Translating Hybrid Texts in Hong Kong
A Case Study of the English Translation of Chan Koon Chung's *Kamdu cha canting*

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1. The Concept of "Hybrid" and "Hybridity" in Literary Criticism and Postcolonial Studies

Borrowed from biology, the concept of "hybrid" originally refers to "the offspring of two animals or plants of different species, or (less strictly) varieties; a half-breed, cross-breed, or mongrel" (*Oxford English Dictionary*). Etymologically speaking, the term carries itself with negative association when its Latin etymon "*hybridia*" was used as "an insult, to refer to someone of mixed racial origin" (Schäffner & Adab, 2001, p. 168). In fact, the term is still used disapprovingly in biology and genetics to refer to the selection of animals, where purebreds are much valued over mix-bred or hybrid ones. In some East Asian (such as Chinese and Korean) cultures, the Chinese term "杂种," or the Korean equivalent "잡종," which are literal translations for "hybrid," is one of the strongest and most offen-sive words used to humiliate someone in these two cultures.

Luckily, this strong derogatory connotation indicated in the ordinary usage of the nomenclature is absent in some humanities disciplines, especially in literary criticism or postcolonial studies, which have used the term extensively to describe the benefits or extra values brought about by a mixed state of entities and/or a blending or mixing process of literary themes, heterogeneous discourse, cultural traits, and codes.

Mikhail Bakhtin, the twentieth-century Russian philosopher and literary theo-rist, is among the first scholars to use the concept of hybridization to explore the nature, structure, and features of novelistic prose. Hybridization, which he believes to be one of the three basic categories of language in the novel (the other two being "the dialogized interrelation of languages" and "pure dialogues"), refers to the use of "two social language within the limits of a single utterance" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 358). The mixing of "two different linguistic consciousnesses, separated from one another by an epoch" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 358) is no better shown in Cathy's father's teasing remarks in the following dialogue taken from the novel *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë:

I remember the master, before he fell into a doze, stroking her bonny hair – it pleased him rarely to see her gentle – and saying, "Why canst thou not always

be a good lass, Cathy?" And she turned her face up to his, and laughed, and answered, "Why cannot you always be a good man, father?"

(Brontë, 1976, p. 37)

In this description of a warm and humorous exchange, the father, Mr. Earnshaw, pokes fun at his daughter by deliberately using some archaic English forms such as "canst" and "thou" in his question for her, "Why canst thou not always be a good lass, Cathy?" By using two socially and chronologically distant terms that are different from the rest of this question, Mr. Earnshaw is presenting two "linguistic consciousnesses" – to use Bakhtin's parlance – as well as two different systems of language. According to Bakhtin, this intentional hybrid, in which "a mixture of two individualized language consciousnesses" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 359) inspires and illuminates each other, is one of the effective devices to create the artistic image of a literary language. In this example, the artistic tension that has been caused by the combination of the two distinct social languages in this question is obviously sensed by Cathy, who reacts by laughing and turning her face up to his father with a funny and provocative rejoinder, "Why cannot you always be a good man, father?"

Bakhtin further elaborates that mixing two linguistic forms can also be represented through two language intensions in a novel: one by the character and the other by the author. Both of them lend to the novel two voices or two accents in the hybrid, which results in polyphony, that is, a multiplicity of views and voices, in a literary work. In other words, hybridity is an essential element that enables narratives to be interpreted with "a plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses" (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 7).

Whereas Bakhtin approaches hybridity from the perspective of literary and artistic effects, a group of scholars in postcolonial studies, such as Homi Bhabha, Néstor García Canclini, and Gayatri Spivak, largely applies this concept either as a tool to describe the special linguistic and cultural features of literary works produced in former colonies or to elaborate how the special cultural mixedness portrayed in these works impacts the formation and awareness of identity of the people in these ex-colonial states. Starting from the early 1990s, the concept of hybridity, which was often associated with the multicultural awareness in postcolonial discourse, has been frequently seen as a positive resistance to cultural imperialism or any forms or works that might lead to the reinforcement of cultural hegemony.

In his classic work *The Location of Culture* (1994) in which the effects of hybridity on identity and culture are examined, Homi Bhabha scrutinizes the shaping cultural force on the colonial masters and the colonized exerted by the hybridity of colonial identity. On the one hand, this hybridity, which results from "the processes of iteration and translation" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 58), confuses or even dismays the colonial authority; on the other hand, it also forces the colonial subject to have its identity formed in a place defined by the colonizer. However, this cultural hybridity status also "opens up a space of translation" for a political identity "that is new, *neither the one nor the other*" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 25)

(emphasis in original). In addition to the cultural and political interpretations of hybridity in postcolonial discourse, Bhabha also investigates how the colonial hybrid could be utilized as a form of subversion to destabilize "the mimetic or narcissistic demands of colonial power" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 126) by presenting the cultures concerned in an ambivalent space. Faced with the hybridity in various objects, the colonial authority could not easily return to its familiar discourse that projects a discriminatory gaze at its subjects but have to rethink what this hybridity brings to its power as it reveals "something other than what its rules of recognition assert" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 112). Since hybridity also obscures the sources of traditional discourses on authority, the colonial power also finds it in an ambivalent state as it loses its dominant control of discursive conditions and interpretations.

If literary critics such as Bakhtin uses the concept of hybridity primarily for the sake of expounding the artistic or aesthetic effects brought about by the polyphony it helps to create in the narratives, postcolonial scholars, including Bhabha, mainly value its cultural subversive function, which defies the political expectations from the colonial power or to the extent of undermines it.

