The Pedagogy of Corpus-aided English-Chinese Translation from a Critical & Creative Perspective

Qingliang Meng
College of Applied Technology, Jiaxing University, Jiaxing, China;
School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics, University College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland

Abstract—With the advancement of corpus linguistics, there has been an increasing interest in using corpora as a tool for translator training and translation practice. Despite the usefulness of corpora in translation pedagogy, the more and more reliance on parallel corpora in translating activities has diminished the ability to determine the meaning of words within different contexts using dictionaries. However, it has hampered the enhancement of translation competence of trainee translators. This study investigates the necessity of adopting critical and creative thinking in the teaching of corpus-aided English-Chinese translation. It first examines the increasing importance of corpora in aiding translator training and translating practice. A critical analysis was adopted to analyze a translation case using a parallel corpus. Thirteen Chinese versions of Pride and Prejudice's opening remark were compared and analyzed critically and creatively with the aid of different corpora. Pedagogical implications for translation teaching were summarized.

Index Terms—critical, creativity, translation, pedagogy, corpus, English, Chinese

I. INTRODUCTION

The combination of corpus linguistics and Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS) has given rise to Corpus-based Translation Studies (CTS). Many different corpora types, such as monolingual, parallel, comparable corpora, have been built and applied in translation studies (Zanettin, 1998). According to Laviosa (2004), Gellerstam’s first monolingual comparable corpus of Swedish novels in 1986 and Lindquist’s investigation of Swedish renderings of English adverbials with a parallel language database in 1989 marked the beginning of applied corpus translation studies, which was mainly concerned with the practice and training of translators (Laviosa, 2004, p.15). Laviosa also pointed out that corpora in applied CTS are used as sources for the retrieval of translation equivalents to help improve the quality and efficiency of target texts. Moreover, it functions as “repositories of data” for better understanding of the translation process and language behavior (ibid.). Unlike descriptive studies, which mainly use parallel, comparable monolingual corpora as well as single translational corpora for a description of translation process and product, applied CTS rely primarily on comparable bilingual corpora or monolingual target language corpora in experiments or classroom teaching of translation to enhance the acquisition of translation skills and target language competence (Laviosa, 2002, p. 101).

As a new paradigm of translation research, Chinese scholars have already adopted corpus linguistics and applied to their studies. Liu Kanglong & Mu Lei (2006) explored the relationship between corpus linguistics and translation studies. Hu Xianyao (2007) discussed the characteristics of lexical terms in Chinese translated novels based on corpora. Xiong Bing (2015) studied a translation teaching model based on an English-Chinese parallel corpus, and Xu Jiajin(2016) looked at the semantic generalization of translational English based on comparable corpora. However, Malmkjær warned that the bulk of statistical evidence, like corpora’s concordances, may lead scholars to neglect or ignore problematic translation (Baker, 1998, p. 53). The novice translators, who have not yet developed proficient linguistic ability and translation competence, might rely too much on corpora to produce the target texts without appropriate guidance from the teachers or trainers. Therefore, it is quite essential and necessary for both teachers and students to assume critical and creative thinking in corpus-aided translation. The masterpieces of translation are mostly the result of the translators’ creativity, and “creativity in translation starts where imitation stops” (Newmark, 1991, p. 9).

This paper first reviewed the importance of corpora in translation pedagogy. Then, a comparison was made between dictionaries and corpora in translation, followed by a discussion of creativity as an essential quality of translators. Afterward, a statistical investigation into parallel and monolingual corpora was conducted. The pedagogical implications for translation teaching and practice were summarized in the last section.

