



**HAL**  
open science

# Between translating and commenting. Accounting for complexity in the chains of transmission of textual knowledge (Keynote speech)

Rainier Lanselle

## ► To cite this version:

Rainier Lanselle. Between translating and commenting. Accounting for complexity in the chains of transmission of textual knowledge (Keynote speech). The 14th International Conference on Digital Archives and Digital Humanities, Taiwan Digital Humanities Association; Digital Humanities Research Centre, National Taiwan University; Department of Chinese Literature, National Cheng Kung University, Dec 2023, Tainan, Taiwan. hal-04325993

**HAL Id: hal-04325993**

**<https://hal.science/hal-04325993>**

Submitted on 10 Dec 2023

**HAL** is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.



Distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License

**Between translating and  
commenting. Accounting for  
complexity in the chains of  
transmission of textual knowledge**

**翻譯和評論之間：衡量文本知識  
傳播過程的複雜性**

**LANSELLE Rainier 藍 碁**

**EPHE-PSL & CRCAO**

## Text of the keynote

I can't thank the organisers of this conference enough for inviting me as keynote speaker.

In fact, the more I consulted the programme, the more I realised what a wealth of expertise had been brought together for these three days of meetings, and the incredible erudition of the participants, the more I realised that it must have been by mistake that I was in this place.

To speak before you, dear colleagues, is an immense honour, but also a humbling experience.

When I read the programme for these days, I said to myself that the last thing I would do would be to think that I was there to teach you a lesson, or to try to give you some kind of lecture. I have neither the means nor the pretence to do so.

I believe that unless they risk ridicule, keynote speakers know that they are there less to deliver knowledge than to assess the situation, just to offer a brief moment of pause and reflection in the midst of the flood of intense exchanges that make up a conference such as this one.

In any case, that's how I see my role today, one in which I fully assume my position as an outsider.

An outsider to so many areas of expertise in which the distinguished colleagues gathered here have made their mark through their work, their research, their teaching and also their methodological innovations.

An outsider who, as an ordinary scholar, does not boast any particular knowledge of any aspect whatsoever, whether technical or theoretical, in the field of digital humanities, but who nonetheless hopes to see it developed.

An outsider, finally, who is a foreigner, a European, a Frenchman, who necessarily observes Chinese culture and its heritage from afar, with an admiration and fascination that has

never waned for... many years, and who is genuinely interested in everything that can be developed to better know and understand it.

With all that *caveat* by way of introduction, and a request that you forgive me in advance for anything I might say that seems naive, uninformed or completely beside the point, it's still with great pleasure that I'll take the liberty of sharing a few experiences or reflections with you, however illegitimate my position may be - and bearing in mind that we're at the end of the day and that I'm not allowed to be (too!) boring!

As I was preparing this speech with the programme of the conference in front of me, I thought that there were many things, in the titles of the panels for example, that resonated with my concerns and interests.

I was delighted to see how the legitimacy of the digital humanities was not only growing steadily, but also affecting an increasingly wide range of fields.

Even before hearing today's talks, as I prepared this paper, many of the titles of the programme's panels and individual communications resonated in my mind with a certain familiarity. For example, reading about “accurate judgment and situation restoring” as “The Only Path Which Must Be Passed to Humanities Research”; or reading about digital humanities in relation to questions of “Methodology and Hermeneutics” in the fields of “Literature, Language, Classics & History”; or about approaches to “Named Entity Recognition and Extraction in Classical Chinese Texts”, or more generally about “Classical Literature Text Analysis and Digital Humanities”.

Before listening to them, I also had a feeling about what the papers in the panel “Taking the risk of digital sinology: A mindset and its methodological challenges in France” might be about. When I read the word “mindset”, I thought that my French colleagues and I must be thinking about the same things...

Being one of them, I'd like to share with you my personal experience and some of the problems I've encountered.

These problems are part of a critical vision of some areas of knowledge, a critical vision that dates back long before the emergence of digital humanities, and even before the spread of computers.

I am referring to the very critique of the notion of the “human sciences”, a notion that the philosopher Michel Foucault was highly critical of. For his contemporary, the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, accepting the notion of “human sciences” to nothing less than giving in to “the call of servitude”. Was the knowledge produced by the “human sciences” objective knowledge, or was it merely the emanation, in all its possible forms, of a discourse, ideological and pre-oriented as such? Should the humanities be condemned as sciences from the outset?

Without wading into this long history, we can only observe that, just about everywhere in the world, humanities are currently experiencing a crisis, while the usefulness of the knowledge they produce is being questioned, and the teaching of humanities is in decline everywhere. In universities all over the world, entire departments are being closed. In the West, if Chinese studies are relatively protected, it is not so much because of the knowledge they produce as because they are qualified to teach the Chinese language.

It is not insignificant that this crisis is occurring at a time when the humanities are increasingly faced with new possibilities, in particular that of seeing their knowledge move from what has long been one form or another of empiricism to an increasingly objective rationality.

So, hard sciences or soft sciences? Where do the humanities stand today, given the possibilities offered by the development of digital tools?

I've always had a certain distaste for the term "hard sciences", which is often used by my academic colleagues - it's a highly inappropriate expression, whereas we should be talking more accurately about "experimental sciences".

But instead of being so-called "soft sciences", why shouldn't the humanities have the right, the possibility, even the duty, to produce objective knowledge, and to be themselves experimental?

In my life as a researcher in premodern Chinese literature, I have, like you in all your different fields, read hundreds of articles and books, and something that has often struck me is the extent to which, in our fields, we move easily from the particular to the general in a way that is sometimes very bold, even unfounded.

This is probably a feature that is much more salient in Western sinology than in the sinology of Taiwan, the Chinese mainland, Japan or other East Asian countries. In the West, people love to generalise about China and Chinese culture.

This is something I have often encountered, and frequently criticised, when scholarly journals have sent me articles for review. I've read some remarkable and sometimes highly researched papers on all sorts of subjects, where the author, on the basis of what they presented, ended up venturing into generalities without the slightest hint of proof.

What authorises you, for example, to speak of all the women of the literate classes of the eighteenth century on the basis of the particular author you have studied? Or to decide on the commentary practices of an entire period when all you have done is study a few samples that you consider to be representative, and when your conclusions are perhaps more the result of a selection that you have more or less deliberately pre-orientated? (Here I am hinting at actual experiences.)

Such research has often struck me as impressionistic, working on intuitions - not necessarily wrong, by the way - but

insufficiently supported by evidence, and very often oversimplifying the complexity of actual situations.

In short, ideological bias, sometimes well-intentioned, the desire to find what we want to find, can be a danger that threatens all research in the human sciences in a way that is obviously more acute than in the experimental sciences, where we would undoubtedly be more quickly disqualified if we indulged in such practices.

Many of my fellow sinologists in France and Europe are still visibly wary of the digital humanities, perhaps because, by increasing the objectivity of the data, they would reduce the degree of free interpretation in which they put a lot of themselves - and their narcissism as scholars, I would be tempted to say.

They are unaware that this resistance is dangerously eroding the discipline, preventing it from regaining the legitimacy conferred by the objectivity of the knowledge it produces.

