Flourishing Creativity & Literacy

Creation for Fidelity – Zhao Yuanren's Translation of Lexical Nonsense in Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

Qunxing Zhang
Foreign Languages School, Beijing Information Science & Technology University, China

Abstract

Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is one of the best examples of the literary nonsense genre. The paper mainly regards nonsense as a rhetoric device for humour and amusement and seeks to examine Carroll's nonsense creation devices mainly at the lexical level, and at the same time explore the strategies the Chinese translator Zhao Yuanren adopts in his translation. The paper finds out that there is a direct correlation between Carroll's devices of nonsense creation and Zhao's strategies in translating them. The strategies Zhao adopts show his creativity and experimentation in dealing with the seemingly untranslatable elements of humorous nonsense to achieve fidelity to the essence of the original work. In reconstructing Carroll's nonsense, Zhao adheres as closely as he could to reproduce the comic effect of the original by different means of creation. In this sense, his translation is creative fidelity.

Keywords: Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, lexical nonsense, nonsense creation devices, translation strategies, fidelity

1. Introduction

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (1865), written by Charles Lutwidge Dodgson under the pseudonym Lewis Carroll, is among the children's classics of most popularity and significance. It demonstrates a child's dreamland full of childhood innocence and imagination, and establishes a unique literary interest in plain, baffling but also amusing language. Since its publication in 1865, it has won everlasting popularity with children as well as adults throughout the world for its fantasy and humour in the past 150 years. Even today *Alice* has never been out of print and still remains a global popular work of verbal art 'with profound philosophical, logical, linguistic and literary value'. (Feng, 2009)

Carroll gives his wit and humour into full play in his *Alice* stories by various means, including parody, pun, rhymes, allusions, irony, faulty reasoning, meaningful nonsense and so forth. Words are displayed by him as comic games with endless variations and possibilities. Among all his means of humour nonsense is quite conspicuous. Carroll actually puts Alice in a situation where she cannot properly converse or reason, but somehow keeps conversing and reasoning in the wonderland. Many a time she found herself 'talking nonsense' or others 'talking nonsense'. For instance, in the conversation between Dodo and Eaglet in Chapter Three, the Eaglet said 'I don't know the meaning of half those long words' (p.31); in the mad tea-party episode of Chapter Seven, when talking with the Hatter, 'Alice felt dreadfully puzzled. The Hatter's remark seemed to have no sort of meaning in it, and yet it was certainly English.' (p.75); in Chapter Ten, after Alice repeated the verse 'Tis the voice of the sluggard,' the Mock Turtle said 'but it sounds uncommon nonsense.' (p.111); after the White Rabbit read the verses at the court in Chapter Twelve, Alice declared 'I don't believe there's an atom of meaning in it.' (p.128) In spite of all the nonsense, Alice still keeps striving to search for 'meaning in a meaningless world' (Pycior, 1984).

Carroll's Alice stories have their roots in a popular literary tradition of nonsense. His nonsense is first deeply rooted in the historical period when he lived. In the nineteenth-century Britain, nonsense was a widely practiced popular form of writing. Alice is undoubtedly 'an archetypally Victorian narrative, unmistakably a product of its time and place'. (Chaparro 2000) In the meantime, Carroll's personal academic background as an Oxford mathematics teacher and logician also has significant influence on his nonsense creation. In the early nineteenth century mathematics occupied a prominent position in developing English thought, logic, mental training and education for sound reasoning. 'The *Alices* embodied the mathematician Dodgson's misgivings about symbolical algebra, [...] The parallels between Carroll's nonsense writings and symbolical algebra are striking: both stressed form or structure over meaning, using words (or other symbols) with multiple possible interpretations.' (Pycior 1984) Instances of nonsense words and sentences with structure but no specific meaning are too many in Alice. For example, in his conversation with Alice about 'well' in Chapter Seven, the Hatter said, 'You can draw water out of a water-well,' 'so I should think you could draw treacle out of a treacle-well – eh, stupid?' (p. 79) The two parts of the sentence share the same syntactic structure 'draw ... out of ...', but the first part makes sense while the second does not. 'The point of Carroll's humour seems clear: structure does not guarantee meaning; emphasis on structure over meaning, so basic to the symbolical approach, can lead to nonsense.'