II. IMPORTANCE OF CORPORAE IN TRANSLATION TRAINING AND PRACTICE

A. Application of Corpora to Translation Studies

The development of computer technology has made possible the automatic processing of large-scale information. When such technology is applied to collecting texts representing a given language for linguistic analysis, a new branch
of general linguistics called corpus linguistics came into being. Modern corpus linguistics began in the early 1960s, marked by the creation of Brown Corpus (Laviosa, 2002, p. 3). After nearly thirty years of progress, Sinclair (1992) predicted that there would be “some fascinating years and decades in linguistics” based on the development of computer technology which enables people to retrieve information from text corpora, and he firmly believed that such technology would exert the most profound effect in the study of language (Sinclair, 1992, p. 379). Following Sinclair’s prediction, Baker (1993), based on her in-depth knowledge and rich experience in the field of translation studies, argued that “the techniques and methodology developed in the field of corpus linguistics will have a direct impact on the emerging discipline of translation studies, particularly to its theoretical and descriptive branches” (Baker, 1993, p. 233). At almost the same time, Leech (1994) also proclaimed that “In the future,…the grammatical tagging of such large quantities of data is likely to have important applications” (Leech et al., 1994, p. 47). A quarter-century has passed since then, corpus linguistics has not only grown into a fully-fledged discipline in itself but been widely adopted by scholars in the field of translation studies in their research of various kinds. Furthermore, this trend had encouraged Robin et al. (2017) to claim that the spread of computer-readable electronic corpora has enabled researchers to apply corpus-based approaches to examine translated texts (Robin et al., 2017, p. 100).

B. Use of Dictionaries and Corpora in Translator Training and Translation Practice

One of the primary resources used by translators or translation trainers has been printed dictionaries (Bowker, 2000, p. 186). Dictionaries have long been the most important source of consultation for translators, regardless of professional translators or novice translators. An authoritative dictionary usually provides as many entries as possible, enabling the translators to find the equivalent meaning of some difficult words or phrases in rendering the target texts. A professional translator may use the dictionary entries as a clue to produce the closest equivalents in the target language, whereas novice translators tend to replace the words or phrases in the source language with the entries in the dictionaries mechanically. However, due to such shortcomings as limited space, the omission of terms or the lack of extended contexts, traditional dictionaries have apparent limitations in providing services to translators. The advent of corpora has changed the situation. With corpus linguistics being applied more and more widely to translation training and evaluation from the early 1990s, corpora have become “a useful complement to conventional translation resources” (Bowker, 1999, p.170). From dictionaries to the Internet and corpora, translators are relying more and more heavily on external sources. Compared with dictionaries, “corpora can provide greater coverage of the concepts and terms in a subject field,” and usage information can easily be obtained from a corpus consisting of authentic running texts written by subject field experts (Bowker, 2000, p. 187). What is more, “Corpora are also capable of providing information about the relative frequency of lexical items-information that is not typically provided in a dictionary even though it can be precious to translators” (Williams, 1996, p.290, cited from Bowker, 2000, p. 188).

While contending that Evaluation Corpus can significantly reduce the subjective element in the evaluation of translation product, Bowker also reminds that a corpus should not be taken “as a replacement for competence and critical judgment on the part of the evaluators, but rather as an aid to help them make sound and objective judgments” (Bowker, 2000, p. 206). This is a significant and timely reminder based on the fact that the application of corpus linguistics to translator training and translation studies seems to have been deemed as a fashionable approach, which has neglected the significance of laying a solid foundation for novice translators. However, when emphasizing the objectivity of corpora in identifying lexical errors made by student translators, Bowker (2000, p.199) hypothesized that corpus-based feedback would be more convincing and acceptable to students, which would “result in the production of higher quality translations.” It should be pointed out that corpus-based feedback alone is insufficient to enhance students’ competence in rendering high-quality translations. Some concordances in target language found in some parallel corpora might not be the closest or appropriate equivalents judging from contextual or cultural criteria.

To sum up, both translation teachers and students must be wise in using dictionaries and corpora. Dictionaries provide entries and explanations, while corpora offer more examples and broader context, which complement each other. Translation teachers or trainers, in particular, should assume critical and creative thinking in their daily training practice with corpora.

III. CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING IN CORPUS-AIDED TRANSLATION

A. Creativity in the Translation Process

People with little knowledge of translation tend to believe that translation is no more than finding the equivalents of the source language in the target language, retaining the meaning and style at the same time. For translation practitioners, it is not the case at all. Critical and creative thinking plays a crucial role in producing masterpieces of translation, and in some sense, creativity in translation is more complicated than in creative writing. As early as the 1970s, Preiser(1976, p. 21) had already proposed such characteristics of creativity in translation as a novelty, surprising elements, singular or at least unusual, and the fulfillment of particular needs by fitting in with reality (quoted from Kussmaul, 1995, p. 39). According to Kussmaul, despite general discussion of creativity by such scholars as Wilss, who maintained that creative translation involves “unpredictable non-institutionalized use of language” (Wilss, 1988, p.127, quoted from Kussmaul, 1995, p. 39) and Alexieva, who believed that creative translation is a non-rule-governed selection of translation variant (Alexieva, 1990, p. 5, quoted from Kussmaul, 1995, p. 39), there had been no data-based
study in this respect until then, limiting his research to non-routine processes which give rise to problems that require creative solutions (Kussmaul, 1995, p. 39). Aranda maintained that although “creativity is an inevitable aspect of the translation process” involving “problem-solving” at an individual level, it has been “a neglected research topic in translation studies” (Aranda, 2009, p. 23) with scarce attention from the field of translation studies. The significance of creativity in translation lies in the fact that it introduces new concepts, new genres, and new devices and mirrors the shaping power of one culture on another (Aranda, 2009, p. 30). Kisiel (1990) had gone a step further, contending that translation is by no means “a seemingly slavish repetition” but “a creative repetition” that requires tact, boldness, and ingenuity, especially when none of the entries offered in the dictionary can fit the sense of the word used in the source text (Kisiel, 1990, p. 143-144). He thus regards the translator’s task as “more difficult than that of the original author” (Kisiel, 1990, p.144).

From a translator training perspective, Hewson (2016, p. 20) defined creativity as:  

the ability to exploit the resources of both source and target languages to produce unpredictable micro-level translation solutions that are coherent with the macro-level interpretation given to the text and compatible with external parameters.

He also claimed that creativity had rarely been explored in many general works on translation theory despite that creative approaches were frequently adopted by translation practitioners, especially in dealing with challenging texts in whatever fields. Furthermore, it was seldom studied in translation classrooms (Heuson, 2016, p. 23). Translation pedagogy generally focuses on principles, routines, norms, techniques, and technologies. In translated works, particularly literary translations, creativity differentiates an excellent translator from a mediocre translator, a masterpiece of translation from a commonplace one.

B. Critical and Creative Thinking in Corpus-aided Translation

As mentioned above, dictionaries and corpora, which complement each other, constitute primary consultation sources for translators. “Bilingual dictionaries provide normative translation solutions for lexical items, which are incorporated into standard syntactic patterns and governed by ‘correct’ grammatical usage” (Hewson, 2016, p. 14), while concordance tools enable translators to “see terms in a variety of contexts simultaneously” and frequency information can help translators to determine commonly or idiosyncratically used particular terms (Bowker, 1999, p.162;163).

Therefore, corpora are “a useful complement to conventional translation resources” (Bowker, 1999, p. 170) in the real sense.

However, we should never overestimate the role of corpora in facilitating translating activities. While emphasizing the central role of corpus translation studies for the discipline of Translation Studies to remain vital and move forward, Tymoczko (1998, p. 1) suggested that “intuition and human judgment” are still essential components behind the establishment of corpora, which is no different from the design of any experiment or research program or survey. Therefore, translation practitioners and teachers must know that neither dictionaries nor corpora can replace translation competence, consisting of linguistic and extra-linguistic components. We should take advantage of technological advances in language and translation studies to gain access to a wide range of authentic and suitable texts. This would not only enable the trainers to verify or correct the students’ choices, both conceptual and linguistic, but provide more constructive and objective feedback based on the evidence (or lack thereof) in the corpus. Moreover, input enhancement through intensive exercises is always necessary and indispensable for nurturing language awareness and promoting linguistic competence in novice translators.

To assume critical and creative thinking in corpus-aided translation, we should:

i. make use of the large number of concordances found in the parallel or monolingual corpora to set exercises for student translators;

ii. apply translation norms acquired previously to make comments on and analysis of a few typical examples in the parallel corpora;

iii. mobilize human judgment and creative thinking to improve some target texts.

In this way, corpus linguistics will be given full play in translation teaching and practice. In the following part, an example taken from a paper entitled “The Role of ‘highly refined’ parallel corpora in translation teaching” in the Journal of Chinese Translators was analyzed. First, we would like to express our thankfulness to the author. Second, it should be noted that the analysis was by no means a denial of the use of corpus by the author. On the contrary, this paper provided an excellent example of utilizing corpora in translator training. In this paper, the author illustrated the application of the parallel corpus “English-Chinese and Chinese-English Translation Distant Teaching System” developed by the City University of Hong Kong to her classroom teaching of translation. The source passage in the corpus is:

(SL)KPMG could transform into a global partnership in 10 years

The head of KPMG has forecast that the accounting firm could transform into a single global partnership within ten years.

The radical reform would be a lasting solution to regulators' concerns that the big accounting firms offer inconsistent audit work standards across the world.