I am firmly convinced that the accumulation of objective data, the construction of proof through experimentation, far from reducing the room for manoeuvre of the human sciences, can only serve to establish their legitimacy, by drawing up new, sometimes unsuspected objects.

In Europe, in France, there are still an incredibly large number of colleagues who, as soon as you talk to them about digital resources applied to the humanities, history and literature, still roll their eyes and start by saying that you shouldn't fetishise the digital humanities - when it's they who are fetishising their old routines.

I was recently struck by the case of a colleague who gave a series of lectures on terms of politeness and civility in novels of the Ming-Qing period. The talk focused mainly on terminology: terms of address, expressions of courtesy, but also references to sartorial attributes in all their social and hierarchical functions.

When his audience asked him, understandably enough, if he used automated searches for terms in corpora, which he could have done very easily on such a subject, he replied that he didn't believe in statistics and that he didn't think going in that direction would change the results in any way. He went on with his rather banal presentations, which clearly had the effect of oversimplifying data that was in all likelihood much more complex than what he was presenting.

This kind of reaction may seem surprising to you, but it is still widespread in Western sinology in general. In any case, this is clearly the case in my field, that of literature. But perhaps more worryingly, we also can see this attitude among historians. It seems that one of the fears felt in the face of technical means that could change the way we see things and their complexity lies in the fear of a loss of control over discourse, of the disappearance of personal constructions which, they believe, is what gives the scholar their true value.

However, the scientific method, if there is such a thing, consists in allowing oneself to be surprised by what one has not seen, or not seen well enough before, but also in suspending one's judgement until one has collected sufficient evidence.

I recall a recent article by a researcher from Finland in *The Journal of the European Association for Chinese Studies*. <Slides # 2-3>

He was interested in the construction of discourse in the famous 1695 anthology, *Guwen guanzhi* 古文觀止, which he began by recalling what a reputation it had for being the bearer, through the choice of its texts, of a rather rigid Confucian ideology, made within the framework of imperial orthodoxy.

He then developed a method for systematically searching for terms and calculating the relative importance of the texts included in the anthology, and arrived at conclusions that largely contradicted this conventional belief. Analysing the collected data, he showed, on the contrary, how the anthology promoted a wide range of opposing points of view, gave pride of



place to individual judgement, and even included numerous allusions to the very opposite of authoritarianism in politics.

He showed two things: firstly, that it was possible to speak of “*Guwen Guanzhi* as a Subtle Challenge to State Orthodoxy”, but also indirectly, from a methodological point of view, how the use of digital means enabled “Reading between the Lines”, in other words enabled the emergence of new avenues of vision.

He was able to demonstrate the complexity hidden behind an appearance of unity, but also how extracting digital data from texts translated into a form of commentary on the text, without the researcher having to put a great deal of subjectivity into it.

I am a specialist in vernacular narrative literature from the late Ming/early Qing period.

I have long studied seventeenth-century *huaben* 話本 literature, the collections published by authors and editors such as Feng Menglong 馮夢龍 (1574-1645), Ling Mengchu 凌濛初 (1580-1644) and many others.

I was a student of André Lévy (雷威安, 1925-2017), and was involved with him and other colleagues in the publication of a major five-volume collection in French entitled *Inventaire analytique et critique du conte chinois en langue vulgaire* (Analytical and critical inventory of Chinese vernacular story, or 話本總目提要). <Slides # 4-5> This undertaking, although not widely known, is nonetheless unique in Western sinology. With more than two thousand pages, this collection gives detailed summaries of more than five hundred *huaben* 話本 and *nihuaben* 擬話本 stories, accompanied by technical notes bringing amounting to a great wealth of factual and textual information.

In a way, this series of publications, which were published in the last two decades of the last century, constituted a form of database long before there was any question of databases in the field of the humanities and sinology in particular.

My participation, when I was a young sinologist, was very formative, as it confronted me with working on close reading of very detailed aspects, but whose accumulation in large quantities was to lead to broad, almost encyclopaedic perspectives. This enabled me to read a lot of texts very early on.

In the second half of the twentieth century, André Lévy was one of the two sinologists in Western sinology who explored *huaben* literature most extensively, the other of course being Patrick Hanan 韓南 (1927-2014). The latter is much better known, however, because his work was more pleasant to read than Lévy's, writing in English gave him a considerable advantage in terms of dissemination, and he trained many students who ensured the great development of studies in Chinese vernacular literature in American sinology.

In the study of *huaben*, one thing has always fascinated me, from my first readings of this literature to the present day, and that is the rewriting phenomenon. As we know, *huaben* are to a large extent texts that are composed as rewritings and transformations of earlier texts.

Of course, this characteristic is not peculiar to this genre, and exists in all genres, at all times, in China as elsewhere in the world. But in this case there is a fascinating systematicity. Many of these stories are true literary masterpieces, extremely well written, but for the most part not the product of authors' imaginations, but the result of the rewriting work of editors and compilers. Many of them have remained famous, to the extent that it is to them that we owe the spread of certain literary themes. These *huaben* have almost always remained far more famous than the sources from which they originated.

The description of the shaping of these vernacular language narratives as regard with their sources, as it has often been presented by authors specialising in the field, is for me typical of the impressionistic, vague, intuitive and little-served-by-factual-evidence approach often found in the sinological works I

mentioned earlier. These are typical cases of what I would call a simplifying approach to complexity.

If the case of *huaben* is particularly interesting, it is because it is a literary genre for which we have an exceptionally high level of documentation on the sources of the texts.

Entire volumes, such as those by Tan Zhengbi, for example, <Slide # 6> have been devoted to cataloguing the sources of stories. New sources are constantly being discovered, both for individual stories and for entire collections, and regularly published.

In the chain of transmission of textual knowledge, it is this diachronic aspect that has been studied the most. We know, chronologically, which sources were at the origin of which stories, and we can establish more or less who rewrote them.

If we consider the number of master's theses and doctoral dissertations currently being prepared in mainland China and devoted to the way in which novels in the vernacular are written from other sources, it is clear that this is an area in which the younger generations of scholars are increasingly interested.

What we have here is a process of textual transmission chains similar to those found in translation, between ST (Source Texts) and TT (Target Texts). <Slides # 7>

But while over the last few decades Translation Studies has developed in considerable depth all the technical aspects of how these transfers are carried out, in this case the description has always remained remarkably vague.

Patrick Hanan sticks to a description that is more of a general outline, and refuses to go into detail. One gets the impression that he is embarrassed to describe this process with any precision, that he finds it difficult to account for all the elements involved in such a transfer from source text to target text.

For example, let us examine what he writes about one such *huaben* story: <Slides # 8-9-10-11-12>

In the end, you even get the impression that he is abandoning the subject as unimportant. This study, after all, may not be a worthwhile challenge.

André Lévy is no better, and in general the work of subsequent generations has remained vague on this issue.

Chinese authors do not develop this aspect much further. Hu Shiyong, for example, makes a brief reference to this process of transformation, using the general term 敷衍, but says little more about it. <Slide # 13>

However, there is a trend towards integrating how this transfer process takes place. <Slide # 14>

For myself, I'm convinced that when Chinese authors wrote a story based on an earlier one, they were as sensitive to what was being transferred as to how it was being transferred. They paid attention not only to the '*what*', but also to the '*how*'.