(ibid) However, in spite of the seeming illogicality, these instances of 'nonsense' have their own rationality within the fictional text world. (Feng, 2009) Carroll's nonsense is never the absence of sense; instead, a strong presence of 'sense' is inherent in the 'non-sense'. (Heyman 1999) A nonsense text actually 'does not seek to limit the text's meaning to one single interpretation–on the contrary, its dissolution of sense multiplies meaning.' (Lecercle 1994: 20) It often turns out that the nonsense texts need meaning, 'at least as much, and perhaps even more so, than meaningful texts ...' (ibid: 115) Readers need to use their linguistic imagination to explore the meaning and appreciate the humour.

The first Chinese translation of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* made by Zhao Yuanren in 1922 has enjoyed wide popularity among the Chinese readership since its publication. This study aims to present a detailed analysis on the creation devices of Carroll's lexical nonsense and how they have been dealt with in Zhao Yuanren's translation. Lexical nonsense will be analyzed in a quantitative way in order to examine in depth the extent to which Zhao reproduces the essence and the amusing effect of the original with consideration to reasons behind his translation decisions. Meanwhile some representative cases will be presented in a qualitative analysis by comparing ST (source text) and TT (target text). Even though enormous linguistic and cultural constraints are imposed on the translator in dealing with nonsense, a great deal of which 'borders on the untranslatable' (Orero-Clavero 2002: 8), 'constraints of themselves actually enhance the translator's creativity' (Boase-Beier, 2011: 54). Zhao's success in dealing with Carroll's nonsense, therefore, helps to prove 'the greater the constraint, the greater the potential creativity demanded of the translator.' (Boase-Beier and Holman 1999: 1-17; Munday 2009; Boase-Beier, 2011: 54) However, Zhao does not create randomly. His creativity mainly serves for achieving fidelity to the essence of the original text.

2. Carroll's lexical Nonsense

'Nonsense is the subversive and creative use of language par excellence […], challenging our interpretation skills, indeed our sense of logic and understanding.' (Mateo 2010) So far scholars (Tigges 1988; Lecercle 1994; Orero-Clavero 2002) have proposed their definitions based on their individual research purposes. This paper mainly adopts Orero-Clavero's definition and regards nonsense as a device of humour and special kind of wordplay in literary works.

> 'The production of nonsense in prose and poetry is a mode of creative writing characterised by deliberate and repeated deviations from sense, either linguistic or conceptual, while maintaining a careful balance between sense and its absence so that the resulting text still conveys a message in which the reader can find meaning, though there will be disagreement about its interpretations.' (Orero-Clavero 2002: 60)

She divided the active nonsense creation devices briefly into two categories, lexical devices and logical devices which work at the syntactic level. Carroll's logical nonsense and his renowned nonsense verses will be excluded in this paper due to limitations of space. Among the 11 devices of lexical nonsense listed by Orero-Clavero (ibid: 73-79), pun and malapropism are adopted by Carroll. According to the author's statistics, there are altogether 35 groups of lexical nonsense, including 17 puns and 18 malapropisms. Carroll's lexical nonsense follows rules to separate spelling from pronunciation and deliberately misuse or misinterpret words to generate comic effect.

2.1 Puns

According to Delabastita (1993: 86), the pun establishes a (near) simultaneous confrontation of at least two linguistic structures with more or less dissimilar meanings and more or less similar forms. He divides puns into four categories: homophony, homography, homonymy and paronymy. Homonymy is the most adopted by Carroll, and then comes homophony and paronymy. Homography was not used. Carroll is fond of using puns. Lecercle once wrote, 'His puns are notoriously awful – they are so facile that one wonders why he bothered to make them. But the strange thing is that, the more facile they are, the more we enjoy them.' (1994: 66) Since this paper focuses on nonsense leading to comic effect, some puns are not included (e.g. 'either you or your head must be off…' in Chapter Eleven p.109). See the following table.