Mike Rake, the international chairman of KPMG, said the creation of a single global would.

The Chinese version given in the corpus is as follows:
(TL)毕马威可能在10年内转型成单一全球合伙人企业

bì mǎ wéi kě néng zài 10 nián nèi zhuǎn chéng dān yī quán qù hé huò rén zhì yè.

会计师事务所毕马威（KPMG®）全球业务董事长麦克·雷克（Mike Rake）近日预言说，公司可能在10年内转型成单一全球合伙企业。

Mike Rake近日预言说，公司可能在10年内转型成单一全球合伙企业。

IV. METHODOLOGY

A. Materials

The research was designed to illustrate the significance of critical and creative thinking in corpus-aided translation practice. The well-known opening paragraph of Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austin was taken as an example. Its thirteen Chinese versions of different periods by different translators were compared and analyzed.

As a romantic novel, Pride and Prejudice was first published in 1813 and has gained tremendous popularity among Chinese readers since it was translated and introduced into China. The opening remark, “It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife,” has not only become a
household sentence in everyday expressions but also remained a hot topic in the field of literature, marriage, love, and family, etc. Researchers like Wang Yan (2007, p. 100) used the novel as a corpus to study linguistic characteristics, plot development, and character personalities with such tools as WordSmith. However, almost no endeavor has been made to compare their differences based on the analysis of relevant corpora, not to mention applying corpus analysis to translation practice and translator training. In translator training, comparable bilingual corpora are often employed to explore stylistic features of texts by comparing words and phrases with strong formal resemblance (Laviosa, 2002, p. 102). Sometimes, translators also use bilingual corpora to produce better target texts based on the equivalents of the same words or phrases. In such cases, corpora play a similar role in dictionaries, with the differences lying in a larger number of examples and extended contexts. In this research, The Babel English-Chinese Parallel Corpus was used as a reference for evaluating the quality and differences of target texts produced by different translators. This corpus was created on a research project Contrasting English and Chinese consisting of 327 English articles and their translations in Mandarin Chinese. It contains 121,493 English tokens plus 135,493 Chinese tokens from 115 texts collected from the World of English between October 2000 and February 2001, and 132,140 English tokens plus 151,969 Chinese tokens from 212 texts selected from Time from September 2000 to January 2001. The corpus contains 544,095 words, including 253,633 English words and 287,462 Chinese tokens, from such articles as The Future of Africa, My Only True Love, For Whom The Bell Tolls, Hacking the Cell's Circuitry, Blue Sky Still Out There, etc. Although this is not a purely literary corpus, it is large enough with comprehensive coverage and representativeness because the language of Pride and Prejudice is not difficult and can be read with relative comfort even it was written more than two hundred years ago.

Furthermore, general corpora such as BNC, COCA, COHA, and MCC (Modern Chinese Corpus) will also address the above parallel corpus' deficiencies. According to Laviosa (2002, p.103), general corpora can also have equal value for enhancing translator skills and refinement of contrastive knowledge of the source and target language. BNC is the British National Corpus with 100 million word collections of written and spoken language from a wide range of sources, designed to represent a broad cross-section of British English from the late twentieth century. COCA is the Corpus of Contemporary American English, containing more than 560 million words of text (20 million words each year 1990-2017), equally divided among spoken, fiction, popular magazines, newspapers, and academic texts. MCC (www.cncorpus.org) is the corpus developed and maintained by the Chinese National Committee of Language and Characters, containing 19,455,328 tokens (including Chinese characters, letters, figures, and punctuations), 12,842,116 words (including single Character words, multi-character words, letter words, foreign words, the string of figures, punctuations), 162,875-word types in total, and 151,300 Chinese words (excluding foreign words, a string of figures and punctuation) from 9,487 texts selected from books, book chapters, journal and newspaper articles, etc.

B. Data Collection

The method of comparison was adopted to compare the thirteen versions of the opening remark of Pride and Prejudice primarily focusing on keywords and phrases such as “truth,” “must,” and “be in want of,” etc. Before the comparison, the information about the translators, publishing houses, the publication time, and the number of Chinese characters of each target text were collected. Then based on the results of the comparison, the Chinese equivalents of “truth,” “must,” and “be in want of” were listed to find out the differences. To have a clear picture of the differences in translation renderings, back translation from each Chinese version into English was provided. Concordance and Word Sketch were used to study more examples of the usage of the words and phrases mentioned above through Sketch Engine to observe their meaning within broader contexts and more examples.