In this respect, we should recall how much they insisted on being accessible, on using the vernacular, on being understood by new audiences and new readers. In different ways, they often mentioned the concern to open up the text, to comment on it so as to make it intelligible in a different way. The prefaces to collections of stories, but also to many novels, are very explicit in this respect.

To achieve this, they were meticulous technicians of language, style and the art of changing points of view and ways of getting access to the text.

If we look closely at the way they operated, we can see that they had developed different means of achieving different objectives, and that they combined them together. It's also clear that they were working with the original text in front of them, on their desks.

In some cases they would simply translate: <Slides # 15-16>

It is very easy to find such cases, which demonstrate a keen awareness of the differences between literary language and vernacular language, and of their correspondences, but also of how to switch from one to the other in the most flexible way possible.

Incidentally this raises the question of how, and where, authors learned to master the written vernacular with such skill, when the education they had received was wholly focused on the classical language.

Apart from translation, there are a number of other techniques.

For example, amplified translation : <Slide # 17>

This is a massive phenomenon, present in all forms of narrative literature. Moreover, it has been observed, including in other cultural contexts and in other languages, how this phenomenon is typical of what is known as intralingual translation, where the translation itself is most often accompanied by additions that are integrated into it with the aim of making the translation more expressive, and bridging places where the original text is supposed to present “gaps” or “lacks”.

This feature is found in another of the microstrategies used by the authors, explanatory translation, or reformulating. <Slide # 18>

Conversely, rewriting in the vernacular can remain so close to the text that it can be a simple verbatim quotation, as in this other example: <Slides # 19>

Quotations are not always verbatim, and may include slight differences from the original text. They are rarely the result of an error: even very small differences are motivated and carry significance.

I can't give examples of all the techniques in use, but the textual comparisons I've made between *huaben* stories and their sources show that micro-strategies for rewriting are limited to a

relatively small number of techniques, no more than 10: **<Slide # 20>**

That said, these micro-strategies are not the whole story when it comes to comparing a target text with its source text(s).

While these micro-strategies are about what I would call a denotational level, accounting for the content of a narrative, its utterance, there are still other things that make up the narrative, and which belong not to a denotational level, but rather to an indexical one.

This indexical level includes linguistic aspects as well as aspects of enunciation. Enunciation is not the same thing as utterance. It's not just what you say, but how you say it.

It is not enough, as a matter of fact, to translate a source text into a target text by finding other formulations, other words to say the same thing, or more or less the same thing, to find synonyms to recreate a statement.

You need to know what language you're translating into. Is it vernacular or literary Chinese? When writing a vernacular story, it's common - in fact, it's the most typical case - to perform a transformation from literary to vernacular. But this is not always the case. A story belonging to vernacular literature may very well be written, from the point of view of grammar and lexicon, in classical, or literary, language, and even be the product of a translation, or an amplified translation, of a source text in classical language, into a text which will also be in classical language, but written differently. You can find many such cases.

As for the enunciative aspects, the variations are especially rich. A source text narrative is often, typically, written in a fairly neutral type of exposition, in the third person. But when an author takes this story and rewrites it as a vernacular narrative, they have a whole range of ways of giving life to the narrative. They can rewrite in all these different modes: **<Slide # 21>**

In some cases, it is a matter of changing the point of view, for example by creating dialogue situations where the original text was simply a third-person statement. In other cases, the aim is to create and maintain a very important function in the narrative, the phatic function, whose purpose is to establish a link, a form of dialogue, between the author and the reader. This is the case, of course, in passages where the author/publisher, by mimicking the manner of a storyteller, affects to engage in dialogue with the reader.

As we can see, far from having to be reduced to vague and general descriptions, a description of the processes of transformation between source texts and target texts in the formation of narratives in the *huaben* genre obeys unspoken rules that have nevertheless been observed by many authors and publishers.

There is in fact a great deal of complexity in all this, and I've become convinced that taking the best possible account of the data relating to these semantic processes would be a way of gaining a better understanding of this literature, as we can definitely infer a great deal from the factors involved in the way these narratives are given shape.

To account for this complexity, we need to be able to simultaneously consider several orders which do not belong to the same hermeneutical categories, but which are nonetheless indissociably linked. For each narrative in relation to a source, we need to be able to encompass in the same analysis both the denotational aspect (that of the micro-strategies) and the indexical aspects (those of the characteristics of language and enunciation).

I therefore carried out a few experiments, simply using spreadsheets, and made concrete textual comparisons sentence by sentence - which takes a lot of time, by the way - while putting associated tags on each significant segment of the text. In this way, multiple statistical results can be obtained, quantified according to the portions of the text concerned by a

given procedure, allowing dynamic identification of what happened during the rewriting process between ST and TT.

**<Slides # 22-23-24-25-26>**

On the basis of these experiments, I started to accumulate data, but in a relatively simple way, by storing them in spreadsheets.

By studying them, using the data in different ways and constructing graphs, I realised their potential to highlight certain procedures that might be specific to a particular story, collection, author or type of story.

The data extracted show that they are capable of constructing a form of commentary about the texts. They also provide a means of documenting issues that have not yet been sufficiently explored in the field of Chinese commentary, especially those of intralingual translation, the various forms of which seem to me to be very strongly involved in the constitution of chains of transmission of textual knowledge.

As the work of examining texts and carrying out text comparisons is extremely time-consuming, I asked myself how I could automate certain tasks in order to increase the amount of data that I had so far compiled manually.

For several months I worked to find technical solutions with someone whom we call a research engineer, a technician with no Sinological training, working for our research centre. He was more of an XML specialist. We even started experimenting at length, which led to the beginnings of an interactive online database. **<Slide # 27>**

And here I came up against difficulties that have proved insurmountable to this day. The complexity of the data to be processed simultaneously, as well as the extraction of information in various forms, proved to be tasks too complex for the technical level and skills I had at my disposal. The technician in question had no motivation to acquire new skills, as his employer, the Centre National de la Recherche



Scientifique (National Centre for Scientific Research, CNRS), offered him no incentive to do so.

I quickly realised that I was faced with the same necessity that plagues most of my colleagues in France interested with new methods, namely that if a researcher wanted to carry out innovative experiments, he would have to learn yet another trade, that of an expert in digital tools, or even a programmer.

This is obviously something I won't be doing, as it would take time away from my work as a sinologist, which, especially for a Westerner, takes up all our time as it is so long and difficult to acquire, though we never achieve more than a very modest mastery.

We are therefore confronted with a collective problem of scientific policy. In Europe, in France at any rate, sinologists, especially when they are scholars of ancient or pre-modern times, constitute a fairly conservative milieu, as I alluded to earlier. In the absence of interest in the uses of digital humanities in our fields, or even because of a silent opposition to their development, we lack the means to carry out innovative experiments, which hampers the possibility of demonstrating how new methods can help the discipline to evolve. A vicious circle is initiated, where resistance and conservatism are fuelled by the absence of anything that might challenge them.