Table 1 Carroll's Puns in *Alice*

NO.	Homonymy = spelling	= sound	Homophony ≠spelling	= sound	Paronymy ≠sound ≠spelling
1	dry (p.30-31)		tale /tail (p.34)		pig / fig (p.69)
2	time (p.75)		not / knot (p.36)		porpoise / purpose (p.109)
3	draw (p.79)		axis / axes (p.63)		
4	well (p.79-80)		tortoise / taught us (p.100)		
5	bite (p.96)		lesson / lessen (p.103)		
6	mine (p.96)		tea / T (p.119)		
7	whiting (p.108)				
8	soles and eels (p.108)				
9	fit (p.129)				

Homonymy is a commonplace rhetoric device applied nearly in every language. To take 'dry' as an example, the mouse tries to tell the story of William's Norman Conquest to make Alice and other creatures soaked in the pool of tears become dry and warm. The Mouse uses the word 'dry' as an adjective which means 'boring or dull' while Alice has the misunderstanding that the mouse will keep them warm and make them not wet any more. So when the mouse asks Alice how she feels at the middle of the story, Alice answers melancholy that the story does not seem to dry her. For the other examples, nonsense humour is produced when the same word serves as different parts of speech with different meanings. For example, 'bite' generally means 'nip with teeth' as a verb, but it also means 'hot' when associated with 'mustard'. As to the word 'Mine', when used as a pronoun, it means 'belonging to me', and when used as a noun it means 'a system of holes under the ground from which coal, gold, or other mineral substances are dug'. In this way Alice and other creatures keep creating comic nonsense in their conversations.

The pairs of homophones in the above table, such as 'tale / tail', 'not / knot', 'axis / axes', 'tortoise / taught us', 'lesson / lessen' and 'tea /T', are already well-known to the global readers. Carroll separates spelling from pronounciation, thus creating humorous effect.

As for the pairs of paronymies, 'pig' and 'fig' both share the syllable /i/ and consonant /g/, and 'porpoise' sounds a bit like 'purpose'. The similarity in form and pronunciation makes a big contrast with the vast difference in meaning, producing funny lexical nonsense.

2.2 Malapropism

A malapropism is a deliberately misspelled word–sometimes suggesting another meaning. (Orero-Clavero 2002: 76) In some cases the misspelling results in another word altogether. The use of a common word with a situationally inappropriate form or meaning might also be considered a malapropism in normal conversational circumstances, such as the words 'uglifying' and 'uglification' which are created by adding the improper suffix '-ing' and '-cation'. Deliberate violation of grammar is another way to create a malapropism, like "curioser". Carroll applies malapropism in a marvellous way particularly in Chapter nine when the Mock Turtle introduces his school subjects, such as Reeling and Writhing, and the different branches of Arithmetic–Ambition, Distraction, Uglification, Derision, Mystery, Seaography, Drawling, Laughing and Grief. Those wrongly spelt words also have something to do with the movements and actions of the creatures in the sea. Readers cannot help bursting into laughter and feeling amazed at Carroll's exquisite usage of language when reading these deliberately misspelled words. See the examples in the following table.

Table 2 Carroll's malapropism in Alice

NO.	Malapropism	Related Correct Word
1	antipathies (p.13)	antipodes
2	curiouser (p.20)	more curious
3	A mouse-of a mouse-to a mouse-O mouse (p.26)	A muse-of a muse-to a muse-O muse
4	Reeling (p.102)	Reading
5	Writhing (p.102)	Writing
6	Ambition (p.102)	Addition
7	Distraction (p.102)	Subtraction
8	Uglification (p.102)changing suffix	Multiplication
9	Derision (p.102)	Division
10	uglifying (p.102)	Multiplying
11	Mystery (p.102)	History
12	Seaography (p.102)	Geography
13	Drawling (p.102)	Drawing
14	Stretching (p.102)	Sketching
15	Fainting (p.102)	Painting
16	Coils (p.102)	Oils
17	Laughing (p.102)	Latin
18	Grief (p.102)	Greek

3. Zhao's Translation of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*

Alice remained unknown to the Chinese readership until the first Chinese translation (*A Li Si Man You Qi Jing Ji*, the Chinese title) made by Zhao Yuanren was published in 1922. Zhao himself thought highly of *Alice*, as he wrote in the preface of his translation, 'I believe the book is competitive even with Shakespeare's most decent books in terms of its literary value. They just belong to different types.' (Zhao 1988: translator's preface p.10; author's translation) He

particularly mentioned the nonsense in *Alice*. 'The joke in this book is of a special kind; its sense lies in its nonsense.' (ibid: p.7; author's translation) Zhao's academic background helped him perfectly present the amusement of Carroll's nonsense to the Chinese readers, because he was a prestigious mathematician, philosopher, linguist and artist of modern China, and he, regarded as the 'father of Modern Chinese Linguistics', firstly applied modern linguistics theories to study Chinese language and also made significant contributions to the development of modern Chinese phonology and grammar.