During this process, the comparable bilingual corpora such as The Babel English-Chinese Parallel Corpus, and the monolingual corpora such as BNC, COCA, COHA, and MCC were used as sources to extract the usage of the keywords and phrases contained in the sentence of the question, as if we were looking at the collocations, the contexts and styles with an amplifier to see the exact meaning of these words and phrases more clearly to evaluate the quality of translated products by each translator. The table below (Table 1) shows the thirteen versions during the past sixty years from the 1950s to 2016. About half of the translators are professors from universities, which indicates that they had an excellent mastery of both English and Chinese languages. However, the target texts vary a lot in the diction of several keywords and phrases.
From the table above, we got the proportion of each equivalent of “truth,” “must,” and “be in want of” produced by different translators (Graph 1, below).

| Equivalent | 真理 (zhēn lǐ) | 真情实理 (zhēn qíng shí lǐ) | 天经地义 (tiān jīng dì yì) | 道理 (dào lǐ) | Total |
|------------|---------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|-------|
|            | 77%           | 7.7%                        | 7.7%                        | 7.7%         | 100%  |

| Equivalent | 必定 (bì dìng) | 一定 (yī dìng) | 势必 (shì bì) | Total |
|------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|-------|
|            | 48%           | 25%           | 7.7%         | 100%  |

Here, ten out of thirteen equivalents of “truth” are 真理 (zhēn lǐ), accounting for 77% of the total. The equivalents of “must” are distributed relatively evenly, with four 总 (zǒng), 31% of the total, five 必定 (bì dìng), 38%, while 一定 (yī dìng) and 势必 (shì bì), accounting for 23% and 7.7% respectively. As per the phrase “be in want of,” six translators rendered it as 想/想要 (xiǎng/xiǎng yào), nearly half of the total, while 需要 (xū yào), 要 (yào), and 缺少 (quē shǎo) accounting for 31%, 15%, and 7.7% respectively. Which of the equivalents rendered by the translators in different periods has the closest meaning to the original? Is the equivalent of the highest proportion the best one? If not, what might be the better equivalent? We tried to answer these questions in the following section with the help of corpora.

C. Results and Discussion

The equivalent of “truth.”

We first searched for the word “truth” in *The Babel English-Chinese Parallel Corpus*, and 17 matches were returned. (Graph 2, below)
Of the seventeen examples found in the parallel corpus, “truth” is mostly rendered in Chinese as 实情 [shí qíng], 真情 [zhēn qíng], 真相 [zhēn xiàng], 事实 [shì shí], meaning the fact, the real situation, and what happened, etc. Maybe confined to the size of the corpus, 真理 [zhēn lǐ] as the equivalent of “truth” rendered in most Chinese versions of the opening remark of Pride and Prejudice was not found in this corpus. Therefore, we resorted to the search for the English equivalents of 真理 [zhēn lǐ] in the same corpus, and got only one result as follows (Graph 3, below):

A liberal strategy was adopted in the translation of the original sentence, and no English equivalent of 真理 [zhēn lǐ] was found in this corpus.

Under such circumstances, we resorted to monolingual corpora of both English and Chinese to find the concordances of the word “truth” in English and 真理 [zhēn lǐ] in Chinese to know the meaning of them in a large number of examples and extended contexts. With SearchEngine, we found 8,368 concordances of the word “truth” in BNC, most of which meaning real situation, or what happened as mentioned above. Very few of them could be translated into 真理 [zhēn lǐ] as in the sentence in question (Graph 4 & 5 below)
Then we turned to MCC to look for the sentences containing the word 真理 [zhēn lǐ], with 754 entries found from this corpus: Graph 6 (below)
The concordances in Chinese provided us with the various contexts in which 真理 [zhēn lǐ] was used. It can be seen from the examples that in some contexts, 真理 [zhēn lǐ] means "truth," while in a lot of other cases, it refers to the objective things and their law of existence that are reflected in people’s mind. In the opening remark, “It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife,” “a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife” is a truth universally acknowledged, but is not necessarily 真理 [zhēn lǐ] even though it is the choice of a dominant number of the translators. What Austen talks about is a social phenomenon that exists in societies of various cultures. In the concordances found in MCC, the word 真理 [zhēn lǐ] is mostly associated with such words as “science,” “practice,” and “attest," etc. The practice is the one, and the only one criterion by which 真理 [zhēn lǐ] is attested. This expression is frequently used in Chinese discourses. Here 真理 [zhēn lǐ] refers not only the fact or the real situation but also the law lying behind the fact or genuine concern.