Generally speaking, when you give a paper at a conference, and especially when you're in the position of keynote speaker, you're rather impatient to present your successes, and I'm sorry to have to report, for my part, if not a failure, at least mixed results, which, for reasons more technical and administrative than theoretical, led to a dead end.

As I said at the beginning, I didn't feel in a position to give you a lesson, and I simply wanted to share with you my personal experience as a practitioner from a European country with a fairly long sinological tradition, but a practitioner who is keen to develop his discipline.

The French sinological tradition is quite conservative, and unlike in the United States, where there is little prejudice against popular culture, in France even the simple fact of studying classical novels and theater can be viewed with suspicion. Literature in the vernacular is a long way from the noble specialities of philosophy, religion above all, or archaeology. But even in the United States and elsewhere, we absolutely need to move away from a sinology that is still pretty much based on individual intuitions, on paths where a person seeks to put forward their personal, original ideas in order to stand out from the others, and where the search for objective truths thus runs the risk of taking second place.

The processing of objective data, anything that can help to reduce prejudice and subjective bias, seems to me to be the only possible future for our discipline, without which, in the West at least, it risks declining, as it is already beginning to do.

I thank you for your attention.

**DADH2023**

第14屆  
數位典藏與數位人文國際研討會  
14th International Conference of Digital Archives and Digital Humanities

**Rainier Lanselle**

EPHE-PSL & CRCAO

**Between translating and commenting -  
Accounting for complexity in the chains of  
transmission of textual knowledge**



École Pratique  
des Hautes Études

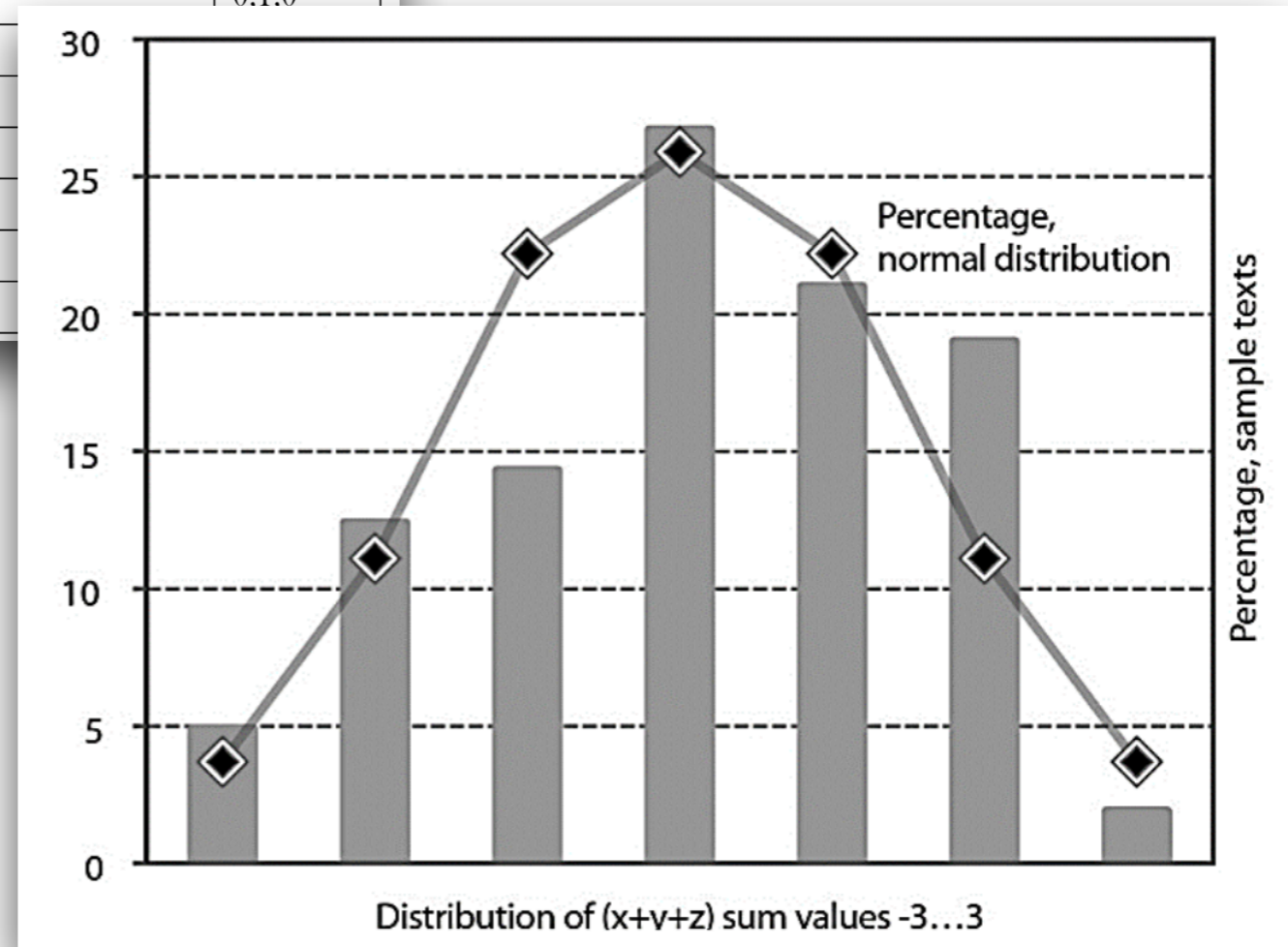
PSL 



Centre  
de recherche  
sur les civilisations  
de l'Asie orientale

Jyrki Kallio. 2020. 'Reading between the Lines of a Classical Chinese Prose Anthology: *Guwen Guanzhi* 古文觀止 as a Subtle Challenge to State Orthodoxy'. *The Journal of the European Association for Chinese Studies* 1: 59–87.

X	X		163	歐陽修·縱囚論	0,-1,0
X	X		168	歐陽修·五代史宦者傳論	-1,0,-1
X	X		170	歐陽修·豐樂亭記	1,-1,0
	X		171	歐陽修·醉翁亭記	0,0,0
	X		172	歐陽修·秋聲賦	0,0,0
			177	蘇洵·心術	0,-1,-1
			179	蘇軾·刑賞忠厚之至論	1,-1,0
	X		185	蘇軾·喜雨亭記	1,-1,0
		X	186	蘇軾·凌虛臺記	0,1,0
	X		188	蘇軾·放鶴亭記	
X	X		190	蘇軾·潮州韓文公廟碑	
	X		192	蘇軾·前赤壁賦	
	X		193	蘇軾·後赤壁賦	
		X	195	蘇軾·方山子傳	
X		X	196	蘇轍·六國論	