Similar to the disciplines of literary criticism and postcolonial studies, translation studies has also witnessed an increasing use of the terms "hybrid" and "hybridity" in its theoretical discourse or the application of these concepts in translation practice. The following section is a brief survey of how this concept is interpreted from different approaches in translational studies.

2. Hybridity in Translation Studies

2.1 Hybridity as Represented by Special Linguistic Features in the Target Text and Produced Under Certain Conditions

Following a language contact perspective on the use of language by human beings, some translation scholars regard translational language as hybrid in nature, in which a blended usage of different registers or forms is frequently seen in the target text. In a recent study on linguistic hybridity and translation from the perspective of narratology, Klinger (2015) discusses how the translation of the hybrid features in the source text might "trigger TT shifts in perspective, cultural identity and allegiance" (p. 38).

In an early programmatic article on the hybrid text in translation, Schäffner and Adab (2001) argue that the hybrid linguistic features are the natural corollary of any interlingual translation process, which entails intercultural exchanges and the face-off of two linguistic conventions and rules. As a result of the interaction and contact of the two cultures (one being the source and the other target) involved in these bilingual transfer processes, some of the target texts inevitably reveal hybrid linguistic features, which "somehow seem 'out of place'/'strange'/'unusual' for the receiving culture, i.e., the target culture" (Schäffner & Adab, 2001, p. 169). These hybrid features of the translation should be differentiated from translationese or even mistranslation in the target text: the former being the result of the intentional

and motivated decisions made by the translator, whereas the latter being the consequence of the lack of translation competence of the translator. Schäffner and Adab's view of regarding a hybrid translation as a translator's deliberate translation decision is in stark contrast to the opinion of Robinson (2016), who equates hybrids in the translation to clumsy expressions that are usually resulted from the translator's overreliance on his or her unwitting and automatic reaction to certain translation tasks.

Schäffner and Adab (2001) also argue that hybrid translations are most likely to appear in the following three contexts (pp. 171–172): (1) when there are no established genres or linguistic models in the target culture for the translator to follow when producing the target text; (2) the translator does not want to produce the translation in accordance with the target text genre conventions, even though the same genre exists both in the source and the target culture; (3) the translator produces either a homogeneous or heterogeneous translation under the influence of globalization.

However, Schäffner and Adab's definition of hybrid translation from a purely linguistic perspective and the description of the different scenarios they tend to occur actually raise more questions than answers. Firstly, they have never made clear what kinds of linguistic features constitute the hybrid features in the translation. Their characterization of hybridity in translation as language features that are "out of place'/'strange'/'unusual'" sounds too subjective to be used in the actual description of translational language, as every reader has his or her own standards or expectations regarding what constitutes the so-called unnatural linguistic features in the target text, ranging from the small units such as vocabulary, syntax, to larger types, including textual organization and genre. Other reader-related factors like educational background, reading norms and habits, as well as horizon of expectation as argued by Jauss, all play a part in determining whether certain features of a translational language strike a reader as "out of place" or not. What makes this hybridity-identifying procedure more complicated is the fact that some of these factors (such as reading norms and habits) are not static: they are constantly changing in accordance with the time. All these factors make any attempt to objectively evaluate the hybridity features in the target text sound like an unreachable goal. Secondly, Schäffner and Adab's definition of hybridity is solely based on linguistic representations in translation, namely, the more out-out-tune these linguistic codes with the conventions of the spontaneously written language in the target culture, the more probable that these codes will be regarded as hybrid language. But as it is often true with many translation readers, it is often the exotic cultures described in the translation, rather than the translational language alone, that decide the degree of hybridity in the target text. Frequently, a translation written in fluent target language will still be considered a hybrid text simply because of the foreign cultural objects, events, or traditions it describes. Put it differently, hybridity is not only a linguistic concept but also a cultural one, as convincingly argued by scholars in postcolonial studies. Thirdly, the demarcation line between a hybrid form of translation and a translationese or mistranslation is not as clear-cut as we tend to believe. The borderline between what constitutes a hybrid

translation and an unacceptable translation can be fuzzy or even subjective. For example, the English sentence "I couldn't agree more," which is frequently used to express a speaker's total agreement, can be either translated into version 1: "我不能够同意得更多了" (literally, "I couldn't agree more") and version 2: "我完全同意" (literally, "I completely agree") in Chinese. Comparatively speaking, version 2 is much more idiomatic than version 1, although the first version is more literal in reproducing the original meaning. Unlike English in which a negative sentence can be used to express approval as long as it is modified with comparative forms such as "more" or "less," traditional Chinese lacks such a linguistic device to express the same meaning. Thus version 1 might sound ungrammatical or like a translationese to Chinese language purists. However, the first version, as well as other similar expressions of using negative forms to express agreement, are increasingly gaining ground, especially among younger generations in China who are more receptive to Europeanized Chinese in their daily communications. For these young Chinese readers, version 1 is perfectly acceptable or even more preferred over version 2 because of its hybrid grammatical features, the use of which might distinguish them from other ordinary Chinese speakers. Lastly, the fact that translation activity, which is essentially a social practice, cannot take place in a vacuum indicates there are multiple scenarios in which hybrid texts might occur. In addition to Schäffner and Adab's three conditions, which are concerned mainly with the literary translations or linguistic conventions between the source and target languages, other non-linguistic factors might play an important role in the translator's decision to produce hybrid target texts. As mentioned previously, the considerations of human entities involved in the translation process, including the reader's expectations and reading habits, the purpose of the translation from the publisher, commissioner, or translator, as well as those factors from non-human entities, such as translation policy, the concrete situation in which translation takes place (i.e., with or without the use of translation aid), the reception norms for hybrid translations in the target culture, etc. All these show that a study of hybridity from a solely linguistic perspective in translation studies might not be enough.