As for translation principles, Zhao attached much importance to the first two *Xin* and *Da* of Yan Fu's three widely acclaimed and accepted translation principles *Xin Da Ya* (namely Fidelity, Expressiveness, Elegance) among the Chinese scholars from Late Qing Dynasty to the May Fourth period. In the notes for his translation of *Alice*, Zhao offered a more concrete explanation of his translation methods. 'When translating, I would first focus on one sentence, and then consider how to render its meaning into Chinese in a natural way. After that I would write the translation down, compare it with the source sentence and modify it based on the standard of "accuracy in each word" until any tiny modification cannot be made in case the translation would sound foreign. However, I fear that a too accurate translation would sometimes transform the meaningful nonsense into meaningless nonsense; a joke of pun would become a non-joke of irrelevance; verse in rhyme would sound an un-rhymed non-verse; an idiom would be not an idiom any more. Therefore, the standard of fidelity can give way a little bit to reproduce the spirit of the original.' (Zhao 1988: notes p.1; author's translation) He highlighted fidelity to the spirit of the source text. Zhao's translation turned out to be a great success as one of the most important translations into simple Vernacular Chinese in that period. The well-renowned Chinese scholar Hu Shi highly praised it by commenting 'What an excellent translation!' (Shen 1998: 107) Zhao's translation further inspired writers to create new novels and helped stimulate the development of Chinese modern literature, especially children's literature. It was because of its popularity among the Chinese readers that Zhao's version had been reprinted more than 17 times till 1949. Up till now, dozens of full translations have been produced in China, yet Zhao's version still has its unrivalled charm in terms of its literary value and creativity.

4. Zhao's Translation Strategies in Dealing with Carroll's Lexical Nonsense

The reading of nonsense is usually 'desultory and playful', because there is 'no fixed and unique meaning or interpretation, but a proliferation of variously ambiguous partial structures.' (Lecercle, 1994: 24) The translator of nonsense is not translating 'what the words of the text "mean" but what meaning(s) they may lead to' (Dolitsky 1988: 88). Translators, therefore, need give full play to their creativity to resolve uncertainty and ambiguity before choosing an appropriate expression.

4.1 Translation Strategies for Lexical Nonsense

Based on Delabastita's nine translation techniques for wordplay (1993: 191-221), this paper proposes the following translation strategies for lexical nonsense:

1) Nonsense into nonsense, in which the ST nonsense is transferred into a TT nonsense, which may or may not share the same properties of the ST nonsense.

- Literal Translation, which means the ST lexical nonsense is literally translated into a TT lexical nonsense.

- Substitution, which means creating a complete new nonsense in the position of the ST one to replace it. The TT nonsense is thus totally different from the ST nonsense.

- Partial substitution, which means creating a partially new nonsense in the position of the ST one. Part of the meanings of the ST nonsense is maintained in the TT nonsense and another part is substituted for something else to create a new nonsense.

- Addition. The translator does not render the ST nonsense in the original position, and instead add a new one which the ST does not have to compensate for the loss of the original nonsense.

2) Nonsense into non-nonsense, in which the original nonsense is transferred into a TT word or word group, which preserves a partial meaning of the original, but fails to retain the comic effect of the original.

- Nonselective literal translation. The meanings of the ST nonsense are literally transferred into the target language.

- Selective literal translation. Part of the meanings of the ST nonsense is literally rendered into the target language with the sacrifice of other meanings.

3) Nonsense into zero, which means the original nonsense is omitted.

4) Editorial techniques, which includes textual techniques (including footnotes, endnotes, parentheses within the TT by means of square brackets, italics, etc.) and extra-textual ones (including introduction, prefaces, after words and etc.)

4.1.1 Translation of Puns

Punning depends much on phonological or morphological similarity of one linguistic system. Since English and Chinese belong to different language families, there is no correspondence between the two languages phonologically or morphologically. Therefore a polysemous word in English cannot be polysemous at all in Chinese if literally translated; or words may be found in Chinese, which are referentially synonymous with an English word, but have radically different connotative meanings.

The following table shows that among Carroll's 17 puns, Zhao translated 15 into puns, including 5 substitutions, 8 partial substitutions and 2 additions while 2 were translated literally into non-nonsense. Paronymy and homophony

were adopted the most by Zhao to create different pairs of puns. Paronymy was used 8 times and homophony 4 times. Homonymy was not applied. The phonetic transcriptions (*pinyin*) of the Chinese paronymies and homophonies are shown in the following table.