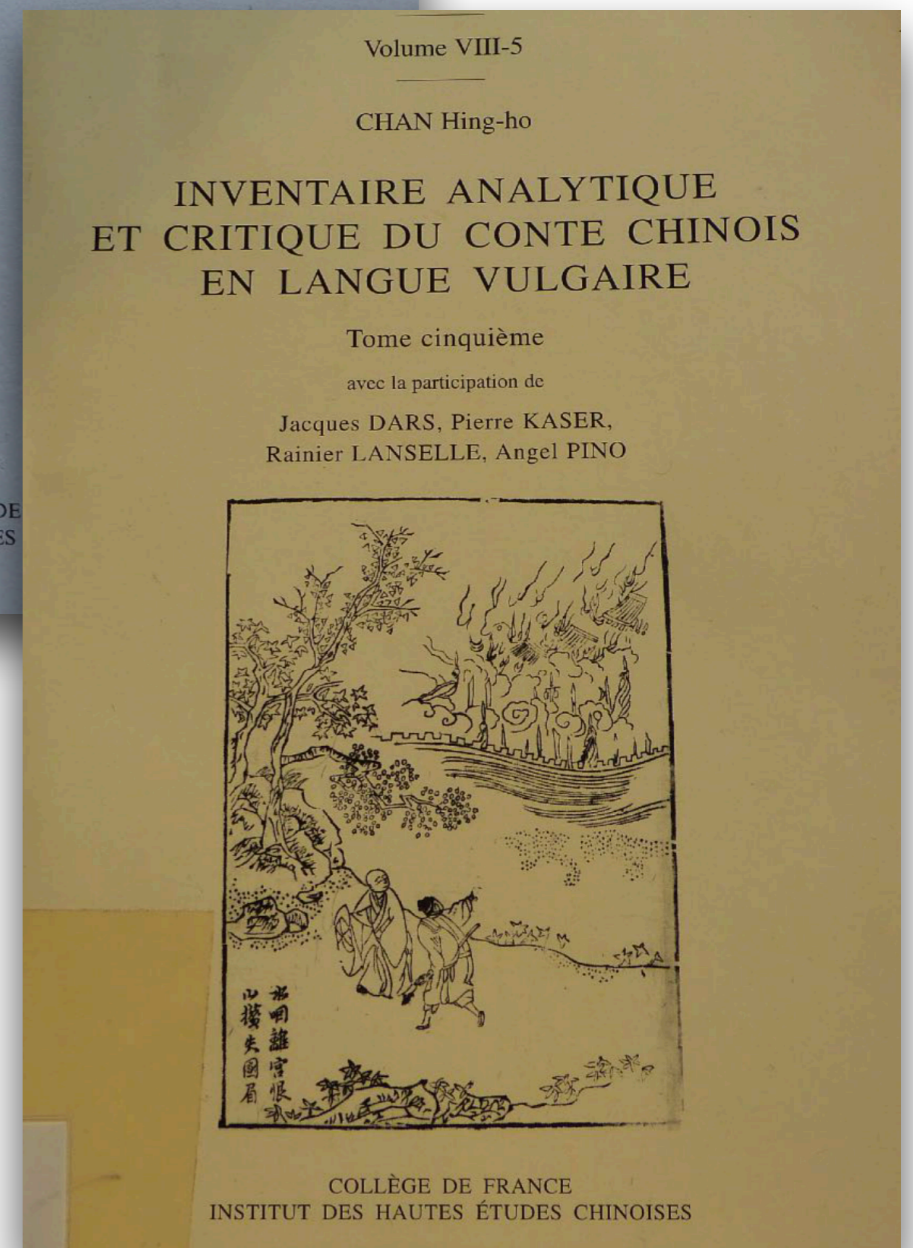
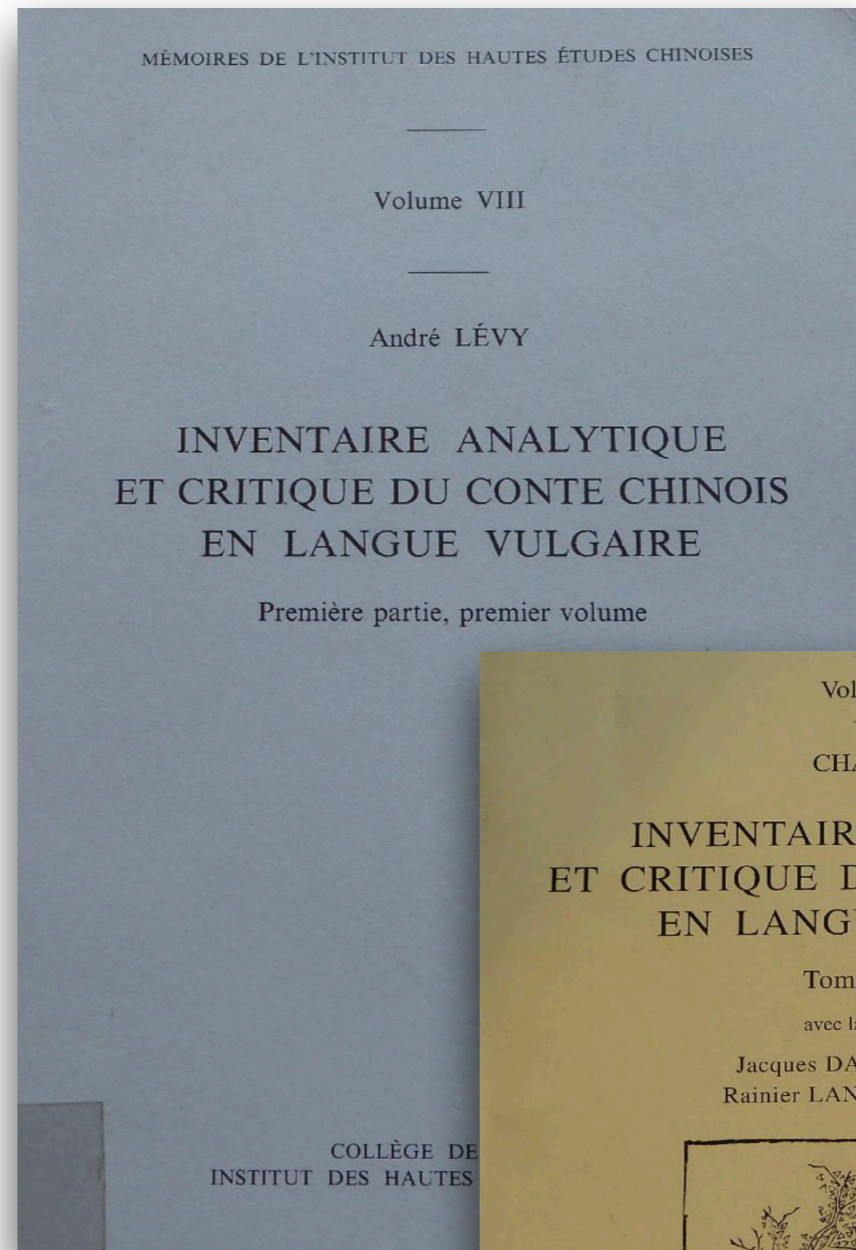


- André Lévy (雷威安, 1925-2017)
- André Lévy, Michel Cartier, Chan Hingho, Rainier Lanselle, and al., eds. 1978–2006. *Inventaire Analytique et Critique du Conte Chinois en Langue Vulgaire*. 5 vols. Paris: Collège de France, Institut des Hautes Etudes Chinoises.