2.2 Hybridity as a Combination of Text Types

The early 1980s has witnessed the use of the concept of hybridity to describe the multiple functions that coexisted in a genre or text-type in linguistics and discourse analysis. In the first systematic study of text linguistics, De Beaugrande and Dressler (1981) describe the concept of text types as the "global frameworks controlling the range of options likely to be utilized" (p. 141). According to them, readers usually have expectations about the linguistic traits for particular text types during the reading process. While acknowledging the distinctive linguistic features with which a text type is usually associated, they also add that some general and well-accepted classifications of text typology, such as description, narration, and argumentation, will be found in various combinations with the other text types. Literary texts are one of the typical representative examples of such a

hybrid text type, as they "contain various constellations of description, narration, and argumentation" (De Beaugrande & Dressler, 1981, p. 173). The concept of multifunctional text types is later picked up by Hatim and Mason (1990), who define hybridity or hybridization as "the multifunctionality of texts, i.e., the fact that texts always serve more than one rhetorical purpose" (p. 241). To them, it is crucial to identify all specific rhetorical purposes in a hybrid text so that those communicative functions, together with the language registers that are associated with them, could be properly reproduced in the target text. Given the fact that "hybrid texts are by definition dynamic/marked" (Hatim & Mason, 1997, p. 154), considering the heterogeneous or even extreme nature in the use of different registers, the best way for the translator to translate this multifunctional text type is to achieve "an approximation to the reality of textual practice" (Hatim & Mason, 1997, p. 107), rather than given an exact reproduction of all these hybrid features in the target text.

Hatim and Mason's use of the notion of hybridity to describe different textual functions of a target text does not gain much ground in translation studies, in which a finer text typology proposed by Reiss (1971/1989) is more frequently used instead. In Reiss's discussion on the translation of text types and genres, she proposed a translation model in which she argued that the predominant function of the source text decides not only the "specific translation methods according to text type" (Reiss, 1976, p. 20) during the translation process as well as determines how the target text should be judged or evaluated. Reiss's linking three language functions (i.e., informative, expressive, and appellative) with text types provides a neat solution for the classification of a myriad of possible genres in reality, which makes it possible for her to further connect all these text types to translation strategies and assessment criteria. To sum up, compared with Hatim and Mason's brief discussion on hybridity, Reiss's framework offers a more detailed explanation of how multifunctional texts work in a communicative situation and how they should be translated accordingly.

2.3 Hybridity in Postcolonial Translation Studies

Inspired by the postcolonial discourse on hybridity aiming at exposing and resisting cultural imperialism imposed on the world by the West, some translation scholars explore the linguistic features as well as the literary and cultural significance of hybrid texts produced in ex-colonial regions or countries and discuss how the special space of in-betweenness in the language, literary tradition, and identity in the source colonial culture could be duly recognized and adequately reproduced in the target text.

Different from Schäffner and Adab (2001) and Hatim and Mason (1990, 1997), who adopt either a micro or a macro linguistic perspective to the study of hybridity in the target text, Snell-Hornby (2001) focuses on both the linguistic and cultural values of hybrid discourse and define them as texts "written by the ex-colonised in the language of the excoloniser, hence creating a 'new language' and occupying a space 'in between'" (p. 207). Instead of regarding hybrid texts

as the results of any form of interlingual translation process, just as Schäffner and Adab do, Snell-Hornby believes that hybridity primarily comes from the constant intercultural interaction between nations or the trend of globalization, where powers, cultures, and people are in constant contact and under mutual influence. In essence, her definition is mainly based on Samia Mehrez's (1992) definition from the perspective of postcolonial studies, who argues that hybridity is especially found in postcolonial texts in which "culturo-linguistic layering" exists (Mehrez, 1992, p. 121). By examining the German version of Salman Rushdie's novel *The Moor's Last Sigh* as an example, Snell-Hornby explains in detail how the original linguistic and literary hybridity have been reduced in the target text and how these features could be more holistically and effectively translated by drawing on themes and frames theories.

Other scholars adopt a similar line to the study of hybridity, including Lu (2003) and Han (2002, 2005), who discuss how this concept could shed light on literary translation in a Chinese context, especially from the perspective of translation strategies. Both Lu and Han regard hybrid features as the natural consequence of foreignized translation, which presents original foreign elements in ways that do not conform to the literary traditions, linguistic conventions, or cultural practices of the target culture. The sometimes unnatural or influent versions out of the strategy of foreignization, according to them, are however, "very important in the development of language, culture and literature of the target end" (Han, 2002, p. 57) by supplying it with new forms and contents. Culturally, although hybrid translations might lead to "the colonization of Chinese culture to some extent" (Han, 2005, p. 200), they would neither affect the autonomy nor result in too much heterogeneity of Chinese culture, if "proper screening and handling procedures have been conducted" (Han, 2005, p. 200). However, Han falls short of explaining in what forms and aspects his "colonization of Chinese culture" are represented and what the so-called proper procedures refer to.

2.4 Defining Postcolonial Hybrid Literature in the Study

Similar to Snell-Hornby, the current study also adopts a postcolonial approach to studying hybridity in literary translation. In this study, the term hybrid postcolonial literature is used to describe the following two types of literary works: the first are the literary texts that are written in the language of the ex-colonizer by "postcolonial bilingual subjects" (Mehrez, 1992, p. 121), whose use of the language exhibiting linguistic features that conform neither to the language conventions of the ex-colonizer nor to the habitual language use of the former colony. The second type of hybrid literary texts is very similar to the first category, except that the texts are by the ex-colonized in their own language, showing features that somehow seem linguistically "unusual" in their own culture. Different from Schäffner and Adab's view that hybridity is the result of interlingual process, it is argued here that hybrid literary texts can exist without translation and are the proper objects of study of their own right.

