Huang himself, but by Lü Tongliu (1938-2005), a Chinese scholar of Italian Studies and translator of many classics of Italian poetry into Chinese. The preface contains famous Chinese poets' high opinions on Dante, as well as some information about Dante's life and the historical context. It also describes the plot of the *Divine Comedy* and the structure of the afterworld created by Dante. Lü considers the poem to be "full of

[8] Tian, 2008, p. 22. Translated from Chinese by the author.

metaphors, symbols, and at the same time permeated by realistic and implicit meanings."[9] He praises the novelty of the poem, as well as its tight structure and clear arrangement. He further describes how the style changes throughout, from the gloomy description of Hell, which features a relatively "low" linguistic register, to the magnificent Heaven, where the marvellous surroundings are matched by Dante's most refined style. About Dante's metaphors/similes (see previous paragraph), he says: "Dante […] often likes to use similes/metaphors from daily life and the natural world, creating extremely unusual artistic effects."[10] The tight rhyme scheme – says Lü – also highlights Dante's outstanding language skills. Moreover, he states that Dante strives to use a new artistic form to convey the ideology of a new era. While fighting the widespread obscurantism of the Middle Ages, Dante praises reason and free will instead. He sees Man at the centre and gives prominence to life's value, human talent and wisdom. According to Lü, the comprehensive and encyclopaedic nature of the poem is also fundamental to its historical significance, since it summarizes most of the Medieval knowledge regarding politics, philosophy, science, theology, poetry, painting and culture. Unfortunately, he makes no comment about the translation itself, such as the textual form chosen, the target readership or the overcoming of translation difficulties.

The third translation object of this study is by Laurence Wong. Born in 1946 from Cantonese parents, he was raised in Hong Kong. He is a poet, translator, polyglot, intellectual and university lecturer at Lingnan University (Hong Kong) and at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. He received his BA and MPhil from the University of Hong Kong, and his PhD in East Asian Studies from the University of Toronto. In order to better understand Dante and his work, he conducted research at Florence University. His translation, published in 2003 in Taiwan, retains the rhyme scheme of the original. Due to reasons of availability, the version consulted in this research is the edition from 2009, published in Beijing. In the introduction, he writes that his translation process started in 1984, and was disrupted between 1989 and 1992, when he was abroad. The translation was mostly complete in 1996, while in 1999 he finished polishing and perfecting the work. In 2000 he started adding the notes, and this process took two years: he compares it to running an additional marathon, right after finishing the marathon of translating the poem itself. The aim of his notes and comments is twofold. The first goal is to give to the unexperienced Chinese reader the necessary tools to enter this

[9] Huang, 2005, p. 8. Translated from Chinese by the author.
[10] Huang, 2005, p. 15. Translated from Chinese by the author.

completely new world. The second goal is to provide scholars, especially translators and comparative linguists, with material that touches upon numerous subjects: this is why adding notes to the *Divine Comedy* is comparable to explaining an entire encyclopaedia. In the final version, the space occupied by the notes even exceeds that of the main text. The introduction is followed by a preface about the translation, which explains the poem's context and the plot, and features many other authors' thoughts on it, as well as extracts of the poems. These include similes, about which he observes: "The *quale-tale* or *come-sì* pattern of simile occurs time and again, and it's an extremely important rhetoric technique." [11] The pattern he mentions, meaning 'such as-just like' and 'as…as', is the most frequently used by Dante when introducing a simile. In an article titled *Translating the Divina Commedia for the Chinese Reading Public in the Twenty-First Century*, Wong explains how he tackled certain issues he noticed while reading existing Chinese translations of the *Divine Comedy*.[12] These mainly concern the question whether to translate in prose or in verse, and how to address the issue of the rhyme scheme. According to him, a translation should "preserve as many poetic qualities of the original as possible", and therefore it should be done in verse. Wong chose to render Dante's hendecasyllable through a five-pause line.[13] By being able to retain the rhyme scheme, Wong believes that he was successful in rendering the emotional intensity and phonological effects of the original.

[11] Wong, 2009, p. 24. Translated from Chinese by the author.
[12] Wong, 2008, pp. 192-207
[13] For a complete explanation of prosody in Italian and Chinese, see Wong, *Translating the Divina Commedia for the Chinese Reading Public in the Twenty-First Century*, 2008

Chapter 2: Figures of speech considered in the research

A figure of speech is defined as "a way of saying one thing and meaning another."[14] Figurative language has a twofold purpose: the *referential purpose* is to describe something more accurately than it would be possible with literal language, while its simultaneous *aesthetic purpose* is to delight the reader and appeal to his senses. In total, scholars have identified more than 250 different figures of speech, although they often blend into each other and, at times, it can be hard to classify a specific example as one or the other.[15] Figures of speech are one of the most difficult components of a text to render in translation. In general, finding a suitable translation goes through the steps of finding a meaning in the source text that is different from the literal meaning of the words, understand its cultural meaning and render it with an appropriate equivalent in the translation. The figures of speech considered in this research are the ones related to the meaning of words: metaphor, simile, personification, metonymy, synecdoche and synaesthesia. While a considerable amount of work has been written on metaphors, the same cannot be said for all the other figures of speech.

2.1 Metaphor

A metaphor is a figure of speech often used in poetry, which makes a resemblance between what is written on the page (the surface representation) and what is indirectly meant by the author. It is based on a point of similarity between an image and an object. In some cases, the similarity is a physical one, but more often the image is chosen for its connotations rather than its physical characteristics.[16] A metaphor is an example of semantic incompleteness: some information is deleted, in order to give rise to a multitude of possible interpretations, which is at the basis of the poetic effect.[17] This is an example of a metaphor from *Inferno*:[18]

> […] solvetemi *quel nodo*
> Che qui ha inviluppata mia sentenza.
> (*Inferno*, X, 95-96)
> […] solve for me *that knot*,

[14] Perrine, 1974, p. 610
[15] Ibid.
[16] Newmark, 2001, p. 84
[17] Katan, 2004, p. 99
[18] For all the examples from *Inferno*, I provided the English translation by Longfellow. For the examples in Chinese, I offer my own translation of them to English. In all the passages, I left the original punctuation: apparent inconsistencies reflect translators' choices.

Which has entangled my conceptions here.

(Longfellow, 1867)

Nodo 'knot' is a metaphor for 'doubt', therefore 'to solve a knot' stands for 'to solve a doubt'. There are many possible ways of classifying metaphors. Perhaps the most immediate distinction is based on their length; a metaphor can be a *one-word* metaphor, or a *complex* one (for example idioms, to the point of a metaphor allegorically stretching throughout a whole text).

Newmark offers a categorization of six types of metaphors.[19] The categories are not to be intended as fixed and completely separate from each other, but rather as a framework for analysis. In the course of time and with changes in usage, a metaphor might shift from one category to another. The types of metaphors are:

1. *Dead metaphors*. They are lexicalised and, as such, their users are hardly aware that they are using a metaphorical image. They are frequently found in spatial and temporal references (e.g. *the legs of the table*).
2. *Cliché metaphors*. They are expressions that rely on excessively widespread language, strings of words that have been overused (e.g. *back in the old days*). They usually consist of one of these two structures: a figurative adjective plus a literal noun, or figurative verb plus figurative noun.
3. *Stock or standard metaphors*. They are established metaphors (but not yet overused), which can be useful to refer to something, while at the same time containing some degree of emotional warmth.
4. *Adapted stock metaphors*. They are stock metaphors that have been adapted by the speaker or author.
5. *Recent metaphors*. They are metaphorical neologisms, whose use rapidly became common in the SL.
6. *Original metaphors*. They are metaphors created by the writer, therefore the expression of his creativity.

Still according to Newmark, most metaphors are either *anthropomorphic* (personification of an inanimate object), or *reific* (objectification of a living thing), according to the process

[19] Newmark, 2001, pp. 84-96

underlying the metaphorical image.[20] Moreover, based on the type of image used, a metaphor can be *universal*, *cultural*, or *individual*.[21]

Bojović, being a teacher who trains translators, focuses on the practical dimension of translating metaphors between two languages. She discusses Newmark's classification for analysing metaphors and his proposed translation techniques. In addition, she distinguishes between *lexicalised* and *non-lexicalised* metaphors, according to their usage. The former kind includes those that are established in a language and have become fixed expressions, while the latter kind consists of those that are novel and created by the author.[22] Applying this classification to Newmark's model would mean that lexicalised metaphors include dead, cliché, stock and recent metaphors, while non-lexicalised consist of original and adapted metaphors.

According to Perrine, basing on whether or not the object and the image of the metaphor are explicit, a classification can be made as in: both the literal and the figurative terms are *named* (as in a simile); the literal term is *named* and the figurative term is *implied*; the literal term is *implied* and the figurative term is *named*; neither the literal nor the figurative terms are named, they are both *implied* (rare).[23]

Lakoff and Johnson pay attention to the use of metaphors in every-day language, as well as in thought and action. They make a distinction between *structural metaphors*, where a concept is metaphorically structured in term of another, and *orientational metaphors*, which give a spatial orientation to a whole set of concepts, and organize them more broadly.[24] This is closely related to culture; taking the concept of time as an example, the past is spatially allocated behind ("that's all *behind us* now"), while the future is in front ("to *look forward* to"). *Ontological metaphors* perceive sets of concepts as entities or substances, serving various purposes, among which referring ("*the honour of our country* is at stake"), quantifying ("you've got *too much hostility* in you") and identifying particular aspects of them ("*the ugly side* of his personality").

After careful consideration of all the possible categorizations for metaphors, I found useful to use Newmark's *dead metaphors*, for the occurrences of *piè* 'foot' in *Inferno*, when

[20] Newmark, Approaches to Translation, 2001, p. 84
[21] Newmark, 1988, p. 105
[22] Bojović, 2014, pp. 78-79
[23] Perrine, 1974, pp. 611-612
[24] Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, pp. 10-32

used metaphorically. Most of the metaphors in *Inferno* would fall under original, stock, or adapted metaphors. However, because of the differences between the language spoken at the time when the poem was written and the modern language, in many cases it would be nearly impossible to establish to which category a metaphor belongs. Bojović's distinction between lexicalised and non-lexicalised also proves not to be insightful, since – again, because of differences in the Italian language – it would be hard to establish whether the image was known to the public or not. Perrine's classification is not especially relevant, because the degree of explication does not provide useful elements to the analysis. As interesting as Lakoff and Johnson's theories are, they mostly apply to every-day situations, rather than to poetry and the use of metaphor as a rhetorical device. In addition to the category of *piè* 'foot' mentioned above, I identified two other categories that are text-specific for *Inferno*: astronomy used for time reference, and adjectives like *duro, aspro, amaro, dolce* 'hard, sour, bitter, sweet'. Note that not all of the metaphors in *Inferno* fall under one of these categories.

2.2 Simile

A simile is "a more cautious form of metaphor" in which the comparison is made explicit through words like "as", "like", "resembles" or "seems".[25] In other words, metaphor and simile both link two images, but similes make use of similarity markers, while metaphors do not.[26] This is an example of a simile from *Inferno*:

> Qual dolor fora, se de li spedali,
> di Valdichiana tra l' luglio e 'l settembre
> e di Maremma e di Sardigna i mali
> fossero in una fossa tutti 'nsembre,
> tal era quivi, e tal puzzo n'usciva
> qual suol venir de le marcite membre.
>
> (*Inferno*, XXIX, 46-51)
>
> What pain would be, if from the hospitals
> Of Valdichiana, 'twixt July and September,
> And of Maremma and Sardinia

[25] Newmark, 2001, p. 84
[26] Fadaee, 2011, p. 174

All the diseases in one moat were gathered,
Such was it here, and such a stench came from it
As from putrescent limbs is wont to issue.
(Longfellow, 1867)

In this simile, which stretches along two tercets, the pain of the damned is compared to all the pains in different hospitals combined, and the putrid smell is compared to that of a decaying corpse. Like metaphors, similes can vary in their length and make use of different images. Esposto classifies some of the similes in *Inferno* as *pseudosimiles*.[27] These are short, often less than one line, and follow a structure similar to *stetti come l'om che…* 'I stood like a man who…'. It is a simple statement, which depends fully on the term of comparison for its characterization – since nothing is said about the subject of the simile, the "I". The second category I am using is that of long similes (consisting of a tercet or longer). Not all of the similes belong to one of these two kinds.