From the above exploration of the corpora’s examples and context, the word “truth” here can be paraphrased as “an established idea” or a kind of concept or phenomenon that has been generally recognized. Based on such a judgment, it was assumed that the dominant 真理 [zhēn lǐ] did not seem to be an appropriate equivalent of “truth.”

The equivalent of “must.”

Of the thirteen versions of the opening remark of the Pride and Prejudice, four translators rendered the word “must” as 总 (zǒng), five for 必定 (bì dìng), three for 一定 (yī dìng), and the remaining one for 势必 (shì bì) as listed above.

As an auxiliary verb, “must” means (1) to be obliged or bound to by an imperative requirement; (2) to be under the necessity to; (3) to be required or compelled to. As per the above equivalents, 总 (zǒng) means the tendency or general trend, while 必定 (bì dìng) and 一定 (yī dìng) are very close in terms of meaning. By standard query of these words in Babel Parallel Corpus (cn->en), we got the concordances (with a few examples shown below), which provided us with some clues to determine the appropriate equivalent of “must.” Graph 7 (below)

Your query “必定” returned 3 matches in 1 text (in 275,361 words [1 texts]; frequency: 10.89 instances per million words) [3.46s seconds]

| No | Filename | Solution 1 to 3 | Page 1 / 1 |
|----|----------|----------------|-------------|
| 1  | babel_c2e | 总  |  |
| 2  | babel_c2e | 必定  |  |
| 3  | babel_c2e | 一定  |  |

Graph 8 (below)

只要有一个零售商有我想要的鞋，我想我们双方一定都能满意而归。Should the right retailer match me up with the right pair of shoes, the retailer and I will both go home happy.
From the concordances of 必定 (bì dìng), we can see that it means something that would “surely” or necessarily happen. The query of 一定 (yī dìng) returned 85 matches, but since most of them meant “to a certain extent,” so they were not exactly what we wanted. The context of 势必 (shì bì) indicates the meaning of “something will happen inevitably” or would happen. In some sense, this corpus did not provide valuable information for differentiating the purpose of the translators’ several words, respectively. Creative thinking should be mobilized to determine which of the four renderings was the most appropriate. It is generally believed that a physically, psychologically, and mentally healthy man will want or need a wife, which is quite natural in Western and oriental cultures. In Chinese culture, a single man in possession of a good fortune is usually under more necessity to have a wife than a single man without much wealth. A good fortune could consist of a large house or villa, or several houses or villas, various assets for maintenance, many servants to be supervised, etc., all of which need a capable person to maintain the smooth operation of the whole family. From this sense, 一定 (yī dìng) and 势必 (shì bì) seem to be the better equivalents in such a context.

The equivalent of “be in want of”
From Figure 1 in section 4.3, we knew that, out of the thirteen Chinese versions, six translators rendered 想/想要 (xiǎng/xiǎng yào) as the equivalent of the phrase “be in want of.” Through back translation, 想/想要 (xiǎng/xiǎng yào) just meant “want” in Chinese, meaning “feel a need or a desire for” or “wish or crave for something.” Let us first have a look at the historical development of the usage of this phrase in COHA. Graph 10 (below)

The above graph shows the frequency of “be in want of” in nearly two hundred years from 1810 to 2000. It can be seen that this phrase has a lower frequency of use in history, starting from ONE in 1810 and reaching the highest of SIX in 1840. After that, it has been decreasing ever since. A few examples shown below provide us with the time and context of this phrase (Graph 11 below).

From the contexts provided here, it seems that the phrase means “feel a desire for,” while in other contexts, it means “need.” So it is necessary to resort to corpora to investigate its usage further.
Through the function of “Word Sketch” in Sketch Engine, we used “want” as the lemma and found the following results in BNC (Graph 13, below).

In the Prepositional Phrases, 158 cases of “want of,” and some concordances are shown as follows (Graph 14, below):

Written: through the function of “Word Sketch” in Sketch Engine, we used “want” as the lemma and found the following results in BNC (Graph 13, below).