Table 3 Zhao's Translation of Carroll's Puns

Nonsense Device	Carroll's Puns	Zhao's Translation	Back Translation	Translation Device
Homonymy	dry (p.30-31)	又 干 又 暖 (p. 29)	dry and warm	literal translation + addition
		嚼 蜡 (p. 31)	chewing a candle	
	time (p. 75)	时候 (p.89)	time	selective literal translation
	draw (p.79)	吸 xī (p.95)	draw	partial substitution (paronymy)
		习 xí (p.95)	study	
	well (p. 79-80)	井 jǐng (p. 97)	well	partial substitution (paronymy)
		尽 jìn (p. 97)	end	
	bite (p. 96)	咬得人麻辣辣的 (p.119)	make people fell hot when bitten	literal translation + addition
	mine (p. 96)	矿 kuàng (p.119)	mine	partial substitution (homophony)
		旷 kuàng (p.119)	absence	
	whiting (p. 108)	(黄)蟹huáng xiè (p.139)	yellow crab	substitution (paronymy)
		鞋(油) xié yóu (p.139)	shoe oil	
	soles and eels (p. 108)	蟹黄xiè huáng 蟹油xiè yóu (p.139)	crab butter crab oil	substitution (paronymy)
	fit (p. 129)	疯fēng (p. 169)	crazy	partial substitution (homophony)
		风fēng (p. 169)	wind	
Homophony	tale/tail (p.34)	委屈wěi qū (p.35)	feeling aggrieved	partial substitution (homophony)
		尾曲wěi qū (p.35)	wiggly tail	
	not / knot (p. 36)	到 dào (p.35)	arrive	substitution (paronymy)
		刀 dāo (p.35)	knife	
	axis/ axes (p. 63)	地轴dì zhóu (p.75)	axis	nonselective literal translation
		斧子fǔ zǐ (p.75)	axes	
	taught-us / tortoise (p. 100)	老王lǎo wáng (p.127)	someone called Lao Wang	substitution (paronymy)
		老忘lǎo wàng (p.127)	someone who is very forgetful	
	lesson / lessen (p. 103)	课 (p.131)	lesson	partial substitution
		多 少 先多后少(p.131)	more or less; More comes before less.	
	tea / T (p.119)	茶叶chá yè (p.155)	tea	partial substitution (homophony)
		查夜chá yè (p.155)	night patrol	
Paronymy	pig / fig (p.69)	猪 zhū (p.83)	pig	partial substitution (paronymy)
		书 shū (p.83)	book	
	porpoise / purpose (p. 109)	鲤鱼lǐ yú (p.139)	carp	substitution (paronymy)
		理由lǐ yóu (p.139)	excuse	

Since it is impossible to maintain the linguistic structure and meaning of the ST nonsense at the same time, the ST context has to be turned into a new contextual setting. To achieve the same comic effect, Zhao made necessary changes of the original context to create new nonsense by making a complete or partial substitute. Take the 'not / knot' pair for example.

'I beg your pardon,' said Alice very humbly: 'you had got to the fifth bend, I think?'

'I had NOT!' cried the Mouse, sharply and very angrily.

'A knot!' said Alice, always ready to make herself useful, and looking anxiously about her. 'Oh, do let me help to undo it!' (Carroll 2001: p.36)

阿丽思很谦虚地道，"对不住，对不住。你说到了第五个弯弯儿嘞，不是吗？"

那老鼠很凶很怒地道，"我没有到！"

阿丽思道，"你没有刀吗？让我给你找一把罢！"（Zhao 1988: p.35）

(Back translation: Alice said very humbly, 'I beg your pardon. Pardon. You had got to the fifth bend, didn't you?' / The mouse said angrily, 'I have not dào (arrived)!'/ Alice said, 'Don't you have a dāo (knife)? Let me offer you one!')

Zhao created a new pair of Chinese pun '到' (dào) and '刀' (dāo). 'Knot' was changed into 'knife' (dāo in Chinese) so the original sentence 'do let me help to undo it!' was substituted for a new one 'Let me offer you one!' Though the translation is not literally faithful to the original meaning, it succeeds in reproducing the humorous effect in a creative way.

