

Yuhua Xia

*Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales (France), Institut français de
recherche sur l'Asie de l'Est (France)*

Beijing, China

Do you speak Translationese? A study of pseudotranslations on Chinese social networks

The term *Fanyi qiang* 翻译腔 means literally “tone of translation”. Rather pejorative, it refers to a certain type of translation in the context of translation studies, which should be avoided or even eliminated according to a prescriptive vision and which is close to what Eugene Nida call “translationese”. However, in literary criticism and in everyday use, the Chinese word means a style of writing that reads as if it has been translated from a text written in another language, so it is even closer to the literal meaning of “translationese” (“translation” plus the suffix “-ese” which means having the qualities or characteristics of something) than Nida’s usage of it.

Pseudotranslations that appear on Chinese social networks under the name of *fanyi qiang* have both meanings of the word. On the one hand, they are netizens’ parodies of “translationese” in Nida’s context, which is what they consider as typical style of translation. On the other hand, with their parodies, netizens have created a number of translation-like texts, which are characterized by their conscientiously foreignized discourse. Unlike pseudotranslations in Western literary history, these short texts posted and spread on Chinese social networks by amateurs are mostly just a game with other netizens, but their various approaches to fabricating translationese represent both a perception of translation and a perception of the Other: languages of the Other, poetics of the Other.