Inspired by Snell-Hornby's analysis of Salman Rushdie's hybrid text *Midnight's Children* and *The Moor's Last Sigh*, a checklist for identifying the macro and micro hybridity features, ranging from lexical and grammatical items, syntactic structures, coinage, jargon, metaphors, puns, allusions, language varieties to idiolects, will be used in analyzing the linguistic features of postcolonial hybrid literary works. Same as Snell-Hornby, the scenes and frames theoretical model will be used to decide general translation strategies in a top-down manner, "proceeding from basic decisions as regards language varieties, rhetoric and style in the text as a whole to the individual grammatical and lexical items which will then depend on them" (Snell-Hornby, 2001, p. 215).

3. Translating Hybrid Postcolonial Literature in Hong Kong: A Case Study of the English Translation of Chan Koon Chung's *Kamdu cha canting*

Given the special language and the unique cultural and literary in-betweenness of hybrid literature, it will be interesting to see how the hybridity features and their embodied cultural identity have been duly represented in the target text. Such an exploration is especially of cultural significance for a place such as Hong Kong, which has been a colony under British rule since 1841. With a colonial history of 156 years, Hong Kong, which is close to the mainland, China, has always been a place where Western languages, cultures, and Chinese ones intersect. Even though Hong Kong was handed over to China in 1997, a lot of Hong Kong residents still have ambivalence about their discourse and cultural identity, which is made even more complicated as a consequence of the increasing influence of the culture from the Chinese mainland (Fung & Pun, 2021). The clashes and the reconciliation between the Western and Eastern values, the cultural conflict that is resulted from Hong Kong's unique place as the gateway for Western culture for more than a century, and Hong Kong people's dilemma about national and local identity are described and documented in some of the literary works written by Hong Kong writers after 1997, all of which provide fertile ground for the study of hybridity, which creates a space in between in the postcolonial Hong Kong society. In the current study, the short story *Kamdu cha canting* written by Chan Koon Chung – a Hong Kong indigenous writer – is selected as an example to probe into the linguistic diversity and cultural dynamic and struggle of collective identities of Hong Kongese.

3.1 Introducing Chan Koon Chung and His Short Story *Kamdu cha canting*

Born in Shanghai in 1952, Chan Koon Chung moved to Hong Kong with his family in 1956. After graduating from the University of Hong Kong with a bachelor's degree in sociology in 1974, he has worked in various capacities, such as a journalist, editor, publisher, and writer. He proves himself to be quite an able and versatile author as he can produce quality works in many genres, ranging from

screenplays, prose, novel, and short stories, whose popularity among Hong Kong readers earned him the title of "'Annual Writer' (年度作家)" by the Hong Kong Book Fair in 2013.

With few exceptions, his fiction draws fodder from the kaleidoscopic city life of Hong Kong and delineates the "petty" stories of all walks of people he had observed so closely since he was a boy. Written in a language mixture of Mandarin, Cantonese, and English, his stories are often fusions of different cultures in Hong Kong (including the predominant British and Chinese cultures as well as some minor ones, such as Indian, Pakistan, and Nepalese cultures, etc.), for which he was hailed as "a pioneering critic for metropolitan life and culture" (Chinanews, 2011, November 08). His fictions, which often embody particular colonial historical and linguistic features of Hong Kong, are particularly revealing of the unique position of Hong Kong modern literature as a special "sub-system" in the polysystem of modern Chinese literature (Even-Zohar, 1978). To use Samia Mehrez's term, Chan's stories are "hybrid" or "métisses" texts due to "the culture-linguistic layering which exists within them" (Mehrez, 1992, p. 121) (1992, p. 121).

Chan's short story *Kamdu cha canting* is one of the three stories collected in his book *Hong Kong Trilogy*, which was first published in 2004. An expanded and revised edition of the book was published by Oxford University Press in 2013. According to Chan, all three stories depict the lives of the baby boomer generations who are deeply "influenced by hybrid cultures in Hong Kong" (Chan, 2004b, p. 229). The story of *Kamdu cha canting* is narrated from the perspective of a Gweilo – who is half British and half Chinese, showing his observations at an eponymous tea restaurant he frequents in Hong Kong. Due to the 1997 Asian financial crisis, he loses his job as an automobile salesperson and has to eat a barbecue dish at the restaurant every night. This gives him plenty of opportunities to get to know well other restaurant-goers who come from all walks of life in Hong Kong. Later on, the financial crisis also affects other sectors, including the restaurant owner, who decides to fold the business soon. Seeing this, these regular customers invite him to take over the shop to keep it running. This invitation puts him in a difficult situation as it forces him to decide whether he should stay or leave Hong Kong.

3.2 Hybridity in Kamdu cha canting: *An Analysis*

The hybridity of Chan's *Kamdu cha canting* can be analyzed from literary, cultural, and linguistic aspects.