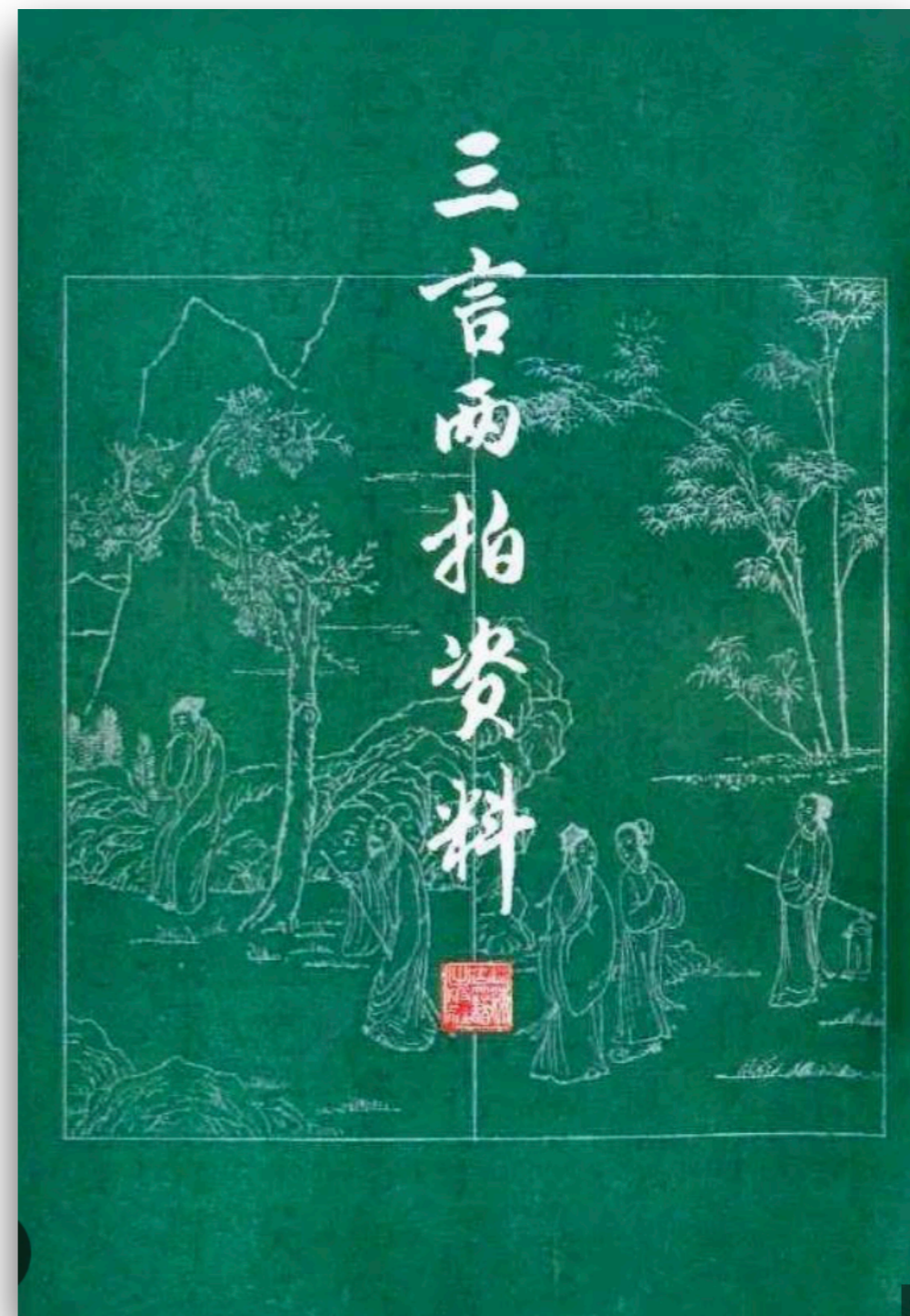
- *Inventaire Analytique et Critique du Conte Chinois en Langue Vulgaire*

→ Analytical and critical inventory of Chinese vernacular story

→ 話本總目提要



Tan, Zhengbi 譚正璧. 1980. *Sanyan Liangpai ziliao* 三言兩拍資料 (Materials related to “Three Words” and “Two Slappings” Stories). 2 vols. Shanghai: Shanghai Guji chubanshe.

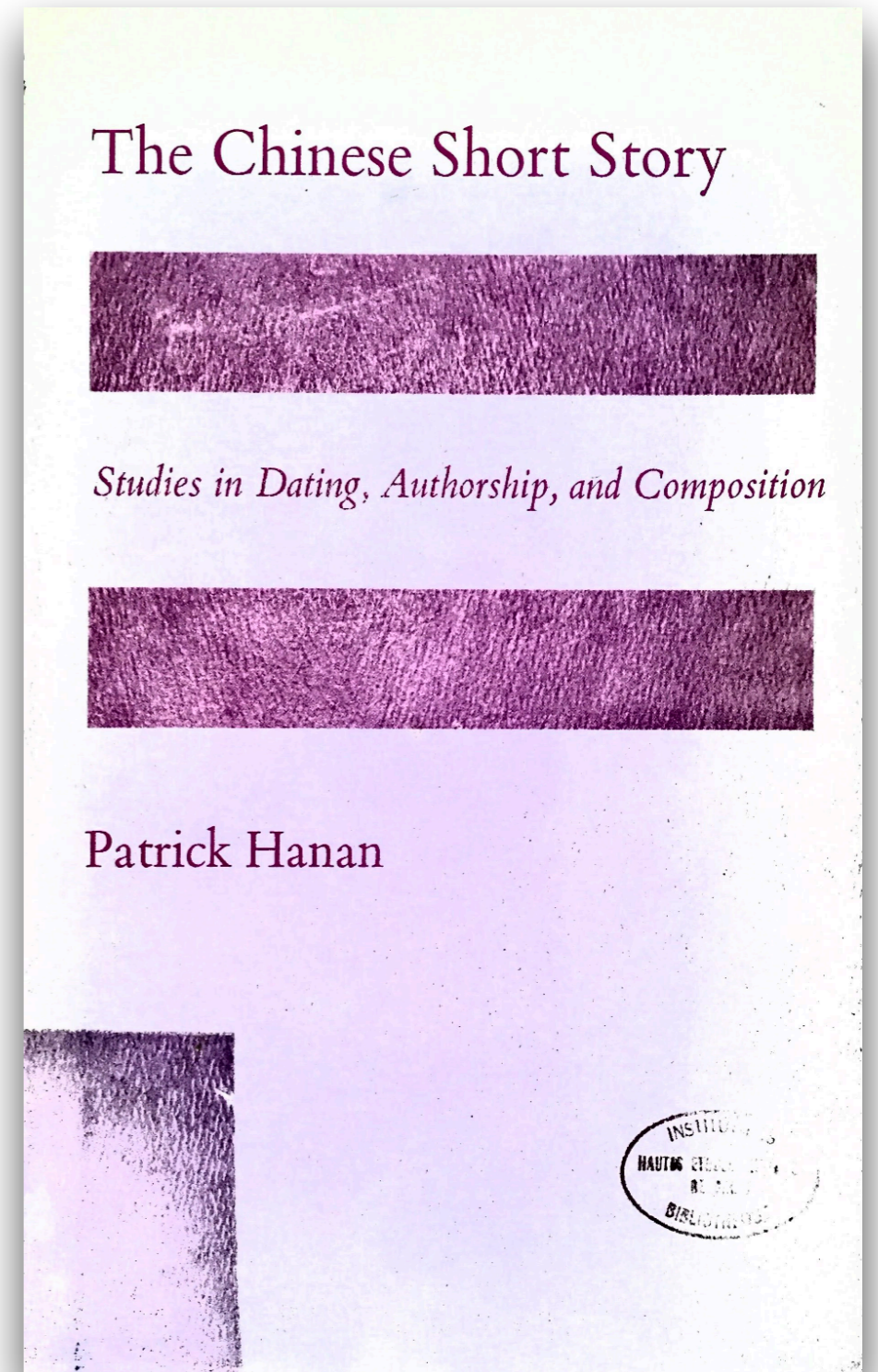




- ST (Source Text) → TT (Target Text)
- Translation Studies

- Patrick Hanan. 1973. *The Chinese Short Story. Studies in Dating, Authorship, and Composition.* Harvard-Yenching Institute. Monograph Series 21. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.  
→ p. 178