2.3 Personification

Personification consists in "giving the attributes of a human being to an animal, object or idea".[28] This figure of speech can be considered as a subclass of metaphor: a metaphor in which the figurative term of comparison is a human being.[29] For instance, this is observable in:

Ma vergogna *mi fe' le sue minacce*
(*Inferno*, XVII, 88)
But shame in me *his menaces produced*
(Longfellow, 1867)

Vergogna 'shame' is threatening Dante: a human action (threatening) is attributed to a feeling (shame). I identified no special categories for personification.

2.4 Metonymy

Metonymy is "the use of something closely related to the thing actually meant."[30] According to Lakoff and Johnson, the difference between metaphor and metonymy is that the former is a way of "conceiving one thing in terms of another" (function of understanding), while the

[27] Esposto, 2017, p. 4
[28] Perrine, 1974, p. 612
[29] Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 34
[30] Perrine, 1974, p. 615

latter "uses one entity to *stand for* another" (referential purpose).[31] This can be carried out in different ways, for example by the use of:

- the cause instead of the effect:

Sempre a quel ver c'ha faccia di menzogna
de' l'uom *chiuder le labbra* fin ch'el pote
(*Inferno*, XVI, 124-125)

Aye to that truth which has the face of falsehood,
A man should *close his lips* as far as may be
(Longfellow, 1867)

'Close his lips' is used to mean 'to abstain from talking'. The cause is stated (close one's lips) instead of the effect (not to talk).

- the effect instead of the cause:

Ma nell'orecchio mi percosse *un duolo*
(*Inferno*, VIII, 65)

But on mine ears there smote *a lamentation*
(Longfellow, 1867)

Duolo 'pain' is said to pummel the ear, but the pain is actually the effect of a loud noise (the cause).

- the material from which an object is made, instead of the object itself:

Questi non ciberà *né terra né peltro*
(*Inferno*, I, 103)

He shall not feed on *either earth or pelf*
(Longfellow, 1867)

Peltro 'pewter', a tin alloy, is the material used for coins. Therefore, it designates money.

- a symbol instead of what it symbolizes:

Vedi le triste che lasciaron *l'ago*,
La spuola e il fuso, e fecersi 'ndivine
(*Inferno*, XX, 121-122)

Behold the wretched ones, who left *the needle*,
The spool and rock, and made them fortune-tellers

[31] Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 36

(Longfellow, 1867)

L'ago, la spuola e il fuso 'the needle, shuttle and spindle' symbolize the job of seamstress.

- an abstract concept instead of something concrete:

e più onore ancora assai mi fenno,
ch'e' sì mi fecer della loro schiera,
sì ch'io fui sesto *tra cotanto senno*.
(*Inferno*, IV, 100-102)

And more of honour still, much more, they did me,
In that they made me one of their own band;
So that the sixth was I, *'mid so much wit*.
(Longfellow, 1867)

Senno 'wisdom', an abstract concept, is used to refer to the five wise people who are with Dante.

- something concrete instead of an abstract concept:

Puote omo avere in sé *man violenta*
(*Inferno*, XI, 40)

Man may lay *violent hands* upon himself
(Longfellow, 1867)

Here, *man violenta* 'violent hand' (something concrete) is used to mean 'violence' (something abstract). I identified a number of categories for recurring metonymies, namely: the use of the word *seme* 'seed' to mean one's origin; *mano destra/sinistra* 'right/left hand' (or, in a few cases, a slightly different expressions) to indicate a direction; the word *occhi* 'eyes' to mean 'gaze'; *lingua* 'tongue' to mean something related to speaking and speech; *legno* 'wood' to mean 'boat'.

2.5 Synecdoche

Synecdoche is similar to metonymy, but it is based on relations of bigger or smaller quantity, through the use of a part for the whole, or singular instead of plural, and vice versa.[32] This is an example of the use of part for the whole:

Poi si rivolse a quella *infiata labbia*,
(*Inferno*, VII, 7-8)

[32] Perrine, 1974, p. 615

Then he turned round unto that *bloated lip*,

(Longfellow, 1867)

Infiata labia 'angry face' (a part of the body) here stands for the whole person. In this example, a noun in the plural form is used instead of the singular:

Tanto ch'i' ne perde' *li sonni e' polsi*.

(*Inferno*, XIII, 63)

So great, I lost thereby *my sleep and pulses*.

(Longfellow, 1867)

The word *sonni*, which is the plural of the noun 'sleep' is used in its plural form, instead of the usual singular form. This rhetorical device presents a problem for the Chinese translators. The Chinese language does not have a general suffix to distinguish between a singular and a plural common noun. The Chinese suffix for pluralization 们 *men* can only be used when referring to people, for example in personal pronouns (我 'I' becomes 我们 'we') or common nouns like "student" (学生'student' becomes 学生们 'students'). In the *Divine Comedy*, however, this figure often refers to living or non-living entities different from people. Therefore, in the Chinese translation, this type of synecdoche tends to vanish, and it is usually impossible to tell whether it was used or not, because the singular and the plural form are identical in Chinese. Consequently, I left these occurrences out of the scope of this research.

As we can see, metonymy and synecdoche are similar, since they both substitute an object with a significant detail or aspect of it. Synecdoche may also be seen as a type of metonymy. Some of them have entered common speech, and are hardly recognizable as such, becoming dead figures. I identified no special categories for synecdoche.

2.6 Synaesthesia

Synaesthesia occurs when an activity or state related to one of the five senses is described in terms of another. For example:

[…] là dove *'l sol tace*.

(*Inferno*, I, 60)

[…] thither where *the sun is silent*.

(Longfellow, 1867)

In this example, the absence of sunlight is described through words semantically connected to the sense of hearing (the absence of sound), instead of the sense of sight. I identified no special categories for synaesthesia.

Chapter 3: Translation strategies

A translation strategy is not merely a way of translating a portion of text; rather it is a conscious, well-considered plan to overcome a particular translation difficulty. Different authors proposed different (but sometimes overlapping) sets of techniques for translating figures of speech, mostly focusing on metaphors.

Newmark's prescriptive model suggests different techniques for translating metaphors:[33]

a. Reproduce the same image, as long as it has the same frequency in the corresponding register of the TL. This is common for one-word metaphors, but harder for more complex expressions and idioms. The more the two cultures are similar, the more frequently this technique can be used;
b. Use a different image, which is established in the TL culture and equally common in the corresponding register.[34] This is rare for one-word metaphors, but more common for extended ones. When using a different image, attention must be paid to changes of meaning and of tone that are likely to occur;
c. Transfer the image of the original metaphor into a simile;
d. Retain the same image (or its transposition into a simile) and explicitly adding its meaning. This clarifies the symbol and makes the cultural elements behind it accessible to the readers with a different background. This compromise allows to address to both the expert and the less learned readership, which wouldn't otherwise understand the sense underlying the metaphor;
e. Reduce the metaphor to its meaning. This is a common procedure when there is no appropriate equivalent image in the TL. In poetry translation, a compensation in a nearby part of the text may be attempted;
f. Delete the metaphor, if it is redundant or unnecessary, as long as the text is not expressive or authoritative;
g. Retain the same metaphor, and add an extra-textual gloss explaining its meaning. Although footnotes break the flow of reading, this technique is preferred when the metaphor is not clear enough for the reader to understand, and especially when the

[33] Newmark, Approaches to Translation, 2001, pp. 106-113
[34] "TL" is used to refer to the Target Language, while "SL" stands for Source Language.

same image occurs multiple times along the text, so that the image can be retained and explained only once.

With regard to original metaphors, Newmark thinks that they should be translated literally, maintaining the original image, since they are the individual expression of the writer's personality. However, if the translator believes that the metaphor is too obscure, he can reduce it to its sense. Factors influencing the translator's choice are: the importance of the metaphor within the context, the cultural element in the metaphor, and the readership's commitment and knowledge.

Nolan claims that, in translating figures of speech, the harder obstacle for translators is perhaps that of failing to recognise a figure of speech as such, and as a result translating it with literal language, obtaining an ambiguous or meaningless translation.[35] Unlike Newmark, he does not propose a set of translation techniques. Nonetheless, he suggests that metaphors, by omitting those connectives typical of similes, when translated can result absurd or awkward. Therefore, in those cases, he advises the translator to turn the metaphor into a simile.

Morneau identifies five translation techniques for metaphors:[36]

a. Word-for-word translation. This is only possible if the metaphor exists with the same value in the TL.
b. Re-phrase the metaphor as a simile. According to him, this can be useful in languages where metaphors are rare, and only if the basic image of the metaphor is intelligible for the speakers of the TL.
c. Translate the metaphor into an equivalent metaphor in the TL, with a different image carrying the same meaning.
d. Translate the metaphor using literal language. This technique renders the meaning, but not the metaphorical image, thereby losing the aesthetic function.
e. Maintain the same metaphorical image, and provide all necessary references for its meaning to be clear, so that the reader can understand it.

Larson discusses translation techniques for different figures of speech. For metaphors, there are five possible techniques. For similes, the last three are valid:[37]

[35] Nolan, 2005, pp.69-74
[36] Morneau, 1993
[37] Larson, 1984, pp. 246-255

a. Leave the metaphor unchanged, if it sounds natural and is understood by TL readers.
b. Transpose a metaphor into a simile by adding comparison markers.
c. Substitute a metaphor (or simile) with another one carrying the same meaning in the TL.
d. Retain the same metaphor (or simile) and adding its meaning.
e. Erase the metaphorical image and reduce the metaphor (or simile) to its meaning.

For metonymy and synecdoche, there are three possible techniques: [38]

a. Substitute the image with its meaning, thereby eliminating the figurative sense and using literal language.
b. Retain the original word and adding its sense. This technique is preferred when there is an emotional value that would otherwise be lost, such as in poetry.
c. Substitute a figurative expression of the SL with a figurative expression of the TL. However, it is important that the same meaning be retained.

For translating personification, there are two possibilities:[39]

a. Maintain the same image of the ST
b. Use a non-figurative form instead, thereby conveying the meaning but losing the figure.

For the purpose of this research, I selected Newmark's translation techniques for metaphors and extended them to all of the figures of speech investigated. The techniques proposed by Newmark are the most comprehensive, and overlap with all the other techniques mentioned by other scholars. In addition to those, I encountered more techniques during the analysis, therefore I added them. These are the translation techniques I consider in my research:

- **T1: the figure is translated by using the same image.** This does not necessarily mean that the translation is a word-to-word translation, but rather that the translator keeps the same image of comparison as the original, without making any changes to the literal meaning of the expression.

[38] Larson, 1984, pp. 111-119
[39] Larson, 1984, p. 128

- **T2: the figure is translated by using a different image**, established in the TL culture. Because of the intelligibility of the original figure, the translator decides to use a different image of comparison, with whom the target readers are more familiar.
- **T3: a metaphor is transposed into a simile.** This technique only applies to metaphors, and consists in adding comparison markers to the metaphorical image, thereby transforming it into a simile.
- **T4: the figure is translated literally, and the meaning is added.** The original image, which is retained, is supplemented by its meaning, thereby being more explicit and less ambiguous.
- **T5: the figure is reduced to its meaning.** The original image is substituted by its meaning. Although the figure of speech is erased, its meaning is rendered with literal language.
- **T6: the figure is deleted.** The original image is deleted, without compensating for its meaning.
- **T7: the figure is translated by using the same image, and a footnote is added.** The original image is retained (as in T1), and is supplemented by an extra-textual note for additional explanation.
- **T2+7:** the figure is translated by using a different image established in the TL culture (as in T2), and a footnote is added.
- **T3+7:** a metaphor is transposed into a simile (as in T3), and a footnote is added.
- **T4+7:** the figure is translated with the same image and the meaning is made explicit (as in T4), and a footnote is added.
- **T5+7:** the figure is reduced to its meaning (as in T5), and a footnote is added.

Chapter 4: Research findings

I found 431 figures in total, of which 116 metaphors, 170 similes, 25 personifications, 92 metonymies, 26 synecdoche and 2 synaesthesia. There are differences in the most used techniques for each figure; therefore, I present the analysis treating each figure separately and commenting on the techniques used. A shorter analysis from the point of view of the translation technique follows. This is useful in order to understand which technique is more suitable for which figure. Finally, I present some remarks about the differences among translators.