Literary aspects here broadly refer to the components (theme, protagonist, narrative point of view, structure, plot, etc.) that constitute a work of literature in whatever forms, such as fiction, poetry, prose, or drama. In Chan's postcolonial story, the hybrid literary feature can be immediately felt when the story is narrated from the start by an unnamed protagonist, who is a half-Chinese and half-Briton young man. He can understand and speak the local dialect Cantonese fluently but with very little knowledge of written Chinese. Indeed, the image of this main

character reminds Chinese readers, especially those in Hong Kong, of the typical type of mixed-race people in this former colony. Due to the long history of British occupation, interracial marriage, which was not uncommon in pre-colonial Hong Kong, is most frequently seen between British expatriates and women of Chinese ethnicity. Their children, born in Hong Kong and raised under the influence of both English and Chinese cultures, were often torn between using Chinese and not using Chinese as their native language. Before 1997, given the colonial status of Hong Kong, English is often considered a language of a higher status because it is the language of the colonizer. Thus, most biracial people, such as the main character, would most likely choose English as their mother tongue. However, their upbringing in Hong Kong, where Chinese is still the dominant language spoken by a majority of the population, makes their interaction with Chinese-speaking people unavoidable. To communicate with Chinese-speaking citizens in this multicultural city, many mixed-race people have learned to speak Cantonese, the daily language used in Hong Kong, just as the main character here did. However, their reluctance to fully master the oral and written forms of this colonizer's language betrays their hidden sense of linguistic superiority. Through this subtle description of the hybrid linguistic choice of the protagonist, Chan vividly presents to his reader the liminality of the character's identity.

Furthermore, through the eyes of this hybrid protagonist, things or objects that are originally so familiar to local Hong Kongers, such as his previous working experience, car brands, etc., are now portrayed with parodic effects and interpreted in a defamiliarizing manner, all of which further reinforce the liminal spaces the author tries to create in the story.

The story ends with the protagonist's dilemma of whether to stay in Hong Kong to take over the tea restaurant or to begin a new business in Shanghai. This ending is symbolic of the character's struggle between a choice of hybridity versus non-hybridity. Whereas his choice of Hong Kong would suggest he ends up coming to terms with the hybridity identity he has now, his option to go to Shanghai to start all over again would mean his forsaking of the previous colonial identity by embracing the one that has been newly imposed on him after the handover of Hong Kong to China in1997.

The hybridity of the text is also evident in the multiple cultures portrayed in the story. The story happens in the setting of a "cha canting" (literally, a tea restaurant) with the name of Kamdu. In Hong Kong, a lot of employees have to be on the job for long working hours, which makes them hardly have time to prepare dinners by themselves at home after work. So most of them choose to eat out, especially in "cha canting," or tea restaurants that provide not only Cantonese cuisine but also adapted Western dishes. "Cha canting" probably gets its name from the cup of tea, either Chinese tea or milk tea in English style, which the restaurant serves its customers when they first sit down at a table. With its amalgamation of both Chinese and Western cuisine it serves and the intimate and essential role it plays in most people's lives in Hong Kong, "cha canting," this Hong Kong–styled café "has become a symbol of the Hong Kong local food culture since the late twentieth century" (Leung, 2006, p. 68) as well as a perfect allegory for the

cultural hybridity in this city. Indeed, most of the story's content can also be interpreted as the narrator's contemplation at the tea restaurant. His thoughts, which are represented in the form of a free flow of associations with whatever comes to his mind, highlight the banalities of social exchange between ordinary people and the "metisses" of Hong Kong local culture as a result of over 150 years of colonial history and the increasing globalization in recent decades.

The literary and cultural hybridity aspects mentioned previously all find their way in various linguistic features, which range from macro linguistic features such as "language varieties, idiolects, jargon, metaphors, puns, coinage and an infinite abundance of allusions" (Snell-Hornby, 2001, p. 209), as well as micro textual features, including vocabulary, syntax, style, etc. How these literary and cultural hybrid features "shape concepts and texts differently" (Jakobsen, 1993, p. 158) and how these linguistic hybrid innovative usages are exploited creatively to forge a new language, which is not necessarily transferable to other languages or target cultures, will be the topic of the next section.

4. A Textual Analysis of *Kamdu cha canting* and Its English Translation

In this part, a textual analysis will be conducted on the linguistic hybrid features of *Kamdu cha canting* and its existing English translation to examine whether the original linguistic hybridity, along with its literary and cultural symbolic meanings, have been duly reproduced in the translation.

This hybrid postcolonial short story, co-translated by Poon Ka-Man and Robert Neather as *Kamdu Tea Restaurant*, was published in *The Literary Review* in 2004.

The hybrid cultural significance can be felt immediately when Chinese readers begin to read the first paragraph of the story:

> ST (1): 金都茶餐厅，英文叫 Can Do, 正门向美丽都大厦横门, 后门傍仙乐都夜总会(最近一直内部装修暂停营业), 左边维多利亚时钟酒店(前伊顿英文补习夜校), 右转角马会(前皇家赛马会)场外投注站 (underlined parts added).
>
> TT (1): Kamdu Tea Restaurant, English name Can Do. Front door facing the side door of the Mirador Building; back door beside Xanadu Night Club (recently under interior renovation, business temporarily suspended). On the left is the Victoria hourly-rated Love Hotel (former Eton English Tutorial Night School); round the right corner is an off-course betting branch of the Jockey Club (former Royal Jockey Club).
>
> (Chan, 2004a, p. 138)

In ST (1), Chan presents an immediate linguistic plurality to his readers by implying the "in-between" cultural space in which the narrator is situated. This is revealed by the intentional use in the first sentence of the three bracketed parts employed to contrast the current and the previous status of the recreational venues mentioned. The change of names or status of these places explicitly indicates the

great extent of transformation that Hong Kong has undergone before and after the colonial periods.