For another example, when the Mock Turtle told Alice about his history, he said his former teacher was a Turtle, but he used to call him Tortoise. The comic effect is achieved by the homophonic 'tortoise' and 'taught us' in the original text. Zhao rewrote the whole conversation in his translation by introducing the pair of Chinese homophones '老忘' and '老王'. It is a traditional Chinese way to call someone by adding '老' ('old' in English) before his/her surname to show the familiarity between each other. '王' is a common Chinese surname while '忘' with a similar pronunciation with '王' means 'forgetful'. At the same time, '王' also has the meaning of 'king' when used as a noun, so Alice mistakenly thought the teacher was kind of king. In this sense Zhao's creation added more humour to the original.

'We went to school in the sea. The master was an old Turtle – we used to call him Tortoise –'

'Why did you call him Tortoise, if he wasn't one?' Alice asked.

'We called him Tortoise because he taught us,' said the Mock Turtle angrily: 'really you are very dull!' (Carroll 2001: p. 100)

"我们小的时候到海里去进学堂。我们的先生是一个老甲鱼——我们总叫他老忘。"

阿丽思问道，"他是个什么王，你们会叫他老王呢？"

那亲甲鱼怒道，"我们管这老甲鱼叫老忘，因为他老忘记了教我们的工课。你怎么这么笨？"
(Zhao 1988: p. 127)

(Back translation: 'We went to school in the sea when we were little. The master was an old Turtle – we used to call him Lao Wang (Old King / Old Forgetful literally).' / 'What kind of king was he? Why did you call him Old King?' Alice asked. / 'We called him Old Forgetful because he always forget to teach us lessons,' said the Mock Turtle angrily: 'really you are very dull!')

The rendering of the last sentence is also very creative, making the whole translated version reasonable. His addition 'he always forgot to teach us lessons' justifies why '老忘' is called instead of '老王'. His creation makes the humorous effect of the original perfectly presented to the Chinese readers.

Take the homonymy 'mine' for another example. Zhao maintained one meaning and translated it into the correspondent Chinese character '矿' and meanwhile omitted the other meaning used as a pronoun. Therefore, in translating the sentence 'The more there is of mine, the less there is of yours', he introduced a new Chinese character '旷' which is the homophone of '矿' and therefore created a new nonsense. Zhao himself explained in the preface, 'It is impossible to literally translate the sentence, so I had to translate it in this way to maintain the same effect. But it is far different from the original.' (Zhao 1988: translator's preface p.1; author's translation) See the following Chinese translation.

那公爵夫人似乎任阿丽思说什么，她总以为然的，她道，"自然是个矿物。这儿近处有一个芥末矿，于此可见——'所旷愈多，所学愈少。'"（Zhao 1988: p. 119）

(Back translation: The Duchess seemed ready to agree to everything that Alice said. She said, 'It is certainly a mine. There's a large mustard-mine near here. And the moral of that is –"The more one gets absent, the less one learns."')

To make his translation acceptable to readers, Zhao created a new nonsense to replace the original one. In spite of the difference, readers can feel the humour.

Besides, Zhao at times made an addition to put his new pun across to the Chinese readers. Take the 'dry' pun for instance. Carroll adopted two different meanings of 'dry' to create the humour: one is 'to make something not wet' as a verb while the other is 'dull' as an adjective. However, the correspondent Chinese character '干' (gān) does not have the meaning of 'being dull'.

阿丽丝道，"我听你讲得一点趣儿都没有，简直像嚼着腊也似的。"那老鼠道，"那不好吗？腊头在外头都能使得东西又干又热，你吃在嘴里还不干起来热起来吗？" (Zhao 1988: p. 31)

(Back translation: Alice said, 'What you told is not interesting at all, as if we are chewing a candle.' The Mouse asked, 'Is that good? The candle wick can make things dry outside, so can't you get dry when chewing it in your mouth?')

To create the comic effect, Zhao added a dialogue between Alice and Mouse before Alice answered 'as wet as ever'. He added to the TT the Chinese idiom '味如嚼蜡' (wèi rú jiáo là, which means 'tasting like candle' literally in English), which shares the same meaning as the English idiom 'as dry as sawdust'. Readers couldn't help bursting into laughter in reading his creative addition.