I now present the characteristics of each figure in *Inferno*, and analyse the ways in which they have been translated.

4.1 Metaphor

Among the figures of speech selected for this research, metaphor is the second most frequent, with 116 occurrences. Some of them are original metaphors, invented and used for the first time by the author. Others, in contrast, echo images that were commonly used by different poets at the time. An example of this is the following passage, which narrates of the moment when Dante meets his guide Virgilius, a poet of the first century BC held in high esteem by Dante. As it was common at the time, an analogy is created between someone who is very wise and has a vast knowledge, and a water spring or river, as if this person was a "spring of knowledge".

«Or se' tu quel Virgilio e quella fonte
Che spandi di parlar *sí largo fiume*?»
(*Inferno*, I, 79-80)

«Now, art thou that Virgilius and that fountain
Which spreads abroad so wide *a river of speech*?»
(Longfellow, 1867)

In translating metaphors, the translators predominantly use three techniques: T5, T7 and T1, in order of frequency. The most common way to translate metaphor is to reduce it to its meaning; the translators probably considered the text too obscure for the Chinese public to understand, if they had retained the original image. For example, this is Tian's reduction to meaning of a metaphor.

Ma drizzò verso me l'animo e il volto

E di trista vergogna *si dipinse*;

(*Inferno*, XXIV, 131-132)

But unto me directed mind and face,

And with a melancholy shame *was painted*.

(Longfellow, 1867)

却把心和脸正对着我，*现出*阴郁的羞耻的脸色,

'But he directed to me his heart and face, and *revealed* a gloomy and shameful look'

(Tian, 1990)

Tian reduces the image of a feeling being "painted" on someone's face to its meaning: a feeling "appearing" on someone's face, through the verb 现出 'reveal, display'. When faced with an Italian-specific item (or in this case, Christian-specific) all three translators, again, reduce it to its meaning, thus erasing the original image.

E io, che posto son con loro *in croce*,

(*Inferno*, XVI, 43)

And I, who with them *on the cross* am placed,

(Longfellow, 1867)

我，这个同他们在一起*受苦*的人，

'I, who with them *I am suffering*'

(Tian, 1990)

至于如今与他们一起*受苦*的我本人，

'Myself, who with them *I am suffering*'

(Huang, 2000)

在这里，我陪着他们*受折磨囚禁*。

'Here, I keep them company in *receiving torment in captivity*'

(Wong, 2003)

The second most used technique is T7: the metaphor is translated by retaining the same image, and an extra-textual note is added in order to explain it.

Allor fu la paura un poco queta

Che *nel lago del cor* m'era durata

(*Inferno*, I, 19-20)

Then was the fear a little quieted

That *in my heart's lake* had endured throughout

(Longfellow, 1867)

这时候，惊悸中我才稍觉安宁。

在我凄然度过的一夜，惊悸

一直叫我的*心湖*起伏不平。

'Only in that moment, my fear was slightly calmed.

During the night that I spent mournfully, fear

Continuously made my heart's lake unstable'

(Wong, 2003)

The image of the "heart's lake" is retained, and the following note is added: "心湖：根据但丁时期的生理学，"心湖"（"lago del cor"）指心脏的内室，是恐惧之所由生。" 'according to the physiology of Dante's period, "heart's lake" ("lago del cor") refers to the inner chamber of the heart, which is the source of fear.' This note, by providing the necessary context, helps the Chinese reader understand the meaning behind the metaphor. The third preferred technique is T1: a translation through the same image.

[…] «Tendiam le reti, sí ch'io pigli

La leonessa e i leoncini al varco»

(*Inferno*, XXX, 7-8)

[…] «Spread out the nets, that I may take

The lioness and her whelps upon the passage»

(Longfellow, 1867)

[…] «让我们把网撒开，

我要把那由此经过的*母狮和两头幼狮*抓来»

'[…] «Let us spread the net,

I want to grab *that lioness and the two lion cubs* that are passing over there»'

(Huang, 2000)

In this passage, a man is about to kill his wife and children, who are referred to through the metaphor of "lioness and her whelps". Huang's translation keeps the original image (母狮和两头幼狮 'lioness and two lion cubs').

Among the different translation techniques object of this research, the only one that is figure-specific is T3, which is only applicable to metaphors. It consists in rendering a metaphor as a simile, by adding comparison markers. For example:

[…] «Che hai tu, Bocca?
Non ti basta sonar con le mascelle,
Se tu non *latri*? […]»

(*Inferno*, XXXII, 106-108)

[…] «What doth ail thee, Bocca?
Is't not enough to clatter with thy jaws,
But thou must *bark*? […]»

(Longfellow, 1867)

«鲍卡，你怎么啦？你的牙齿格格地打颤难道还不够，你还非得*像狗一般叫*不可吗？[…]»

'«Bocca, what's wrong? It is not enough that your chuckling teeth shiver, you must *shout like a dog*? […]»'

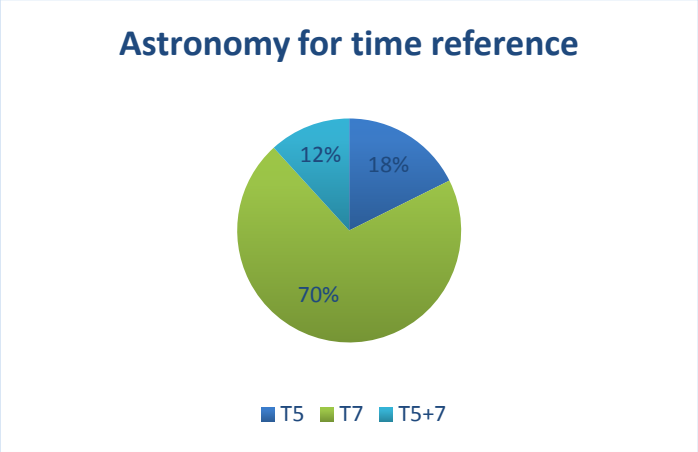
(Tian, 1990)

Dante's metaphor lies in applying the verb *latrare* 'to bark' to a person damned in Hell, thus underlining that his low condition is more similar to that of beasts rather than that of humans. Tian, instead of using a verb meaning 'to bark' (such as 吠叫), decides to phrase it as a simile, with the comparison marker 像 'like' made explicit. This technique is used only for a small percentage of metaphors, but with a similar frequency among the translators.

4.1.1 Astronomy for time reference

The first category of metaphors involves those that use astronomy for time reference. Only three techniques are adopted. The technique by far most used by all translators is T7: retaining the same image and adding a note. In a few occurrences, T5 is also used, substituting the metaphorical image with its meaning. For instance, Dante uses the sun for the meaning of "year": *Infra tre soli* 'Within three suns' (*Inferno*, VI, 68). In this case, all three of the translators use T5, removing the image of the sun and using literal language instead. Tian translates it as "以后再三年之内" 'within the next three years', Huang as "在过三载" 'when three years have passed', and Wong as "三年内" 'in three years', all three meaning literally 'within three years'. In some cases a note is also added to it (T5+7). What we can conclude is

that metaphors featuring astronomy for time reference were never simply translated literally. The meaning was probably considered too opaque for the readers, therefore the image was either substituted with an explicit time reference, or – more frequently – a note was added to the image, in order to keep the original flavour and at the same time explain which period of time corresponds to the astronomic image.



4.1.2 *Piè* 'foot' as dead metaphor

A second category is that of *piè*, which means 'foot'. This is a frequently used dead metaphor in the poem, expressing a spatial proximity. For instance:

Com'io *al piè* della sua tomba fui

(*Inferno*, X, 40)

As soon as I was *at the foot* of his tomb

(Longfellow, 1867)

Apart from a single case in which Wong uses T6, erasing the whole metaphor and its meaning, T1 and T5 are used to translate the different occurrences of *piè* with an equivalent distribution. In the example above, different translators use different techniques. Tian and Wong adopt T5, while Huang prefers T1.

当我来到他的坟墓*旁边*时

'When I arrived *next to* his tomb'

(Tian, 1990)

当我来到法里纳塔的坟墓*前*

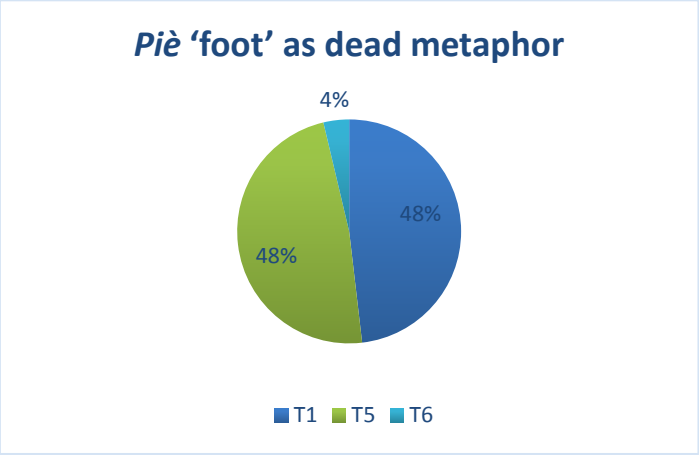
'When I arrived *in front of* Farinata's tomb'

(Wong, 2003)

我来到他的坟墓*脚下*

‘I arrived *at the foot of* his tomb’

(Huang, 2000)



4.1.3 Metaphorical adjectives

The last category within metaphors is the metaphorical use of the adjectives *duro* ‘hard’, *aspro* ‘sour’, *amaro* ‘bitter’, *dolce* ‘sweet’. These are lexicalised metaphors, because their use entered every-day language. In total, the translator use six different techniques to translate these adjectives, and most commonly reduce them to meaning (T5). Let us take *duro giudicio* ‘stern judgment’ as an example (*Inferno*, II, 96). Tian renders it with “严峻判定” ‘severe judgement’, Huang with “严厉决定” ‘severe resolution’ and Wong with “严峻天条” ‘severe Heaven’s commandment’. The second most frequently used technique is T1. For example, Tian renders *dolce dir* ‘sweet words’ as “甜蜜的话” ‘sweet words’ (*Inferno*, XIII, 55). Interestingly, T2 is used in one occurrence. In translating *Quando tu sarai nel dolce mondo* ‘When thou art again in the sweet world’ (*Inferno*, VI, 88), Tian uses a concept familiar to the Chinese readership. The line refers to when Dante’s journey through the afterworld will be over, and he will return to the world of the living (the ‘sweet world’). Tian’s translation is “回到阳间时”. ‘阳间’ – literally ‘the Yang world’ – is used to refer to the world of the living, as opposed to ‘阴间’ ‘the world of the dead’, literally ‘the Yin world’. The character 阴 *yáng* has the sun as its radical, and the character 阳 *yīn* has the moon instead. In Chinese philosophy, the concept of Yin and Yang is used to express opposite but complementary forces in a variety of contexts, such as dark-bright, negative-positive, male-female. Another interesting example of a metaphor translated by using a Chinese concept can be found in Wong’s translation.

Bestemmiavano Dio e lor parenti,

L'umana spezie e 'l luogo e 'l tempo e *'l seme*
Di lor semenza e di lor nascimenti.

(*Inferno*, III, 103-105)

God they blasphemed and their progenitors,
The human race, the place, the time, *the seed*
Of their engendering and of their birth!