In the original text, it is indicated that the English name for the restaurant is Can Do, the English pronunciation of which is similar to the Cantonese pronunciation of the Chinese name *Kamdu*. However, in addition to the acoustic similarity between these two terms, the English name Can Do is rich in local cultural connotation, as it reminds local readers of the "can do spirit" originating in the early 1970s in Hong Kong and is still popular today. This "can do" attitude that defines Hong Kong has at least the following cultural implications for Hongkongers: first, it indicates a person's hardworking mentality by suggesting "anything you can do, I can do better," which reminds us of the notoriously well-known workaholic culture in this city; second, it also represents a core value of being willing to take up whatever challenges come with the job and overcome these difficulties in the end. Another term for this intangible cultural quality in which Hong Kong people take pride is the "lion rock spirit," which describes Hong Kong people's motto of "never giving up" in the face of adversity. The English name Can Do also echoes the ending of the story, in which the English words of "can," "can do," and "do" are used several times to describe the narrator's dilemma of whether he "can do" a business in Shanghai or Hong Kong. With its multiple layers of symbolic meaning, the name of the restaurant name is a rich, hybrid cultural image.

In TT (1), the translators made their first attempt to reproduce the hybridity of this hybrid postcolonial text by trying to imitate the paratactic Chinese structure in the first sentence. Instead of translating the original Chinese "金都茶餐厅, 英文叫Can Do" into a more fluent and idiomatic English version, such as "The English name for Kamdu Tea Restaurant is Can Do," they chose to use two seemingly independent phrases "Kamdu Tea Restaurant, English name Can Do," which can be roughly regarded as "block language" (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 845), which are not complete and grammatical sentences, in English. According to Quirk et al. (1985), block language messages, which "are most often non-sentences, consisting of a noun or noun phrase or nominal clause in isolation; no verb is needed" (p. 845), are most often used in newspaper headlines, advertisements, and other notices. But here, the superimposition of these two language segments, which are not logically linked to each other with cohesive links, as most common English sentences do, is largely used to highlight the syntactic features of original Chinese by imitating their information structures. Thus, with the unconventional use of the block language in TT (1), the linguistic hybridity of the translational language can be immediately appreciated by English readers. However, the cultural significance and allusion of "can do spirit," which the original Chinese name of the restaurant strongly suggests, is lost in the English translation "Kamdu Tea Restaurant," as few English readers will be evoked of any Hong Kong cultural core values that are associated with this term when reading this translation.

The linguistic hybridity of the story is further enhanced by defamiliarizing syntactic structures used to describe cultural banalities of Hong Kong. Note later how

Chan manages to create an in-between literary language that is neither in line with Chinese nor English grammar in ST (2):

ST (2): 如无意外, 样样顺风顺水, 老板阿杜过几年大可以返东莞乡下买幢西班牙式洋楼, 养只番狗, (如果发展商辂烂尾)屋前小型人工湖, 屋后迷你十八洞高球场, **左邻劳工子弟出身香港现任高官个阿妈，右里来历不明樟木头新发财位阿二，行行企企叹世界听谭咏麟李克勤锄大弟食野味睇无线拍蚊过世**。(underlined parts added)

In the underlined sentence of this example, long lists of pre-modifiers are used before such noun phrases as "阿妈" (with a pre-modifier of 15 characters) and "阿二" (with a pre-modifier of 13 characters), which forms a strong contrast with Chinese normal noun phrases in which fewer than five pre-modifiers are generally used. Similarly, peculiar syntactic features are also found in the last part of the final sentence of ST (2), in which six verb phrases (e.g., "行行企企叹世界," "听谭咏麟李克勤," "锄大弟," "食野味," "睇无线," and "拍蚊过世"), each indicating a typical way of living in Hong Kong, are connected with each other without using any punctuation, thus forming an extremely long paratactic structure that is rarely seen in a normal Chinese sentence. Stylistically, the abundant use of local colloquial registers to describe these leisure activities also makes this hybrid postcolonial text sound remarkably like the spoken words from the mouths of grassroots people in the city.

The cultural hybridity revealed from the linguistic hybridity in ST (2) is equally impressive. In this linguistically defamiliarizing paragraph, the narrator makes liberal use of banal cultural references, such as "purchasing a villa with a Spanish air about it," "keeping a dog of foreign breed," "playing golf," which are lifestyles usually associated with the so-called higher-class, more Westernized Hongkongers, to contrast with other activities such as "listening to Cantonese pop songs," "playing the popular Cantonese poker game of big two," "watching local TV channel Jade," which are common leisure hobbies of the grassroots Hong Kong people. These two different lifestyles, which in essence represent the cultural imaginations of both the East and the West, conceive Hong Kong citizens' lives as a hybrid mixture of Eastern and Western traditions, again testifying to the in-between nature of culture in Hong Kong.

However, the cultural and linguistic hybridity implied by the underlined sentence in ST (2) is lost to some extent in Poon and Neather's translation:

TT (2): Neighbour on the left will be the mother of a current Hong Kong government senior official from a worker's family. Neighbour on the right will be the mistress of a Zhangmutou nouveau riche of unknown origin. He'll loaf around enjoying life listening to songs by Alan Tam and Hacken Lee playing Big Two gorging on game-meat watching channel Jade killing flies to live a life.
(Chan, 2004a, p. 138)