4.1.2 Translation of Malapropisms

In dealing with malapropisms, Zhao adopted the same method by deliberately replacing the correct Chinese character with a wrongly-written one which shares the same or a similar pronunciation with the correct one. Among the 18 malapropisms in the ST, 2 were translated literally. One is 'a mouse-of a mouse-to a mouse-O mouse' which is about the Latin grammatical formations, and the other word is 'Uglifying'.

Table 4 Zhao's Translation of Carroll's Malapropisms

NO.	Carroll's Malapropism	Zhao's Translation with *Pinyin* (phonetic transcription)	Related Correct Chinese Characters with *Pinyin*	Translation Device
1	antipathies (p.13)	倒 猪 世 界 (p.7) dào zhū shì jiè	倒 足 世 界 dào zú shì jiè	partial substitution (malapropism)
2	curiouser (p.20)	希 汉, 切 怪 (p.17) xī hàn qiē guài	稀 罕, 奇 怪 xī han qí guài	partial substitution (malapropism)
3	A mouse-of a mouse-to a mouse-a mouse-O mouse (p.26)	主格，一个耗子—— 领格，一个耗子的—— 司格，在一个耗子—— 受格，一个耗子—— 称呼格，哦，耗子		literal translation+ explanation
4	Reeling (p.102)	练 浮 (p.129) liàn fú	练 字 liàn zì	substitution (malapropism)
5	Writhing (p.102)	泻 滞 (p.129) xiè zhì	写 字 xiě zì	partial substitution (malapropism)
6	Ambition (p.102)	夹 术 (p.129) jiā shù	加 术 jiā shù	partial substitution (malapropism)
7	Distraction (p.102)	钳 术 (p.129) qián shù	减 术 jiǎn shù	partial substitution (malapropism)
8	Uglification (p.102)	沉 术 (p.129) chén shù	乘 术 chéng shù	partial substitution (malapropism)
9	Derision (p.102)	丑 术 (p.129) chǒu shù	除 术 chú shù	partial substitution (malapropism)
10	Uglifying (p.102)	丑 术 chǒu shù (p.129)		literal translation
11	Mystery (p.102)	里 湿 (p.129) lǐ shī	历 史 lì shǐ	partial substitution (malapropism)

12	Mystery, ancient and modern (p.102)	上 骨里湿 (p.129) shàng gǔ lǐ shī 中 骨里湿 zhōng gǔ lǐ shī	上 古 历 史 shàng gǔ lì shǐ 中 古 历 史 zhōng gǔ lì shǐ	partial substitution (malapropism)
13	Seaography (p.102)	底 里 (p.129) dǐ lǐ	地 理 dì lǐ	partial substitution (malapropism)
14	Drawling (p.102)	涂 化 (p.129) tú huà 尖 鼻 化 (p.129) jiān bí huà	图 画 tú huà 铅 笔 画 qiān bǐ huà	partial substitution (malapropism)
15	Stretching (p.102)	水 菜 化 (p.129) shuǐ cài huà	水 彩 画 shuǐ cǎi huà	partial substitution (malapropism)
16	Fainting in Coils (p.102)	油 化 (p.129) yóu huà	油 画 yóu huà	partial substitution (malapropism)
17	Laughing (p.102)	腊 钉 (p.129) là dīng	拉 丁 lā dīng	partial substitution (malapropism)
18	Grief (p.102)	稀 腊 (p.129) xī là	希 腊 xī là	partial substitution (malapropism)

These examples present Carroll's wit in wordplay and Zhao's creativity and fidelity to the essence of the original work. By adopting the same device of malapropism in his translation, Zhao successfully reproduces the artistic effects and achieves the purpose of entertaining the target readers. Take 'curiouser' for instance. The correct comparative degree form of 'curious' is 'more curious'. Carroll deliberately misspelt the correct form by using another comparative degree form the suffix '-er'. Zhao ingeniously miswrote the correct Chinese phrases '稀罕' and '奇怪' into paronymies '希汉' and '切怪' which share similar pronunciations with the correct ones . As a result, the picture of Alice's disorder produced in the original is vividly presented before the Chinese readers. For the words 'antipodes', Zhao rendered it into '倒足世界' which literally means a world where people walk with their feet up and their heads on the ground. It vividly describes the world in Alice's imagination. To make the translation as comic as the original, Zhao deliberately replaced the correct character '足' which literally means 'foot' with a paronymy '猪' which means 'pig' in English. As to the amusing subjects mentioned by the Mock Turtle (Examples from 4 to 18 in the above table), Zhao skilfully adopted the device of malapropism in his translation. The Chinese characters Zhao used share a same or similar phonetic transcription with the correct ones. The sound effects produced by those wrongly written Chinese characters remind us of someone who cannot speak clearly and always says something similar but wrong. At the same time, to make his translation stay closer to the Turtle's living environment Zhao used the words closely related to the ocean, for instance, '浮' whcih means 'floating on the surface of water', '沉' which means 'sinking', '夹' (clip) and '钳' (pincer) which remind the readers of crabs, lobsters and other sea creatures.