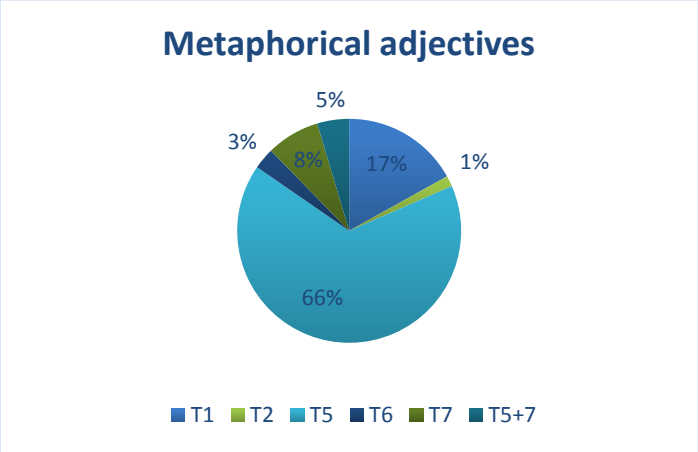
(Longfellow, 1867)

他们辱骂上帝，辱骂父母，
辱骂人类，辱骂自己的时辰、
八字、老家，以至生命之所出。

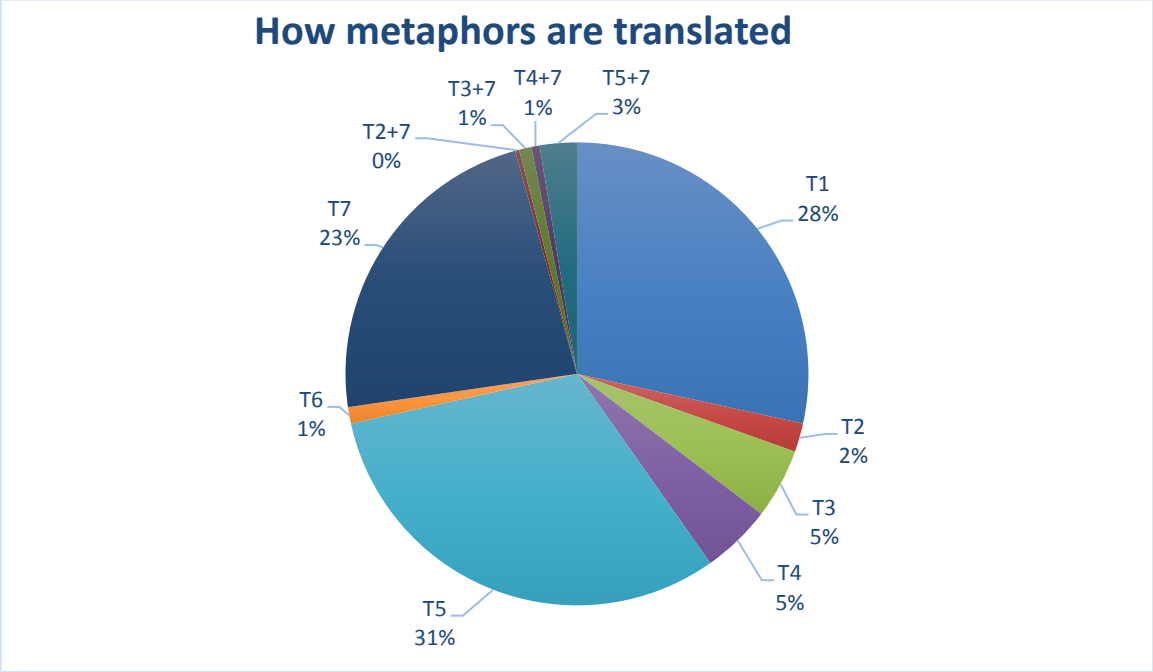
'They insulted God, insulted [their] parents,
Insulted the human race, insulted their own time,
The Eight Characters, [their] native place, and even the place where life began'

(Wong, 2003)

In this passage, Wong uses "八字" to translate the meaning that is expressed by *'l seme di lor semenza e di lor nascimenti*, which – in a nutshell – refers to one's birth. "八字" literally means 'the Eight Characters', which, in four pairs, indicate the year, month, day and hour of a person's birth. According to Chinese astrology, through these characters it is possible to predict the blueprint of one's life.



In sum, we can conclude that for metaphors in *Inferno*, the translators mostly kept the same image, with or without adding a note (T1 and T7), or favoured the meaning, erasing the image (T5). They also leaned towards the use of one technique rather than another based on the specific type of metaphor, adding more notes than usual when the image is an astronomic one, or being faithful but more explicit when encountering metaphorical adjectives.



4.2 Simile

Among the figures of speech investigated in this research, simile is the most recurrent in *Inferno*, appearing 170 times. Different similes vary quite remarkably in their length, ranging from less than a line, to six tercets (18 lines). The characteristic that distinguishes a simile from a metaphor is the presence of markers of comparison. In *Inferno*, these are typically *come… così…* 'as… so…' and *quale… tale…* 'as… such…'. Most of the times, these connectives appear at the beginning of a line, in a marked position, while, other times, one or both of them are placed in the middle of a line, in an unmarked position. Occasionally, one of these markers is omitted, so that the reader does not realise that the narration entered a simile. In some cases, a long simile that stretches along more than a tercet contains in itself other similes, usually consisting of one line. While a simile usually expresses a comparison in a positive form, some other times this comparison is expressed in the form of a difference, as

a “dissimilitude”.[40] Dante often uses this rhetoric device in order to express a hyperbolic characteristic, something extraordinary that cannot be contained in a “standard” comparison.[41] For instance:

Né *o* sí tosto mai né *i* si scrisse,
Com’el s’accese ed arse […]

(*Inferno*, XXIV, 100-101)

Nor *o* so quickly e'er, nor *i* was written,
As he took fire, and burned; […]

(Longfellow, 1867)

With regard to the semantic content of similes in *Inferno*, many of them feature images of every-day life, such as snow, dogs, birds or other animals; but they are not limited to these. In fact, especially the longer ones are extremely rich in references to political figures, classical antiquity and the Bible. Therefore, similes do not only have a descriptive and aesthetic function, but their encyclopaedic value is extremely high.

In translating similes, the translators mostly use two techniques. T1 is used for over half of the similes, whose image is retained. Let us see, for example this one-line simile, in which the image of the arrow leaving the bow remains unvaried.

Si dileguò *come da corda cocca*.

(*Inferno*, XVII, 136)

He sped away *as arrow from the string*.

(Longfellow, 1867)

就*像疾矢脱弦*，消失了影踪。

‘As a quick arrow takes off from the bowstring, [he] erased any trace’

(Wong, 2003)

The other widely applied technique is T7: maintaining the same image and adding an explanatory note. While for similes featuring every-day images and activities the translators did not consider necessary to give additional explanation, virtually all of the similes featuring historical or mythological figures needed an explanation that was not included in the main

[40] Esposto, 2017, p. 9
[41] Esposto, 2017, p. 17

text. After all, the original Italian text – in most editions – is also abundant in lengthy notes: Italian readers would also struggle to interpret some passages.

4.2.1 Long similes

The first category is long similes, consisting of one tercet or longer. There are 83 in *Inferno*: almost half of the total. Since most of them allude to historical or mythological figures, or names of places, and the reader is not always familiar with them, it is not surprising that in two thirds of the cases the original image is retained, but an explanatory note is added (T7). For instance:

E qual colui che si vengiò con li orsi
Vide 'l carro d'Elia al dipartire,
Quando i cavalli al cielo erti levorsi,
Che nol potea sí con li occhi seguire,
Ch'el vedesse altro che la fiamma sola,
Sí come nuvoletta, in su salire:
Tal si move ciascuna per la gola
Del fosso, ché nessuna mostra 'l furto,
E ogni fiamma un peccatore invola.

(*Inferno*, XXVI, 34-42)

And such as he who with the bears avenged him
Beheld Elijah's chariot at departing,
What time the steeds to heaven erect uprose,
For with his eye he could not follow it
So as to see aught else than flame alone,
Even as a little cloud ascending upward,
Thus each along the gorge of the intrenchment
Was moving; for not one reveals the theft,
And every flame a sinner steals away.

(Longfellow, 1867)

那位有二熊代为复仇的人物，
在众马骧首腾跃、向天上飞升时，
曾看见以利亚的战车冲上征途；

他的双目在后面追随着一直
仰视，却什么都看不见；只看见烈焰
像一朵小小的云彩向高处飞驰。
深坑的火，也这样在峡谷里面
移动；每一朵都盗走一个
罪人，所盗的赃物不让人看见。
'That figure who has two bears for revenge,
When the galloping horses leaped towards the sky
Saw Elijah's chariot leaving for the journey;
His eyes strove to follow it from behind
Looking up, but nothing was to be seen; only the flame
As a little cloud speeding upwards.
Fire in a deep hole, thus inside the canyon
Was moving; each flame stealing a
Sinner, without allowing people to see the stolen goods'
(Wong, 2003)

The note that Wong adds to this passage is: "第八囊惩罚的，是阳间呈献诈伪的人。这些亡魂，各被一朵火焰包裹。" 'The ones punished in the eighth *bolgia* [one of the ten ditches in the eighth circle of Hell] are the deceivers of people worthy of respect. These spirits are each wrapped in a flame'. This explanation helps the reader understand the content of the simile: the scenario presented in the previous lines is relevant because of the similarity between the flame of Elijah's chariot and the flames that cover the souls. The second most used technique is T1. In these cases, especially when the image of the simile originates from daily life, it is left unchanged. Huang uses T2 in one case:

E come *i gru* van cantando lor lai,
faccendo in aere di sé lunga riga,
cosí vidi venir, traendo guai,
ombre portate dalla detta briga:
(*Inferno*, V, 46-49)
And as *the cranes* go chanting forth their lays,
Making in air a long line of themselves,

So saw I coming, uttering lamentations,

Shadows borne onward by the aforesaid stress.

(Longfellow, 1867)

正像空中排成长列的*大雁*，

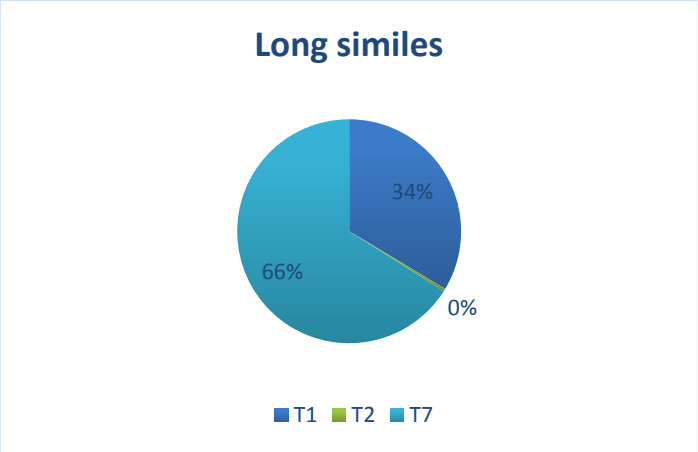
不住发出凄惨的悲鸣，

我听目睹的这些凄厉叫苦的幽魂

也同样被那狂风吹个不停；

(Huang, 2000)

Gru 'crane', the image of this simile, is a bird present both in Europe and in Asia. However, Huang substitutes it with 大雁 'swan goose' or 'wild goose'. This species lives only in China, and is held in high prestige in Chinese culture. In fact, two of the main symbols of the city of Xi'an are the Giant Wild Goose Pagoda (大雁塔) and the Small Wild Goose Pagoda (小雁塔). He probably made this choice in order to give a higher status to this simile, matching with Dante's high linguistic register. Although this kind of substitution can sometimes bring about a series of problems such as anachronisms in the case of historical events, or strong distortions of meanings,[42] in this case the replacement is not only harmless, but it also contributes to dignify the text in an appropriate way.



4.2.2 Pseudosimiles

The second group of similes worthy of a separate discussion are *pseudosimiles*.[43] In a few cases, the translators apply T5 and eliminate the structure as a simile, only conveying the meaning.