In TT (2), the original clumsy, lengthy pre-modifiers were rephrased into grammatical and fluent English structures: "Neighbour on the left will be the mother of

a current Hong Kong government senior official from a worker's family. Neighbour on the right will be the mistress of a Zhangmutou nouveau riche of unknown origin." These two English sentences, both grammatical and idiomatic, cannot remind target readers of the original hybrid Chinese sentence, which, in the context of the story, is fittingly spoken by a half-Chinese and half-Briton narrator who has only a limited knowledge of written Chinese. In contrast, the hybrid linguistic features represented by the unbroken, unpunctuated flow of information displayed by the superimposition of six verb phrases in the final clause of ST (2) were retained intact in TT (2). The English translation "He'll loaf around enjoying life listening to songs by Alan Tam and Hacken Lee playing Big Two gorging on game-meat watching channel Jade killing flies to live a life," which is a highly long English sentence that has been converted from the original Chinese clause, is used here to try to represent the narrator's stream of consciousness as the original does. Target readers can immediately sense the syntactic hybridity of this sentence as they struggle to understand the units of meaning and the cultural metaphors or allusions embodied by this convoluted sentence, just as the source readers do when reading the original Chinese sentence. It is worth noting that the translators do not come to terms with this syntactic and cultural hybridity by "bending back" all the original phrases into rational codes, that is, by making them easier to understand with more fluent structures and idiomatic phrases. Instead, they also resort to a highly estranging English structure, which helps to highlight or even heighten the original syntactic and cultural hybridity. From the perspective of the use of vocabulary, it should also be noted that typically Cantonese colloquial terms (e.g., 行行企企叹世界, 锄大弟) and cultural references (e.g., "拍蚊过世") are used in the final clause of ST (2), which add to the linguistic hybridity of the paragraph concerned. In the translation, the spoken phrase "行行企企叹世界" (literally, "walking and standing to enjoy the world") was translated as "loaf around enjoying life," a more literary and idiomatic expression in English. The culture-loaded slang verb "锄"[1] used in describing the poker game "锄大弟" (literally, "dig Big Two") was replaced with a more generic term of "play" that is mostly used to describe a poker game in English. Finally, the original phrase "拍蚊过世" (literally, "killing mosquitoes to lead a life") refers to the humid weather all year-round that favors mosquito activities in Hong Kong. However, the cultural allusion of "mosquitos" was replaced with "flies," a different kind of insect in the translation, thus completely losing one of the cultural references most familiar to Hong Kong people.

To sum up, despite the translators' successful attempt to retain the syntactic hybridity of ST (2) in their translation, they fail to reproduce the typical Cantonese cultural locality, which is represented by a wide range of colloquial expressions and typical cultural references. As we see in TT (2), some of these expressions have been neutralized into standard literary language in English, and some references have been replaced with images that read more natural or logical to English readers. Since cultural locality forms an essential part of Hong Kong's hybridity, such modifications cannot do sufficient justice to the heterogeneous ways employed by the author to represent the particular in-between position that Hong Kong culture and people are occupying during the postcolonial period.

5. Translating the Hybridity of *Kamdu cha canting*: A Scenes-and-Frames Approach

From the textual analysis of the STs described in the previous section, hybridity in the postcolonial short story of *Kamdu cha canting* can be represented through linguistic, cultural, or literary features in the text, which are often intertwined with each other. The unusual linguistic features, ranging from syntax, vocabulary, and register, are frequently reminiscent of the popular values and social practices that are portrayed as mixed or adapted versions of Western and Chinese cultures in Hong Kong. A reader's experience of hybridity is reinforced each time he or she reads, interprets, and empathizes with the description. However, this hybrid reading experience, due to a totality of interpretation of all these features, also poses problems for translators working with hybrid texts in a postcolonial context. As the previous analysis of the TTs shows, the retention of one particular feature (such as the syntactic one) at the expense of others (such as the cultural and literary ones) inevitably undermines the overall representation of hybridity in the translation. To fully account for the language features of hybrid postcolonial literary texts, Snell-Hornby (2001) argued that the scenes-and-frames approach is the best theoretical model to analyze the linguistic "complexity and profusion" (p. 213) that abound in these texts. With its emphasis on both macro linguistic frames and the micro linguistic units that lead to such scenes, the scenes-and-frames approach can help translators appreciate the overall effect of hybridity and understand how this effect is realized by linguistic markedness or stiltedness in the text. In the current research, the same scenes-and-frames model is adopted to examine the combined effect of hybridity of Chan's *Kamdu cha canting* from both macro and micro perspectives, aiming at reproducing its hybrid effects in the translation in a holistic manner.

The scenes-and-frames framework is first based on the semantics developed by Fillmore (1977, 1985) in his case grammar and further expounded by Lakoff (1977, 1982) later. Arguing for "an integrated view of language structure, language behavior, language comprehension, language change and language acquisition" (Fillmore, 1977, p. 55), Fillmore rejected an atomistic or pure formalistic view of language that has dominated linguistics research in America at the time. Instead, he favors an experiential and holistic view of language in which users associate words or other grammatical categories "with prototypical instances of scenes" (Fillmore, 1977, p. 63). Here, scenes are not only referring to visual images but also "any kind of coherent segment, large or small, of human beliefs, actions, experiences, or imaginings" (Fillmore, 1977, p. 63) that might be evoked in the language users' mind. Scenes are induced or prompted by frames, which are made up of concrete linguistic choices. For instance, a verbal action introduces a particular perspective to the world, which is in turn connected with a particular scene. In the case of hybrid literary texts, this approach means examining special linguistic items and finding out how these linguistic means are used to form particular scenes of hybridity in the text. A general understanding of the cultural and literary background and significance of the text helps translators develop

translation strategies in a top-down manner, proceeding from general options such as motifs, genres, themes, and choices of characters, to "from basic decisions as regards language varieties, rhetoric and style in the text as a whole to the individual grammatical and lexical items which will then depend on them" (Snell-Hornby, 2001, p. 215).

Thus, a scenes-and-frames approach to the translation of *Kamdu cha canting* will start from a holistic understanding of the cultural, historical, and literary hybridity as embodied by its linguistic choices in the text, which is exemplified by the analysis of the language in ST (1) and (2) in section four. After having the overall scene of the hybridity in mind, the translator could approach the text from each type of hybridity observed by analyzing the frames prescribed by the system of linguistic choices in the text. Among all these language options, the translator should pay extra attention to retaining the linguistic frames (such as references, allusions, concepts, forms of address, etc.) that can evoke scenes of source cultural hybridity in the target reader's mind. The original frames that are too culture-bound to be translated literally could be best explained by adding a gloss so that the resulting scenes that the English-speaking readers activate will be more or less the same as the Cantonese readers.