In the Prepositional Phrases, 158 cases of “want of,” and some concordances are shown as follows (Graph 14, below):
The concordances are indicators of the frequency of the phrase “for want of,” which means “for lack of” or “for lacking in.” A broader context is provided here as an example in graph 15 (below):

In the full sentence here, “What an excellent horse do they lose for want of skill and courage to manage him!” the word “want” means “lack or deficiency.” Then still in BNC, the search for collocates of “in want of” produced only one concordance. The phrase here actually means “be in need of,” which is one of the renderings of the thirteen Chinese versions of the opening remark in *Pride and Prejudice*. (see Graph 16 below)

To have more supportive information, we went back to *The Babel English-Chinese Parallel Corpus*, and through the query of “want,” we got 265 matches, as shown in Graph 17 (below):

This graph shows the number of occurrences of the word “want” used in different phrases. In *Wanting VVJ* structure, only one example was found, in which “wanting in” means 缺乏[quē fá] (be lack of, be deficient of) (see Graph 18 below).

Furthermore, we again searched for the full phrase “be in want of” in BNC, and got the same sentence as *Pride and Prejudice*. (Graph 19 below)

Sometimes, due to choice and coverage of materials, one corpus always has some limitations. As a complement, we resorted to COCA, and happily got more contexts of the phrase “be in want of” ranging from 1990 to 2017(see Graph 20 as follows).
From these concordances above, we knew that “be in want of” mostly means “be in need of,” which can be rendered as 需要 (xū yào) instead of 想要 (xiǎng/xiǎng yào) in Chinese, as four translators did in the translation of the opening remarks in *Pride and Prejudice*. Just as what has been analyzed in this paper, it is quite natural for any healthy man to be looking forward to a wife, whereas in real life, a man of a good fortune is usually considered to be under more necessity to find a wife at least this is the case in Chinese culture. In other words, this is just like the relationship between a dream and reality. So 需要 (xū yào) is more appropriate than 想要 (xiǎng/xiǎng yào) in this context.

A new version of the translation

The search results from the comparable parallel corpus and the monolingual corpora have enabled us to have a very close look at the meaning of the keywords and phrases such as “truth,” “must,” and “be in want of” in the opening remark of *Pride and Prejudice* of Jane Austen. Therefore, we have had a thorough analysis of the equivalents’ appropriateness of these words and phrases in Chinese as rendered by the selected thirteen versions. However, we should by no means be saturated with the analysis and appreciation. By assuming critical and creative thinking, we would like to propose another version of the opening remark:

家财万贯，单身男子，一定得有位贤妻内助，这在哪里都毫不稀奇。

jiā cái wàn guàn, dān shēn nán zǐ, yī ding děi yǒu wèi xián qī nèi zhù, zhè zài nǎ lǐ dōu háo bù xī qí.

V. CONCLUSION

It can be concluded from the above discussion and analysis of the thirteen versions of the opening remark of *Pride and Prejudice* with the help of corpora that:

(1) Corpora, with a large number of concordances providing many more examples and extended contexts, are useful and powerful tools and sources for translation practice as well as translation training;

(2) It should be noted that each corpus has its limitations due to its size, representation, and coverage for its specific purposes of design;

(3) Because of the nature of corpora, there are generally no explanations for particular words or phrases. Therefore, they should be used in combination with dictionaries, both of which can complement each other;

(4) Some, at least from my judgment and analysis, inappropriate translations of the words and phrases investigated here, such as “truth,” “must,” and in particular, “be in want of,” are the result of the fact that these words and phrases seem too simple to be treated seriously. Therefore, some translators might take it for granted and produce the commonly matching equivalents from their minds quietly naturally;

(5) Novice translators are mostly likely to make such mistakes, moving an entry from the dictionary into their translation without trying to think hard to find a more appropriate equivalent based on the entries in the dictionary;

(6) Therefore, it is crucial in corpus-aided translation practice and translation teaching that translators or teachers should assume critical and creative thinking in corpora use. On the one hand, we can take advantage of the resources provided by various corpora, and on the other hand, we should not rely too much on corpora. Human judgment should be mobilized in the evaluation of the appropriateness of translation, especially those keywords and phrases;

(7) Lastly, as translation teachers, we should also consider that enhancing student translators’ competence through constant practice is still the priority in teaching or training activities; otherwise, students are much likely to be confused in front of such powerful tools as corpora.

REFERENCES

[1] Aranda, L. V. (2009). Forms of creativity in translation. *Cadernos De Tradução*, 1(23), 23-37.