5. Conclusion

Nonsense 'embodies the contradiction between verbal chaos and verbal constraints, between the need for meaning and the refusal of meaning…' (Lecercle 2008) However, the semantic void or possibility of nonsense grants translators 'maximal creativity' (Lecercle 1994: 67). Even though there is always a tension between creativity and fidelity, creation is not going astray from the original, but to achieve fidelity to the essence of the ST. Despite the vast difference between Chinese and English, Zhao translated most of the lexical nonsense into nonsense mainly by creating a complete new one or providing a partial substitution, faithfully and creatively reconstructing a wonderland in the Chinese context. There is a direct correlation between Carroll's nonsense creation devices and Zhao's strategies in dealing with them. His translation is a marvellous example of fidelity to the 'nonsense essence' of the original text by adopting the devices Carroll used. Meanwhile he overcame the linguistic and cultural limitations to reproduce the similar artistic images and aesthetic value of the original and achieved the correspondent amusing effect as well. His translation reads vastly different from Carroll's nonsense linguistically, yet it maintains the resemblance in spirit with the original. His creation prolongs the original's life, and meanwhile gives it a second life. In this sense, his translation can be regarded as creative fidelity.

References

Boase-Beier, J. and Holman, M. (1999). 'Introduction', in Jean Boase-Beier and Michael Holman (Eds), *The Practices of Literary Translation: Constraints and Creativity*. Manchester: St Jerome.

Boase-Beier, J. (2011). *A critical introduction to translation studies*. London: Continuum.

Carroll, L. (2001). *The Annotated Alice: Alice's Adventures in Wonderland & Through the Looking-Glass*. Martin Gardner (Ed). London: Penguin Books.

Carroll, L. (1988). *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass and What Alice Found There.*(trans. Zhao,Yuanren), Beijing: The Commercial Press.

Chaparro, A. (2000). Translating the Untranslatable: Carroll, Carner and Alícia en Terra Catalana? *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Studies*, 6(1), 19-28.

Delabastita, D. (1993). *There's a double tongue: An investigation into the translation of Shakespeare's wordplay, with special reference to Hamlet.* Amsterdam: Rodopi.

Feng, Z. (2009). Translation and reconstruction of a wonderland: Alice's Adventures in China. *Neohelicon,* 36(1), 237-251.

Heyman, M. (1999). A New Defense of Nonsense; or, Where Then Is His Phallus? and Other Questions Not to Ask. *Children's Literature Association Quarterly,* 4, 187-194.

Lecercle, J. (1994). *Philosophy of nonsense: The intuitions of Victorian nonsense literature / Jean-Jacques Lecercle.* London: Routledge.

Lecercle, J. (2008). Translate it, translate it not. *Translation Studies,* 1, 90-102.

Mateo, M. (2010). Review on The Problem of Translating 'Jabberwocky'. *The Nonsense Literature of Lewis Carroll and Edward Lear and their Spanish Translators by* Pilar Orero. *Target*, (22)1, 130–137.

Munday, J. (2009). The Creative Voice of the Translator of Latin American Literature. *Romance Studies*, 27(4), 246-258.

Orero-Clavero, M. (2002). *The translation of Nonsense into Spanish with particular reference to Lewis Carroll and Edward Lear*, supervised by M. Baker. Manchester: UMIST.

Pycior, H. (1984). At the Intersection of Mathematics and Humor: Lewis Carroll's "*Alices*" and Symbolical Algebra. *Victorian Studies,* 1, 149-170.

Shen, W. (1988). *Dairies of Hu Shi*. Tianyuan: Shan Xi Education Publishing House.

Tigges, W. (1988). *The Anatomy of Literary Nonsense*, Rodopi: Amsterdam.