To achieve an optimal degree of hybridity in the translation, the translator does not need to deliberately bend the original frames that are couched in normal, grammatical Chinese in the story, as this deliberately made-up foreignizing language more often than not leads to artificial translationese that results in an over-representation of the original hybrid effects. In contrast, for the frames expressed in linguistically hybrid forms, the translator needs to try his or her best to preserve the special grammatical and lexical items in the translation to evoke the scene of hybrid Hong Kong in the target reader.

Bearing the thrust of scenes-and-frames approach to the translation of *Kamdu cha canting* in mind, we have come up with revised translations for the underlined parts in ST (1) and ST (2) in the previous section.

> Underlined part (1):金都茶餐厅, 英文叫 Can Do,
> Revised TT (1): Can Do tea restaurant, its Chinese name Kamdu.
> Underlined part (2):左邻劳工子弟出身香港现任高官个阿妈, 右里来历不明樟木头新发财位阿二,
> Revised TT (2): Neighbour on the left will be a from-the – grassroots current Hong Kong government senior official's mother. Neighbour on the right will an unknown-origin Zhangmutou the-new-rich's Second Mrs.
> Underlined part (3): 行行企企叹世界听谭咏麟李克勤锄大弟食野味睇无线拍蚊过世。
> Revised TT (3): He'll walk and stand around to enjoy the world and listen to Alan Tam and Hacken Lee music and dig Big Two and eat game-meat and watch channel Jade and chase and swat mosquitoes to live a life.

Compared with TT (1) and (2), hybrid cultural elements that are expressed via estranging and mixed linguistic forms are more accentuated in the revised

translations to evoke similar scenes in the mind of the English reader. In revised TT (1), the original information structure is modified in such a way as to present the English name of the restaurant first, followed by the transliteration of its Chinese name Kamdu. The aim is to set the English name "Can Do" as well as its cultural connotations, which are more familiar to the target reader, against the scene evoked by the foreign linguistic frame of Kamdu, thus forming a contrast between familiarity and strangeness. This opening line, with its new focus on the English name of the restaurant, "Can Do tea restaurant," rather than its Chinese one, also functions as a cultural metaphor for the spirit so closely associated with Hong Kong people in a postcolonial era. Additionally, it immediately conveys a sense of hybridity, which is the theme of the story, to the reader when he or she starts reading the text.

In revised TT (2), Poon and Neather's version, in which the more grammatical and fluent English structure was used to render the long list of pre-modifiers, is replaced with a literal rendition of the original sequencing of these modifiers as well as their meaning. The noun phrases in the revision, such as "a from-the-grass-roots current Hong Kong government senior official's mother" and "Neighbour on the right will a unknown-origin Zhangmutou the-new-rich's Second Mrs." create linguistic frames that lead to the imagination of hybrid cultural scenes in Hong Kong and in Zhangmutou, a town nicknamed "little Hong Kong" in the mainland, China, due to its proximity to and cultural resemblance with the metropolis.

Similarly, the longwinded, unpunctuated syntax of underlined part (3) was retained faithfully in the revised TT (3). In addition, the abundant verb phrases used in the example are also translated as literally as possible. For example, the Chinese phrase that contains five verbs "行行企企叹世界" is translated into "walk and stand around to enjoy the world," a more foreignizing version than Poon and Neather's fluent rendition of "loaf around enjoying life." The connective "and" is also used profusely in the revision to recreate a syntactic structure that sounds dull and repetitive, a rhythm that alludes to the mundane and monotonous life most ordinary Hongkongers live. Altogether, the estranging grammar, the unfamiliar diction, and the unusual use of diction that have been deliberately exploited in the revised TT (3) all help to activate scenes of hybridity in the postcolonial Hong Kong among the target reader.

6. Conclusion

The importance of the concept of hybridity in providing a unique prism through which lives, thoughts, behaviors, communications, and traditions of the people in the postcolonial period can be better examined has long been acknowledged by scholars of cultural studies such as Homi Bhabha, Néstor García Canclini, Stuart Hall, Gayatri Spivak, and Paul Gilroy. Abundant literary works have also been written on this topic to express the linguistic and cultural in-betweenness of the people from ex-colonized lands. There is no exception with Hong Kong, a former British colony. Due to its long colonial history, Hong Kong is one of the frequent subjects in Chinese postcolonial literature. However, the discussions on

translating the hybridity, as revealed in these literary works, are relatively few and far between. Based on a scenes-and-frames approach to the translation of hybrid literary texts as proposed by Snell-Hornby (2001), the current study illustrates how the macro (i.e., scenes) and micro perspectives (i.e., frames) offered by the model can shed light on the translation of cultural, literary, and linguistic hybridity of Chan Koon Chung's short story *Kamdu cha canting*. It is argued that the approach enables the translator to adopt a holistic view of the hybrid postcolonial literature and develop translation strategies to deal with different types of hybridity in the text accordingly. Additionally, the "in-between" space created by the hybridity also allows the translator to search for creative means to fully tap on the artistic and innovative potential of hybrid literature in the translation.

Note

1 In Cantonese slangs, "锄" means "kill" or "beat," whereas "大弟" refers to the number 2 on a poker card. Thus the expression "锄大弟" means "killing or beating number 2" in a poker game in the local language of Hong Kong. This expression is used only in Cantonese-speaking regions.

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