[42] Larson, 1984, p. 171

[43] Esposto, 2017, p. 4

Attento si fermò *com'uom che ascolta*

(*Inferno*, IX, 4)

He stopped attentive, *like a man who listens*

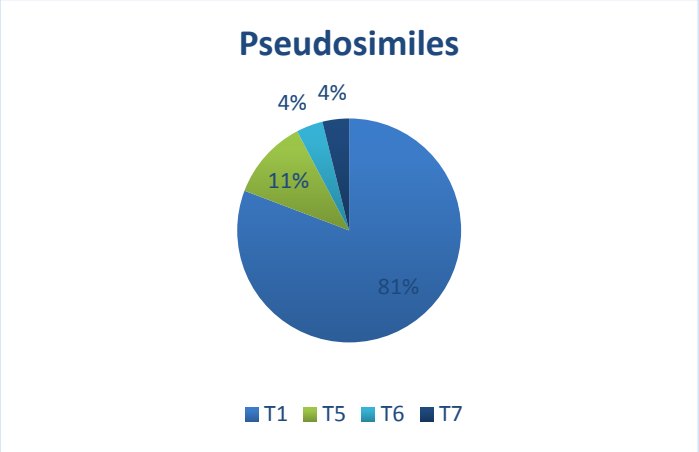
(Longfellow, 1867)

他止住脚步，*像倾听什么似的仔细谛听*

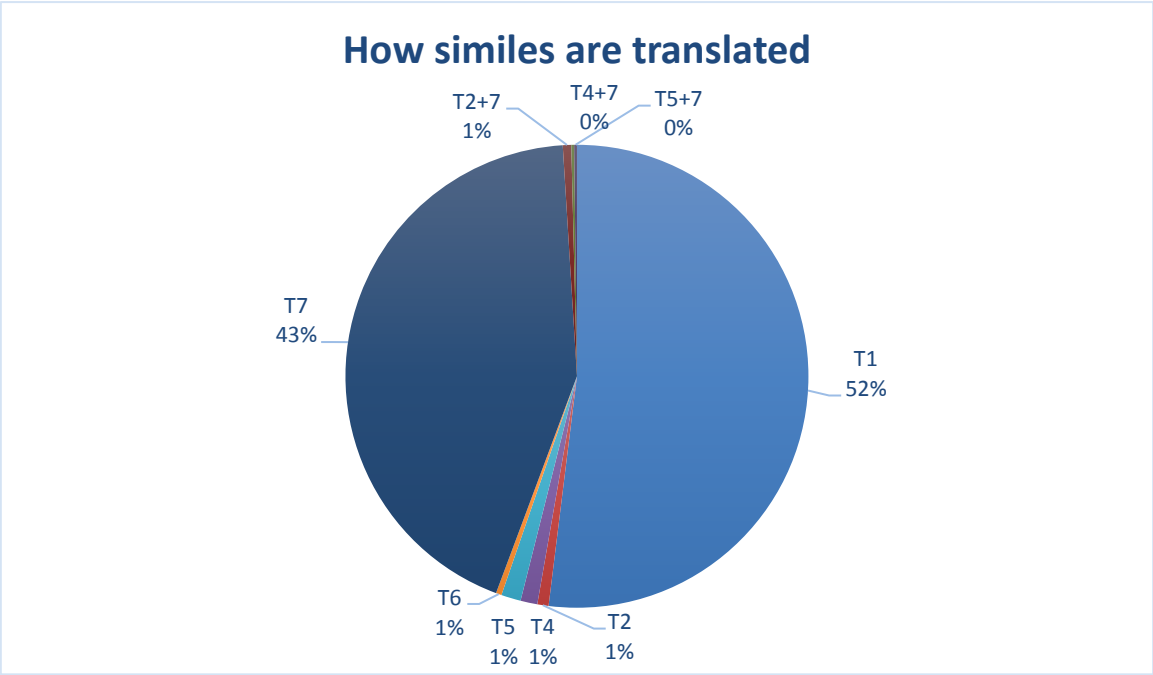
'He stopped walking, and listened attentively as if he was carefully listening to something'

(Huang, 2000)

In this translation, the reference to 'like a man who…' is omitted, and the meaning is given directly. However, in more than 80% of the cases, the simplicity of this kind of simile allowes the translator to use T1. For instance, *Ed elli a me, come persona accorta* 'And he to me, as one experienced' (*Inferno*, III, 13) is translated by Tian and Huang respectively as "他像老练的人似的对我说" 'He said to me, as someone experienced' and "他像一个熟谙此情的人对我说" 'He said to me, as a person familiar with the matter'.



Overall, we can conclude that similes required fewer reductions to meaning (T5) than metaphors – which is quite natural since, as a form of comparison, they are inherently more overt. The translators also translated in a literal way the accessible pseudosimiles, and added a considerable amount of extra textual information when needed.



4.3 Personification

Inferno contains 25 personifications. Many of them consist of only a verb describing a human action that is applied to an inanimate being. Slightly longer personifications are also present, with a maximum length of a tercet. The translators use T1 for more than half of personifications: they probably consider the image to be clear enough for the Chinese readers, with no need to make it more explicit or adding a note. For example: Huang uses T1 in translating *Lo giorno se n'andava* 'Day was departing' (*Inferno*, II, 1) as "白昼在离去" 'daytime was leaving'. In contrast, Tian translates the same line by using T5, thereby dropping the figure of speech and retaining only its meaning. His translation reads "白昼渐渐消逝" 'The day gradually vanished'. T5 is the second most used technique for personifications, accounting for a quarter of the total. In the cases in which it is applied, the translators probably believed that applying such a verb to a non-human being would have sounded strange or would have been unclear. For the same line mentioned above, Wong uses a different strategy: he maintaines the personification, but uses a different image (T2). His translation is "白天在退隐" 'The day was retiring'. The meaning of 退隐 is 'to retire', especially of an official retiring from public life, or to retire from society. This verb is applied to 'the day', therefore it is still a personification, although the literal meaning is different from the original 'to depart'. The same phenomenon occurs later in the same canto.

E tanto buono ardire al cor mi corse,

(*Inferno*, II, 131)

And such good courage to my heart there coursed,

(Longfellow, 1867)

浩浩的勇气沛然流入了心中。

'Vast courage abundantly flowed into my heart'

(Wong, 2003)

The original meaning of *corse* 'ran' is changed into 流入 'to flow', by this means keeping a personification, but with a different image. The translators also use T7 in a number of cases. Interestingly, the translators use T6 (deletion) in more than one occasion. In these cases, neither the figure nor its meaning are reproduced in the translation.

Ed elli a me: «La tua città, ch'è piena
D'invidia sí che già ne trabocca il sacco,
Seco mi tenne in la vita serena. […]»

(*Inferno*, VI, 49-51)

And he to me: «Thy city, which is full
Of envy so that now the sack runs over,
Held me within it in the life serene. […]»

(Longfellow, 1867)

他对我说: «你的城市遍地都是嫉妒，
在我活在那明朗的人世时，
它已经是恶贯满盈。[…]»

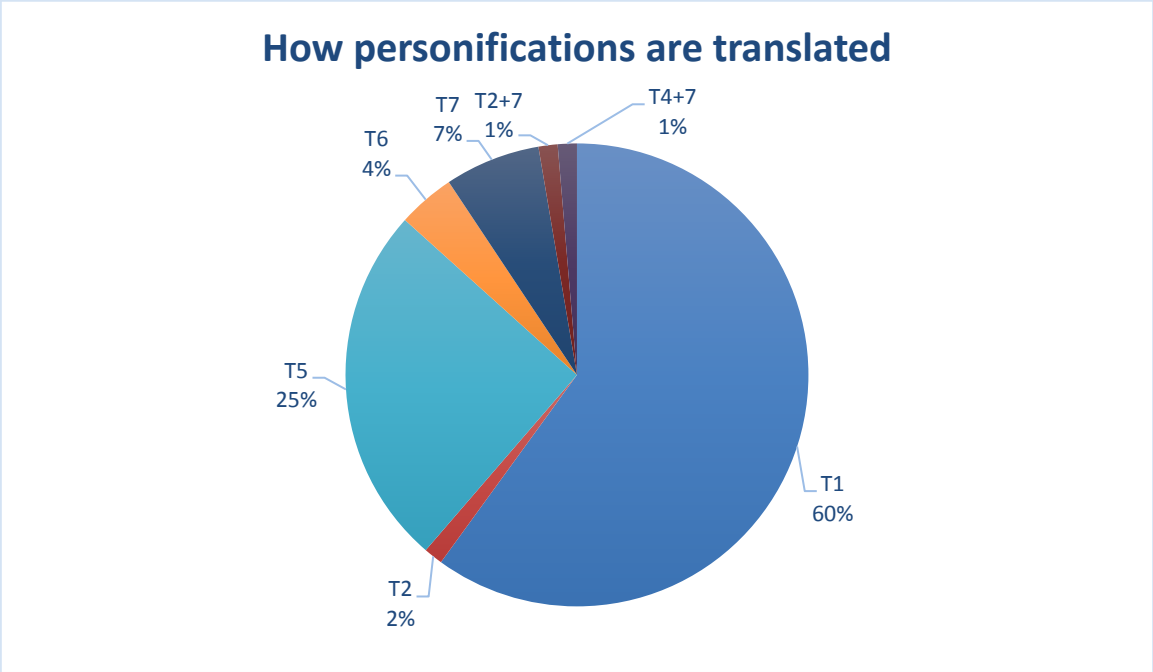
'He told me: «Your city is full of envy,
When I was living in that bright world,
It was already filled with evil. […]»'

(Huang, 2000)

La tua città 'your city' is translated literally, but the personification two lines later, *Seco mi tenne* 'Held me within it', is not rendered in the translation. Instead, Huang uses the phrase "在我活在那明朗的人世时" 'when I was living in the serene world', without reference to the fact that he was living in that same city.

Overall, the most used techniques for personification are T1, T5 and T7, with a strong preference for T1. This shows that, despite the initial feeling of bewilderment that these

figures can arise in the reader – who does not expect inanimate beings to perform human actions – the translators kept the figures as literal as possible, trying not to diminish the emotional power.



4.4 Metonymy

Among the selected figures of speech, metonymy is the third most common, with 92 occurrences. Metonymies in *Inferno* include different kinds: the cause instead of the effect and vice versa, the material from which an object is made instead of the object itself, a symbol instead of what it symbolizes, an abstract concept instead of something concrete and vice versa. In more than half of the occurrences, the translators apply T5, thereby eliminating the metonymic figure, but conveying its meaning.

E l'animose man del duca e pronte
Mi pinser *tra le sepulture* a lui,

(*Inferno*, X, 37-38)

And with courageous hands and prompt my Leader
Thrust me *between the sepulchres* towards him,

(Longfellow, 1867)

我的向导的勇气、敏捷的手把我*从那些坟墓中间*向他眼前推去

'My guide's brave and agile hands moved me away *from between those tombs*, and brought me before his eyes'

(Tian, 1990)

Sepulture 'burial' refers to the act of burying a corpse in the ground, but in this case – metonymically – it indicates the tombs. This is a case of an abstract concept substituting something concrete. The Chinese translation (as well as the English one by Longfellow above) reduces the metonymy to its meaning, by using 坟墓 'tomb'. The second preferred technique for metonymy is T1: the metonymic image is simply retained. This is a case of two metonymies occurring in the same line.

Questi non ciberà né *terra* né *peltro*

(*Inferno*, I, 103)

He shall not feed on either *earth* or *pelf*

(Longfellow, 1867)

这猎狗，不吃*土地*，不吃*铜臭*

'This hound, doesn't eat *soil*, doesn't eat *the stink of money*'

(Wong, 2003)

Wong translates the first metonymy, *terra* 'land' – in which the concrete substitutes the abstract – using T1, as "土地" 'land'. In contrast, he translates the second metonymy, *peltro* 'pewter' (the material instead of the object) using technique T4+7. I classify this technique as T4 because alludes to the material (铜 'copper') – thereby remaining almost literal to the original metonymy – but at the same time it hints at the negative meaning attached to money with 臭 'stinky'. In addition, a note is added; therefore, it is T4+7. The note explains that a direct translation of the original *peltro* would have been "白镴" 'pewter', and that this was a common material to produce coins. As in this case, a note is sometimes added to a literal translation of other metonymies, making T7 the third preferred technique. In some cases, the translators choose T4, thereby adding the meaning to the original metonymic image. In translating *chiudere le labbra* 'close his lips' (*Inferno*, XVI, 125), Tian chooses to use the same image, and add the meaning: "闭口不谈" 'close the mouth and not talk' (although it is noteworthy that this is an existing 4-character expression used in Chinese).

4.4.1 *Seme* 'seed' for 'origin'

The first category within metonymies consists of those that use the word *seme* 'seed' to refer to someone's origin. More than half of the occurrences are reduced to meaning (T5),

and the others are either translated literally (T1), or reduced to meaning and a note is added (T5+7). I now present an example of each.

Huang uses T5 in translating *il mal seme d'Adamo* 'the evil seed of Adam' (*Inferno*, III, 115) as "亚当的这些不肖子孙" 'These unworthy descendants of Adam', thereby maintaining the same meaning, but removing the metonymy. We can see an example of T1 in Wong's translation.

Gridò: «Ricordera'ti anche del Mosca,
Che dissi, lasso! ' Capo ha cosa fatta',
Che fu *'l mal seme* per la gente tosca.»
(*Inferno*, XXVIII, 106-108)

Cried out: «Thou shalt remember Mosca also,
Who said, alas! 'A thing done has an end!'
Which was *an ill seed* for the Tuscan people. »
(Longfellow, 1867)

他在叫喊：« 你也该记得莫斯卡吧，
可怜的人哪！他曾说过：'把他干掉算了。'
这就给托斯卡纳人播下了*灾难的种子*。»
'He shouted: «You should remember Mosca,
Poor man! He said: 'Just get rid of him.'
This spread *the seed of disaster* on the Tuscan people.»'
(Wong, 2003)

The same image is retained by the use of "灾难的种子" 'the seeds of disaster'. We can see an example of T5+7 in Tian's translation.

Ahi Pistoia, Pistoia, ché non stanza
D'incenerarti sí che piú non duri,
Poi che in mal far *lo seme tuo* avanzi?
(*Inferno*, XXV, 10-12)

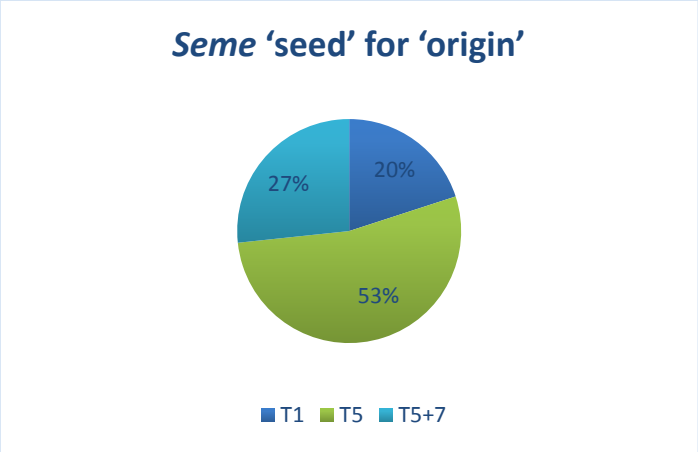
Pistoia, ah, Pistoia! why resolve not
To burn thyself to ashes and so perish,
Since in ill-doing thou *thy seed* excellest?
(Longfellow, 1867)

啊，皮斯托娅，皮斯托娅，既然你作恶超过*你的祖先*，为什么你不决定使自己化为灰烬，不再存在呢？

'Ah, Pistoia, Pistoia, since the evil you did exceeded *your ancestors*, why don't you decide to let yourself become ashes and cease to exist?'

(Tian, 1990)

The extra-textual note explains the figure of Catilina, who founded the city of Pistoia and is thus considered the ancestor of its citizens. Tian chooses to make the text more intelligible by both converting the metonymy into literal language, and by giving additional information, allowing the reader to better understand the context of these lines.



4.4.2 *Mano destra/sinistra* 'right/left hand' for directions

A second category involves those metonymies that use *mano destra/sinistra* 'right/left hand' or, in a few cases, a slightly different expression, to indicate a direction (a case of the concrete instead of the abstract). For all the 9 occurrences of this expression, all three translators use T5 (which means that T5 is used 25 times in total), except for a case in which Wong uses T4, and a case in which Huang adds a note after reducing the figure to its meaning (T5+7). This is how the figure is typically translated, through T5.

Noi ci volgemmo ancor pur *a man manca*

(*Inferno*, XXIII, 68)

Again we turned us, still *to the left hand*

(Longfellow, 1867)

我们仍然只是*向左转*

'We turned *left*, as before'

(Huang, 2000)

In contrast, Wong uses T4 for the same line.

我们再度*朝左手的方向拐弯*

'Once more, we made a turn *to the direction of the left hand*'

(Wong, 2003)

He retaines the same image (the 'left hand'), and adds the meaning, by using 方向 'direction'.

4.4.3 *Occhi* 'eyes' for 'gaze'

Another grouping within metonymies concerns those that employ the word *occhi* 'eyes' to mean 'gaze': again, the concrete instead of the abstract. These metonymies are largely reduced to meaning (T5). Sometimes translated literally (T1), and in a few cases a note is added (T7). We can see a reduction to meaning in the following example.

Già era dritta in su la fiamma e queta

[…]

Quand'un'altra, che dietro a lei venìa,

Ne fece *volger li occhi* alla sua cima

(*Inferno*, XXVII, 1-5)

Already was the flame erect and quiet,

[…]

When yet another, which behind it came,

Caused us to *turn our eyes* upon its top

(Longfellow, 1867)

这时，火焰已经寂然竖起，

[…]

另一朵火，正从它后面来臻，

[…]

使我们向它的尖端*注目凝神*。

'In this moment, the flame was already quiet and erect,

[…]

Another flame, arrived from right behind it,

[…]

And made us *gaze and fix our attention* on its pointed end'

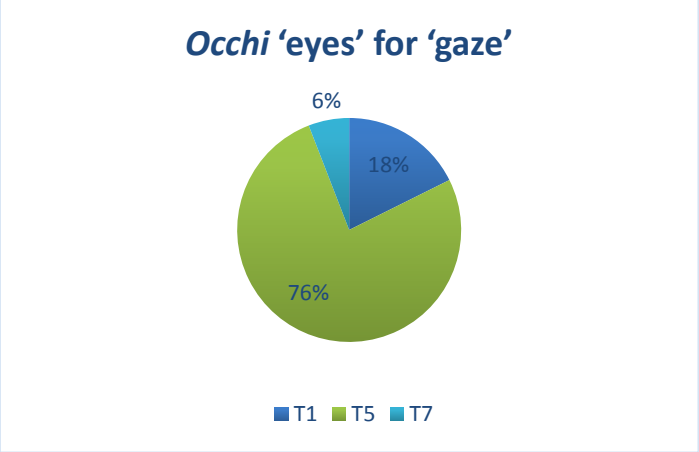
(Wong, 2003)

In this translation, Wong uses the two expressions 瞩目 and 凝神, which both mean 'to gaze at, to fix one's attention', eliminating the image of the eyes, and only conveying the meaning. The second most used technique, T1, is exemplified by Tian's translation of the same lines.

我们*把眼睛转过去*向着它的尖顶

'We *turned our eyes* to its pinnacle'

(Tian, 1990)



4.4.4 *Lingua* 'tongue' for 'speech'

The fourth category of metonymies pertains to those that use *lingua* 'tongue' to refer to something related to speech. The translators employ various techniques to translate them. A third of these are translated through T4, a third through T5, and the remaining through T7 and T5+7. This is an example of T4.

Ma piú al duolo *aveva la lingua sciolta*.

(Inferno, XIV, 27)

But had *their tongues more loosed* to lamentation.

(Longfellow, 1867)

但他们的舌头却更便于哀呼惨叫

'But *their tongues were even more prone* to scream in sorrow'

(Huang, 2000)

4.4.5 *Legno* 'wood' for 'boat'

The last category involves those metonymies that use *legno* 'wood' to stand for 'boat': a use of the material instead of the object. The three translators use T5 for all of the occurrences. This figure was probably considered too obscure for the Chinese reader; therefore, it is substituted with literal language.

Tosto che 'l duca e io *nel legno fui*

(*Inferno*, VIII, 28)

Soon as the Guide and I were *in the boat*

(Longfellow, 1867)

老师和我方才*在船上*坐定

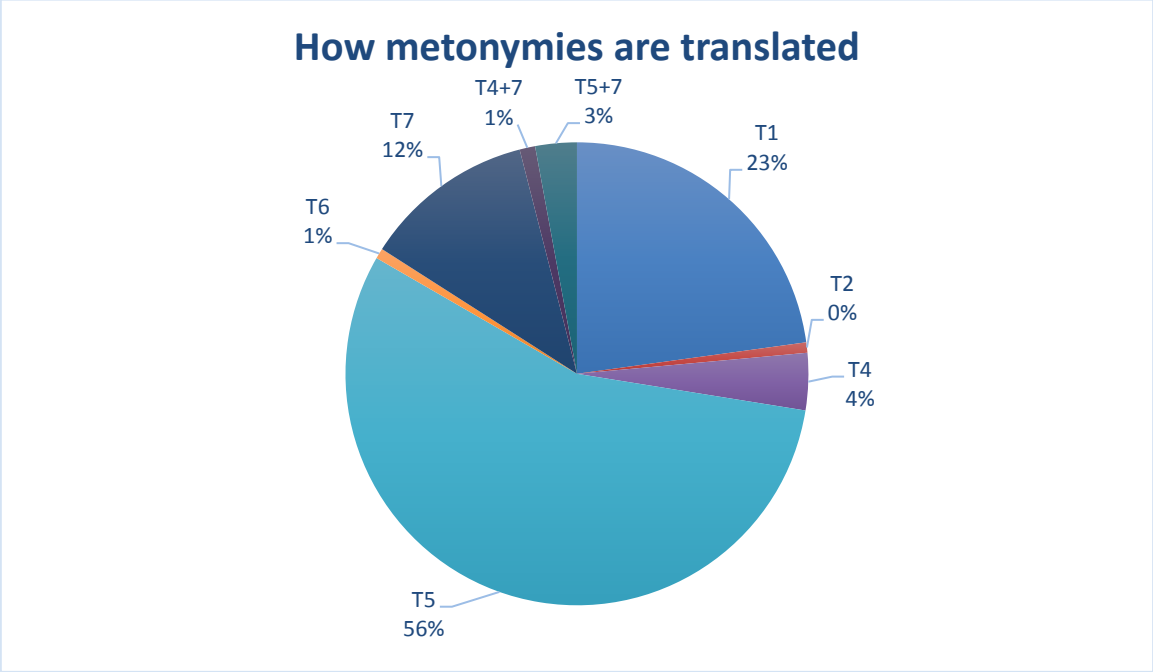
'The Master and I then sat *on the boat*'

(Huang, 2000)

Nel legno is literally 'in the wood': the English translation also reduces the figure to its meaning).

Overall, we can remark that metonymies were largely reduced to their meaning, and the vast use of T5 suggests that the translators considered these images too cryptic to remain unchanged in Chinese. This is understandable; however, one could argue that the metonymies in the original Italian text are just as cryptic as they would have been in a literal Chinese translation. 'Wood' does not immediately make the modern Italian reader think of a boat, for instance. However, the same metonymy, i.e. the use of the word 'wood' to mean 'boat' was used in other poems known to Dante's contemporaries, such as the Odyssey. A possibly viable solution for remaining more faithful to the original – at least for the recurring metonymies – would have been to add a note to the first of these occurrences explaining what it refers to (i.e. use T7 once), and then translating all of them literally through T1, once the reader is able to decipher the figure.[44]

[44] Reiss, 2004, p. 77



4.5 Synecdoche

In *Inferno* there are 26 synecdoche. This figure is based on a relation of quantity between what is written and what is meant: a part is used to represent the whole or vice versa. As mentioned earlier, I leave those occurrences in which Dante uses the singular instead of the plural (and vice versa) out of the scope of this research, because Chinese does not make this distinction. Only one translator, in one occurrence, decides to mark this difference and retain this figure.

Quando fu l'aere sí pien di malizia
Che li animali, infino al *picciol vermo*,
Cascaron tutti […]

(*Inferno*, XXIX, 60-62)

When was the air so full of pestilence,
The animals, down to the *little worm*,
All fell […]

(Longfellow, 1867)

[…] 空气中充满了有毒的细菌，
[…]
所有动物，甚至*一只小小的蠕虫*，
也全都中毒倒下 […]

‘[…] The air was full of poisonous bacteria,

[…]

All the animals, even *a small worm*,

Collapsed because of the poison […]’

(Huang, 2000)

In this case, Huang specifies that there is only one single worm. In contrast, in all the other cases, it is impossible to distinguish between the singular and plural form. Without considering these occurrences, *Inferno* contains 19 synecdoche. The most used techniques for translating them are T1 and T5. This is an example of Huang retaining the same image.

«[…] Vedi la bestia per cu’ io mi volsi:

[…] ella mi fa tremare *le vene e i polsi*».

(*Inferno*, I, 88-90)

«[…] Behold the beast, for which I have turned back;

[…] she doth make *my veins and pulses* tremble».

(Longfellow, 1867)

«[…] 你看那头猛兽，它迫使我退后，

[…] 它使*我的血管和脉搏*都在不断颤抖。»

‘«[…] Look at that beast, it forced me to turn back,

[…] it made *my veins and pulses* shiver relentlessly.»’

(Huang, 2000)

This synecdoche uses *le vene e i polsi* ‘veins and pulses’ to mean the whole body, which trembles at the sight of a beast. We can see now an example of T5.

Ciò c'ha veduto pur *con la mia rima*,

(*Inferno*, XIII, 48)

What only *in my verses* he has seen,

(Longfellow, 1867)

他仅只在*我的诗里*所看到的情况

‘The circumstances he only saw *in my poems*’

(Tian, 1990)

La mia rima ‘my rhyme’ here stands for the poems that the speaker (Virgilius) wrote. Note that Longfellow’s English translation is not literal either. In some occasions, T7 is also used,

thereby clarifying the original image, which was maintained. The translators also use T4 in some instances; for example, Wong in the same line as the example in the previous page.

«[…] 你看这畜生，逼得我要折回来。

她使*我的血脉悸动加快*。»

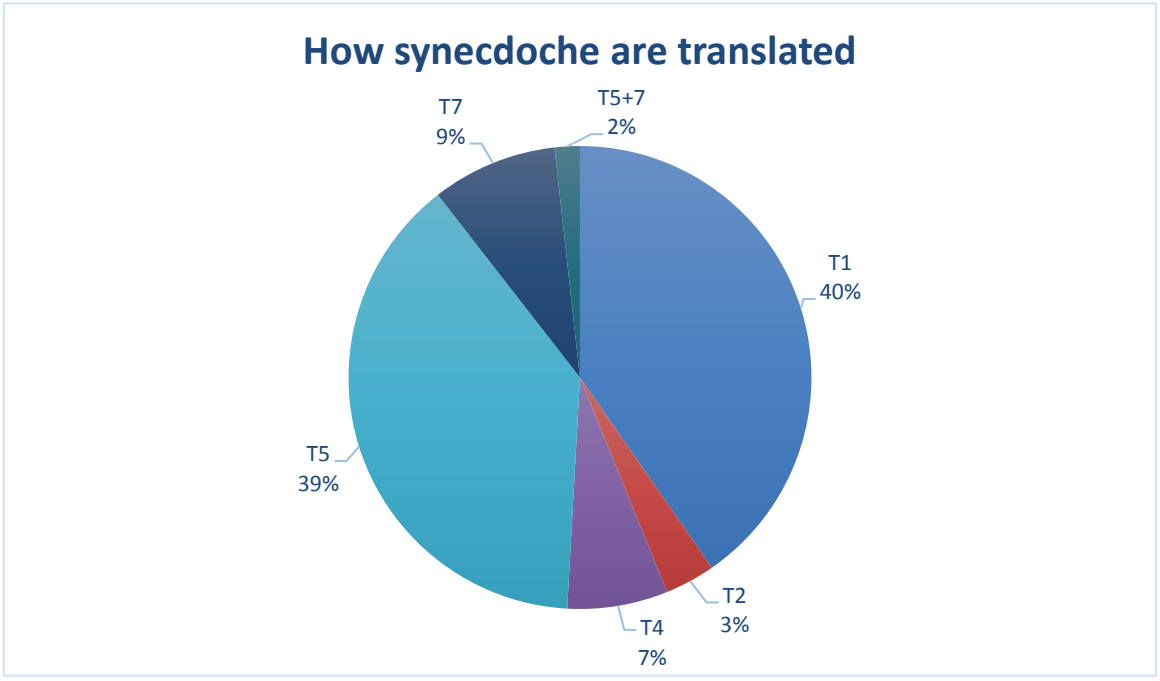
'«[…] Look at this beast, it forced me to turn back.

She made my blood vessels palpitate faster from nervousness»'

(Wong, 2003)

Wong decides to keep the image by saying "我的血脉" 'blood vessels', and at the same time be more explicit about the meaning, through "悸动" 'palpitate from nervousness', which makes overt the reason why he is trembling.

On the whole, we can conclude that synecdoche were mostly left unchanged or reduced to meaning. The translators judged how easy (or difficult) it would have been for the reader to understand the meaning of the figure, and decided whether it was clear enough, or whether it had be erased, in favour of its meaning.



4.6 Synaesthesia

There are only two synaesthesia in *Inferno*, making it by far the least frequent figure of speech, among the ones researched. However, it is interesting to note that all three translators used the same technique for both synaesthesia: T7. Thanks to the scarcity of this figure, I am able

to display both examples in full. Both synaesthesia make use of a verb referred to the sense of hearing, applied to the sense of sight.

[…] là dove *il sol tace*

(*Inferno*, I, 60)

[…] thither where *the sun is silent*

(Longfellow, 1867)

These are the renderings of Tian "太阳沉寂的方向" 'The direction where the sun is quiet', Huang "那里连太阳也变得悄然无声" 'There, even the sun became absolutely quiet', and Wong "太阳不做声的地方" 'The place where the sun doesn't make a sound'. The translators probably deemed important to keep the emotional power that this figure carries. For Dante, the absence of light in Hell is a key feature, and this image helps to stress this further. Tian, Huang and Wong believed that this was an image worth explaining further. In their notes, they clarify that here a verb referred to the sense of hearing is used to refer to sight, and that the meaning it conveys is that of absence of light. Wong even quotes the name of this figure, both in Chinese and English. This is the second occurrence.

Io venni in luogo *d'ogni luce muto*,

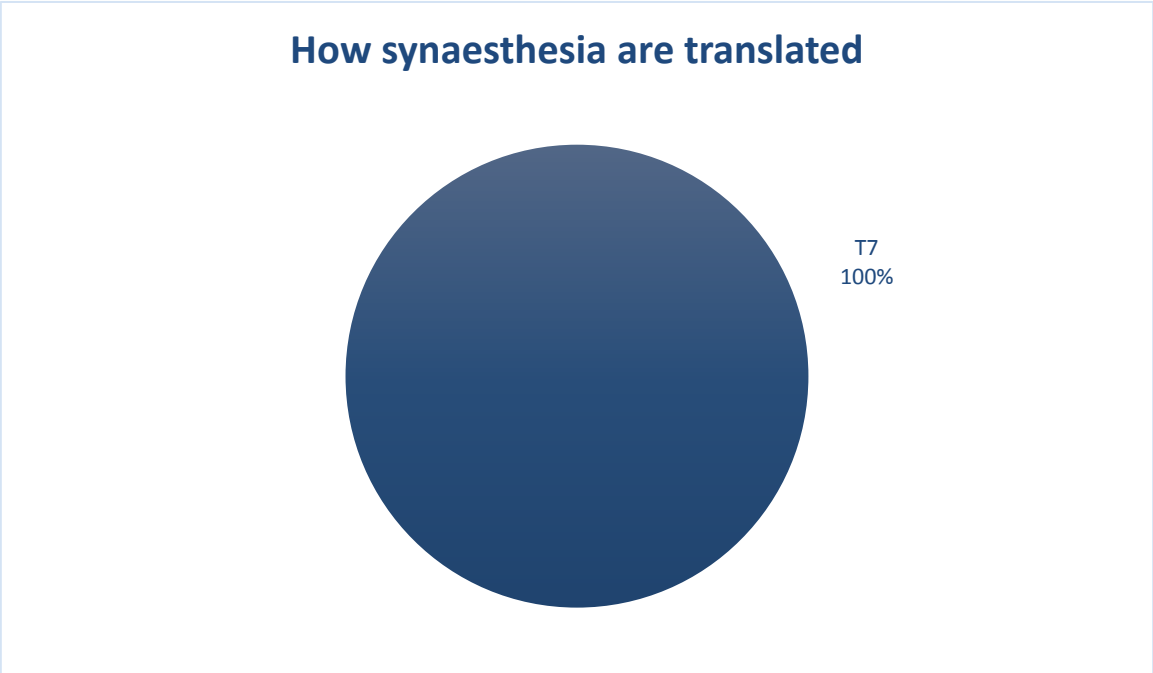
(*Inferno*, V, 28)

I came into a place *mute of all light*,

(Longfellow, 1867)

Tian translates this as "我来到一切光全都喑哑的地方" 'I arrived in a place where all light is mute', Huang as "我来到连光线也变得喑哑的地方" 'I arrived in a place where even light became mute', and Wong as "我来到一个众光喑哑的场所" 'I arrived in a place where a multitude of rays is mute'. All three translators' notes make remarks similar to the previous occurrence, and they refer to it for comparison.

Although, due to the exiguity of this figure, it is not possible to make as many general remarks as with the other figures, it is interesting to see that the translators gave importance not only to the descriptive level of this figure, but also to its emotional power, and made sure to make it intelligible for the readers.



4.7 Use of the techniques

Here I present some remarks from the point of view of each translation technique. Overall, considering all figures of speech together, the most used techniques are T1 (39% of occurrences), T5 (24%) and T7 (28%). The rest of the techniques together makes up for the remaining 9%. T1 (the figure is translated by using the same image) is widely used for all the figures, except for synaesthesia. T2 (the figure is translated by using a different image) is used mainly for metaphor, but also for simile, metonymy and synecdoche. T3 (a metaphor is transposed into a simile) is, of course, only used for metaphors. T4 (the figure is translated literally, and the meaning is added) is mainly used for metaphor and metonymy, and to some extent for simile and synecdoche. T5 (the figure is reduced to its meaning) is used mostly for metonymy, but also for synecdoche, metaphor and personification. T6 (the figure is deleted) is used more frequently for personification and metaphor, and for some metonymies and similes. T7 (the figure is translated by using the same image, and a footnote is added) is mainly used for synaesthesia, simile, and metaphor, and for all the other figures in a smaller amount. The techniques 2+7, 3+7 and 4+7 revealed necessary to be included, in order to accurately

describe some occurrences. However, they were only rarely used: that is why they are not especially mentioned in the analysis by figure of speech, which focuses on the most frequently used techniques. T2+7 (the figure is translated by using a different image, and a footnote is added) is used 5 times in total, 3 of which for simile. If we combine this with the fact that T2 is used 4 times for simile, we can observe that the translators opted to substitute the original images with a different one, with or without adding a note, more frequently in similes in respect to other figures. T3+7 (a metaphor is transposed into a simile, and a footnote is added) is used, of course only for metaphors, 3 times, making this the least used technique. T4+7 (the figure is translated with the same image and the meaning is made explicit, and a footnote is added) is adopted 7 times in total, spread across different figures, and Tian uses it more often than other translators do. Finally, T5+7 (the figure is reduced to its meaning, and a footnote is added) is used mostly for metaphor and metonymy.

4.8 Differences among translators

Although the differences among translators are not especially stark, it is noteworthy that some differences are present, especially in respect to the three most used techniques (T1, T5 and T7), and T6. Wong uses T1 (retaining the same image) less frequently than the other translators do, preferring T7 instead (same image and adding a note). This shows that he preferred to remain as close as possible to the original text, while at the same time making sure that the reader understands the text, through the note. Tian uses T5 (reducing the image to its meaning) less frequently than the other two translators. He does not compensate for this by using more often another technique in particular. Remarkably, he is also the only translator who never uses T6, thereby never eliminating completely any figure. Lastly, Huang does not use T7 as often as Tian and Wong. His translation has fewer notes than the other two, preferring to reduce a figure to its meaning (T5) rather than maintaining the same image and adding a note (T7).

Conclusion

This research investigated the translation techniques adopted by three translators of Dante's *Inferno*, with a focus on figures of speech related to the meaning of words, namely: metaphor, simile, metonymy, synecdoche, personification and synaesthesia.

I used text analysis in identifying the figures of speech in the source text and in the corresponding passages in the translations. I identified which of the translation techniques was used for each occurrence, by each translator. I labelled each translation according to the techniques previously determined. I analysed the data and, through inductive reasoning, I commented on it primarily from the point of view of each figure of speech, but also from the perspective of the translation techniques, and of each translator. The research question was: which translation techniques are employed when translating figures of speech related to meaning in *Inferno*, and which conclusions can be drawn about them? For metaphors, the translators mostly kept the same image, with or without adding a note (T1 and T7), or favoured the meaning, erasing the image (T5). They also leaned towards the use of one technique rather than another based on the specific type of metaphor, adding more notes than usual when the image comes from astronomy, or being faithful but more explicit when encountering metaphorical adjectives. Similes required fewer reductions to meaning (T5) than metaphors – which is quite natural since, as a form of comparison, they are inherently more overt. While for most of them it was sufficient to maintain the same image (T1), in many more cases than for metaphor, the translators deemed necessary to add an explanatory note (T7). That is to say, when T1 was not a viable option, for metaphors a reduction to meaning was common, while for similes, the preferred choice was adding a note to the original image. For personifications, T1 was used considerably more than for the other figures. This shows that the translators were able to keep the emotional power of this figure and translate it faithfully to the original, although sometimes it required to be reduced to its meaning (T5). This technique, T5, was widely used for all kinds of metonymy, which were often considered too obscure for the Chinese readership, although in some cases the translators were able to keep the same image (T1). Similarly, these two techniques (T5 and T1) were the preferred for synecdoche, in a similar proportion with each other. In contrast, all occurrences of synaesthesia required extra textual information (T7), thereby letting the reader appreciate the poetic image, and at the same time providing an explanation for it. Overall, the most

frequently used techniques for translating figures of speech were T1, T5 and T7. This shows that all the translators gave importance to the literal meaning of the images, and tried to stay as faithful as possible to the original text. When this was not possible, they either added extra textual information to help the reader understand the image, or, as a third choice, erased the image in favour of its meaning. In conclusion, although sometimes the translators had to make the figures of speech more explicit, their meaning was (almost) never lost.

This study showed the choices made by the Chinese translators of the *Divine Comedy*, and attempted to explain their rationale and implications. Although I examined three different translations, I did not find stark differences among them. In future research, it would be interesting to examine dissimilarities among translators more in depth, perhaps comparing translations belonging to different eras. Moreover, a possible focus for future research would be on figures of sound rather than meaning. Wong offers a starting point in his article *Translating the Divina Commedia for the Chinese Reading Public in the Twenty-First Century*.

Lastly, I would like to appreciate the translators' efforts in overcoming the translation difficulties that figures of speech present. Despite centuries of cultural and language changes, they were overall successful in being faithful to the source text, and let the Chinese readers appreciate the beauty of this classic of world literature, also through its figures of speech.

Primary sources

Alighieri, D. (1970). *La Divina Commedia* (Vol. Inferno). (N. Sapegno, A cura di) Florence: La Nuova Italia Editrice.

Huang, W. (2005). *La Divina Commedia 神曲 (trans.)* (Vol. Inferno 地狱篇). Beijing: 译林出版社 Yì lín chūbǎn shè. The first edition is from the year 2000.

Tian, D. (2008). *La Divina Commedia 神曲 (trans.)* (Vol. Inferno 地狱篇). Beijing: 人民文学出版社 Rénmín wénxué chūbǎn shè. The first edition is from the year 1990.

Wong, L. (2009). *La Divina Commedia 神曲 (trans.)* (Vol. Inferno 地狱篇). Beijing: 外语教学与研究出版社 Wàiyǔ jiàoxué yǔ yánjiū chūbǎn shè. The first edition is from the year 2003.

Bibliography

Baker, M., & Saldanha, G. (2010). *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (2 ed.). Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

Bassnett, S. (2004). *Translation Studies* (3 ed.). Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

Bojović, B. (2014). Strategies of Metaphor Translation. *ELTA Journal, 2*(2), 74-81.

Dartmouth College. (n.d.). *Reader - Dante Lab at Dartmouth College*. Retrieved from http://dantelab.dartmouth.edu/reader

Esposto, D. (2017). Le Similitudini nella Divina Commedia. Una Proposta di Classificazione e di Marcatura in TEI XML. *Testo & Senso, 18*, 1-20.

Fadaee, E. (2011). Translation techniques of figures of speech: A case study of George Orwell's "1984 and Animal Farm". *Journal of English and Literature, 2*(8), 174-181.

Katan, D. (2004). *Translating cultures. An introduction for Translators, Interpreters and Mediators.* Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors We Live By.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Larson, M. L. (1984). *Meaning-based Translation: A Guide to Cross-language Equivalence.* Lanham: University Press of America, Inc.

Lefevere, A. (1992). *Translation/History/Culture.* London and New York: Routledge.

Longfellow, H. W. (1867). *La Divina Commedia (trans.).* Boston: Ticknor and Fields.

Masroor, F. (2016). Problems in Translating Figures of Speech: A Review of Persian Translations of Harry Potter Series. *International Journal of English Language & Translation Studies, 4*(4), 131-143.

Morneau, R. (1993). *Designing an Artificial Language: Metaphor*. Electronic source. Retrieved from http://www.rickmor.x10.mx/metaphor.html

Nembrini, F. (2017). *In Cammino con Dante.* Milano: Garzanti.

Newmark, P. (1988). *A Textbook of Translation.* Hemel Hempstead: Simon & Schuster International Group.

Newmark, P. (2001). *Approaches to Translation.* Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

Nolan, J. (2005). Figures of Speech. In *Interpretation: Techniques and Exercises* (pp. 67-116). Great Britain: Cromwell Press Ltd.

Perrine, L. (1974). *Literature: Structure, Sound and Sense.* (2nd ed.). New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Pragglejaz Group. (2007). MIP: A Method for Identifying Metaphorically Used Words in Discourse. *Metaphor and Symbol, 22*(1), 1-39.

Raffa, G. P. (2009). *The Complete Danteworlds: A Reader's Guide to the Divine Comedy.* Chicago: Chicago Univerisity Press.

Reiss, K. (2004). *Translation Criticism. The Potentials and Limitations.* (3 ed.). Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

Shuttleworth, M. (2014). *Translation Studies and Metaphor Studies: Possible Paths of Interaction.* London: School of European Languages, Culture and Society, University College London.

Snell-Hornby, M. (2006). *The Turns of Translation Studies: New Paradigms or Shifting Viewpoints?* Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Venuti, L. (2012). *Translation Studies Reader.* London: Taylor & Francis Group.

Wiedenhof, J. (2015). *A Grammar of Mandarin.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Wong, L. (2008). Translating the Divina Commedia for the Chinese Reading Public in the Twenty-First Century. *TTR: traduction, terminologie, rédaction, 21*(2), 191–220.

Appendix A: metaphors

This is where the figures of speech are found in the original Italian *Inferno*. The Roman number refers to the *canto* and the following Arab number refers to the line.

Canto I: 4, 5, 7, 13, 20, 43, 79, 80, 82, 103, 119, 126

Canto II: 4, 8, 67, 96, 108

Canto III: 12, 104, 109

Canto IV: 65, 95, 118

Canto V: 83

Canto VI: 50, 65, 68, 74, 88

Canto VII: 18, 64, 91, 98

Canto VIII: 2, 7, 56, 107, 110

Canto IX: 122

Canto X: 40, 69 (x2), 78, 82, 93, 95, 130, 132

Canto XI: 72, 96, 105, 109, 113

Canto XII: 55

Canto XIII: 55 (x2), 57

Canto XIV: 92, 100

Canto XV: 1, 55, 56, 65, 71, 72, 73, 88, 114

Canto XVI: 6, 43, 61

Canto XVII: 61, 134

Canto XVIII: 8, 118, 126

Canto IXX: 57, 118

Canto XX: 102, 124

Canto XXII: 58, 90

Canto XXIV: 1, 5, 13, 21, 79, 124, 126, 132

Canto XXV: 27, 96

Canto XXVI: 2, 72, 118, 125, 130

Canto XXVII: 3, 26, 75

Canto XXVIII: 74, 93, 127

Canto IXXX: 10, 25, 41, 43, 139,

Canto XXX: 8

Canto XXXI: 61, 69

Canto XXXII: 108, 114

Canto XXXIII: 7, 27, 96

Appendix B: similes

Canto I: 7, 22, 55

Canto II: 37, 48, 127, 132

Canto III: 13, 30, 47, 112, 117, 136

Canto IV: 2, 109

Canto V: 29, 40, 46, 82, 126, 141, 142

Canto VI: 19, 28, 36

Canto VII: 13, 22, 84

Canto VIII: 13, 22, 50

Canto IX: 4, 67, 76, 101, 112

Canto XI: 104

Canto XII: 4, 15, 22, 57

Canto XIII: 40, 45, 99, 112, 126

Canto XIV: 14, 29, 31, 38, 79, 99

Canto XV: 4, 18, 21, 45, 121

Canto XVI: 3, 22, 78, 87, 88, 94, 133

Canto XVII: 17, 18, 19, 21, 27, 49, 62, 63, 74, 85, 100, 104, 106, 109, 127, 136

Canto XVIII: 10, 14, 28

Canto IXX: 16, 28, 49, 58, 85

Canto XX: 8

Canto XXI: 7, 25, 44, 55, 67, 94

Canto XXII: 19, 25, 32, 36, 56, 130

Canto XXIII: 2, 6, 10, 17, 37, 46, 51, 100

Canto XXIV: 1, 11, 25, 50, 85, 100, 106, 112

Canto XXV: 19, 58, 61, 79, 81, 84, 90

Canto XXVI: 25, 34, 39, 87, 89

Canto XXVII: 7, 53, 94

Canto XXVIII: 7, 111, 122

Canto IXXX: 46, 51, 58

Canto XXX: 1, 13, 20, 22, 26, 49, 92, 136

Canto XXXI: 4, 34, 58, 136, 145

Canto XXXII: 23, 25, 31, 36, 49, 50, 127, 131

Canto XXXIII: 78, 98, 100

Canto XXXVI: 4, 12, 15, 47, 49, 56, 80, 83

Appendix C: personifications

Canto I: 17, 48

Canto II: 1, 131

Canto III: 4, 50, 107, 114

Canto V: 51, 69, 100

Canto VI: 1, 51

Canto IX: 62, 71

Canto XII: 53, 133

Canto XIII: 64

Canto XIV: 1

Canto XV: 6

Canto XVI: 67, 124

Canto XVII: 89

Canto XVIII: 125

Canto XXV: 90

Appendix D: metonymies

Canto I: 54, 103 (x2), 109

Canto III: 1, 50, 93, 115, 132, 133, 134

Canto IV: 8, 102

Canto V: 133

Canto VI: 35

Canto VII: 17

Canto VIII: 28, 65, 77

Canto IX: 16, 32, 110, 132, 133

Canto X: 4, 34, 38, 94, 133

Canto XI: 40, 72, 102

Canto XII: 33, 46, 132

Canto XIII: 6, 63 (x2), 73, 106, 113

Canto XIV: 10, 11, 27

Canto XV: 8

Canto XVI: 39, 125

Canto XVII: 2, 31, 42

Canto XVIII: 4, 22, 48

Canto IXX: 41

Canto XX: 109, 111, 119, 121

Canto XXI: 9, 11, 66, 98, 132

Canto XXII: 21, 30

Canto XXIII: 68, 85, 98, 110, 129

Canto XXIV: 131

Canto XXV: 12, 49, 105

Canto XXVI: 60, 101, 110, 138

Canto XXVII: 5, 50

Canto XXVIII: 108

Canto IXXX: 2, 53, 134

Canto XXX: 2, 47

Canto XXXI: 1, 15

Canto XXXIII: 56, 87

Canto XXXVI: 28

Appendix E: synecdoche

Canto I: 84, 90

Canto II:

Canto III: 83, 97, 118

Canto V: 88

Canto VII: 7, 27

Canto IX: 133

Canto X: 75 (x2), 87

Canto XII: 109

Canto XIII: 4, 48

Canto XV: 20

Canto XVI: 32

Canto XVII: 1

Canto XVIII: 60

Canto XXI: 34

Canto XXIII: 52

Canto XXIV: 43

Canto XXVIII: 119

Canto IXXX: 61

Canto XXXI: 68

Canto XXXII: 42

Appendix F: synaesthesia

Canto I: 60

Canto V: 28