- About 《警世通言》 29



- Its language verges on Classical Chinese.
  - Attempt at describing the language
- An example of the most economical adaptation possible.
  - Attempt at characterizing the rewriting technique
- It has set pieces, but on at least two occasions they occur just where a sequence of descriptive phrases comes in the Classical, and some of the language is kept.
  - Partial account on the enunciative techniques associated with language characteristics

- This is not to say that nothing is changed. There are subtle differences of character and theme.
  - Use of the double negative; vague descriptions (“subtle”, but how so?)
- A guilty dream which the short story inserts is clearly intended to show the hero’s crisis of conscience. There is also a development in the girl’s character.
  - Reference to techniques → addition or diverging addition
- Some of the “natural” changes made when translating a Classical tale into a vernacular story.
  - Use of the translation paradigm in passing; difficulty to find accurate words to describe (use of inverted commas)

- The mode of commentary, including the prologue, is a lens through which the whole work appears different.
  - Reference to rewriting as commentary; use of images to describe (“lens”)
- The descriptive mode is set off clearly, by prosodic means; and so forth.
  - Reference to techniques → enunciative characteristics
- But there are differences also in the mode of presentation, quite apart from the story’s tendency to particularize; the vernacular sometimes multiplies incidents that occur once in the Classical.
  - Difficulty to characterize wholly: “there are differences” (which ones?); “tendency to”; “sometimes”

- In dialogue the vernacular often builds up a climactic series of questions and answers which, though common enough in the drama, is rarely found in the Classical.
  - Complexification of points of view (transformation of ST into dialogue in TT), associated with linguistic characteristics

# “敷演”

Hu, Shiying 胡士莹.  
1980. *Huaben xiaoshuo  
gailun* 话本小说概论  
(General Treatise on  
Vernacular Short Story). 2  
vols. Beijing: Zhonghua  
shuju.

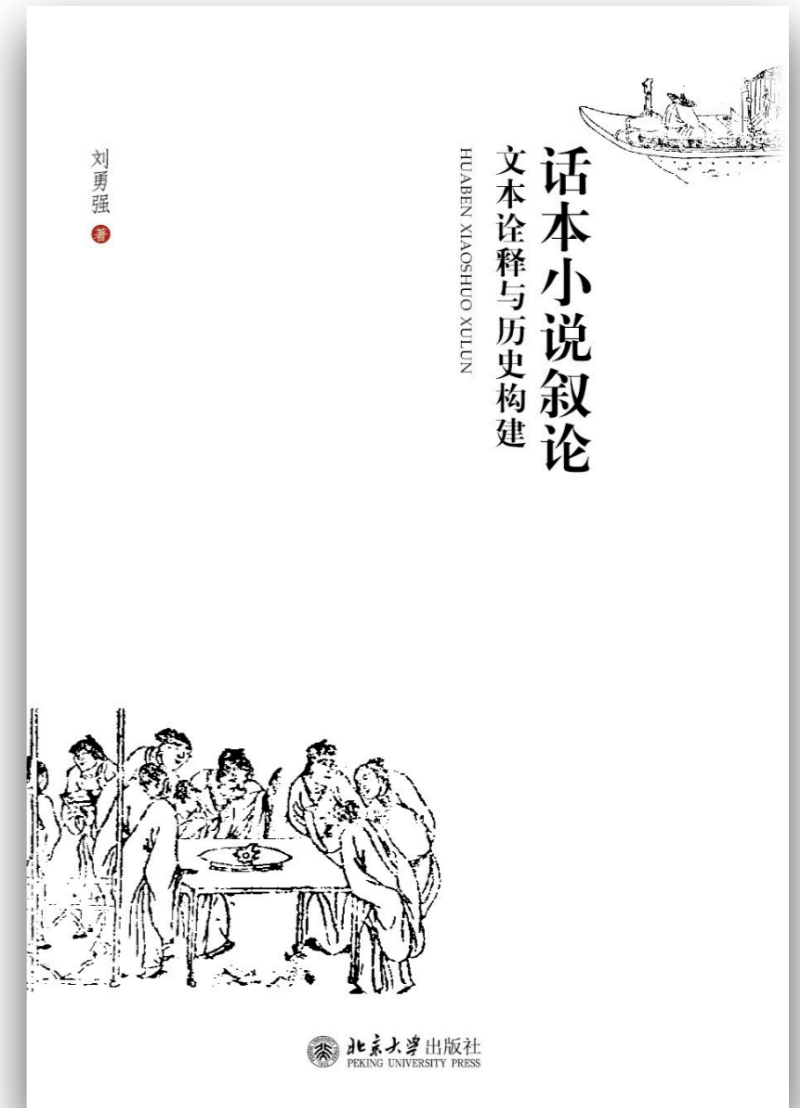


vol. 2, 455–58



Liu, Yongqiang 刘勇强. 2015. *Huaben xiaoshuo xulun: wenben quanshi yu lishi goujian* 话本小说叙论: 文本诠释与历史构建 (Assessing Huaben Stories: Textual Interpretation and Historical Construction). Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe.

→ p. 58–82





ST:

“適無所攜，而已饗主人飯，奈何？”

TT:

“適才忘帶了錢來，今飯多吃過了主人的，卻是怎好？”

ST:

適有飛蛾來火上，媪佯以扇撲之，燈滅，偽啟門點燈。

TT:

只見一個飛蛾在燈上旋轉，婆子便把扇來一撲，故意撲滅了燈，叫聲：「阿呀！老身自去點個燈來。」

ST: 盜果取其鏹而去， 劬勦中僕馬俱失所在。

TT: 那一夥強盜聽了說話，果然只取包裹來，搜了銀兩去了。程元玉急回身尋時，那馬散了韁，也不知那裡去了，僕人躲避，一發不知去向。

ST:

程德瑜者 (...) 有長者風。

TT:

姓程名德瑜(...) 不妄言笑，忠厚老成。

ST:

生自相門，窮極富貴，第宅宏麗，莫與為比。然讀書能文，敬禮賢士，故時譽翕然稱之。

TT:

生在相門，窮極富貴，第宅宏麗，莫與為比。卻又讀書能文，敬禮賢士，一時公卿間，多稱誦他好處。

1. Quotation

a. Verbatim Quotation

b. Quasi-Quotation/Amplified Quotation

2. Translation

a. Translation/Replacement by (Quasi-)Synonym

b. Amplified Translation

c. Explanatory Translation/Reformulating

3. Divergence and Addition

a. Divergence

b. Addition/Amplification

c. Diverging Addition/Diverging Amplification

4. Omission

5. Textual Displacement

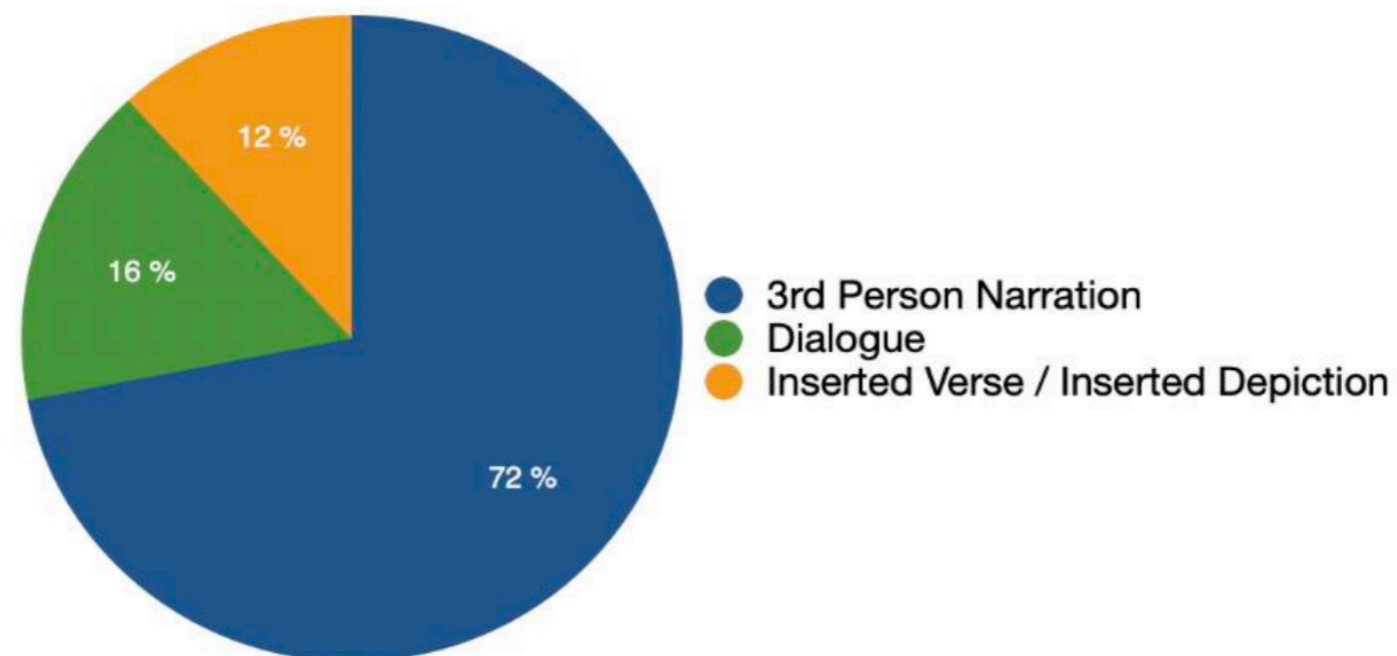
*a. Linguistic Characteristics*

- Literary Chinese
- Vernacular Chinese: Standard Guanhua
- Vernacular Chinese: Dialectal
- Mixed Language
- Bivalent

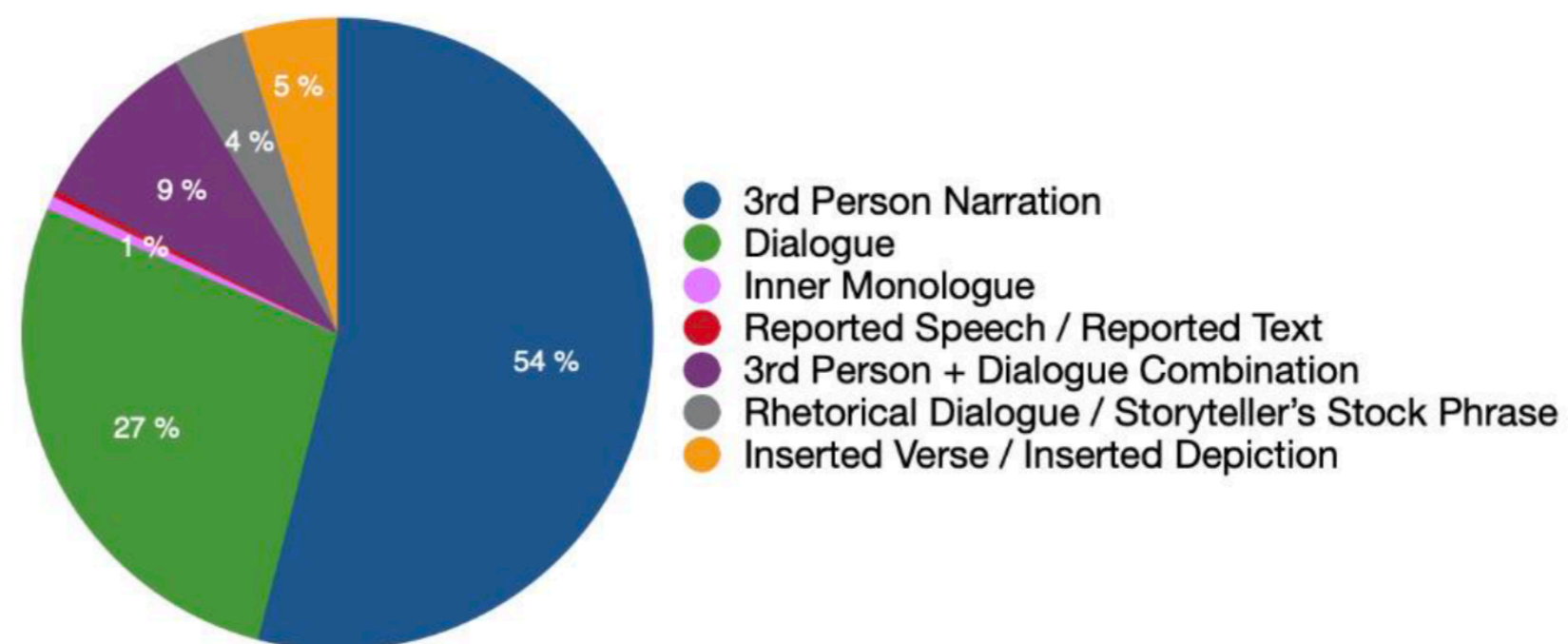
*b. Narrative Point of View*

- 1st Person Narration
- 3rd Person Narration
- Dialogue
- Inner Monologue
- Reported Speech/Reported Text
- 3rd Person + Dialogue Combination
- Rhetorical Dialogue/Storyteller's Stock Phrase
- Inserted Verse/Inserted Depiction

# Distribution of narrative points of view in ST

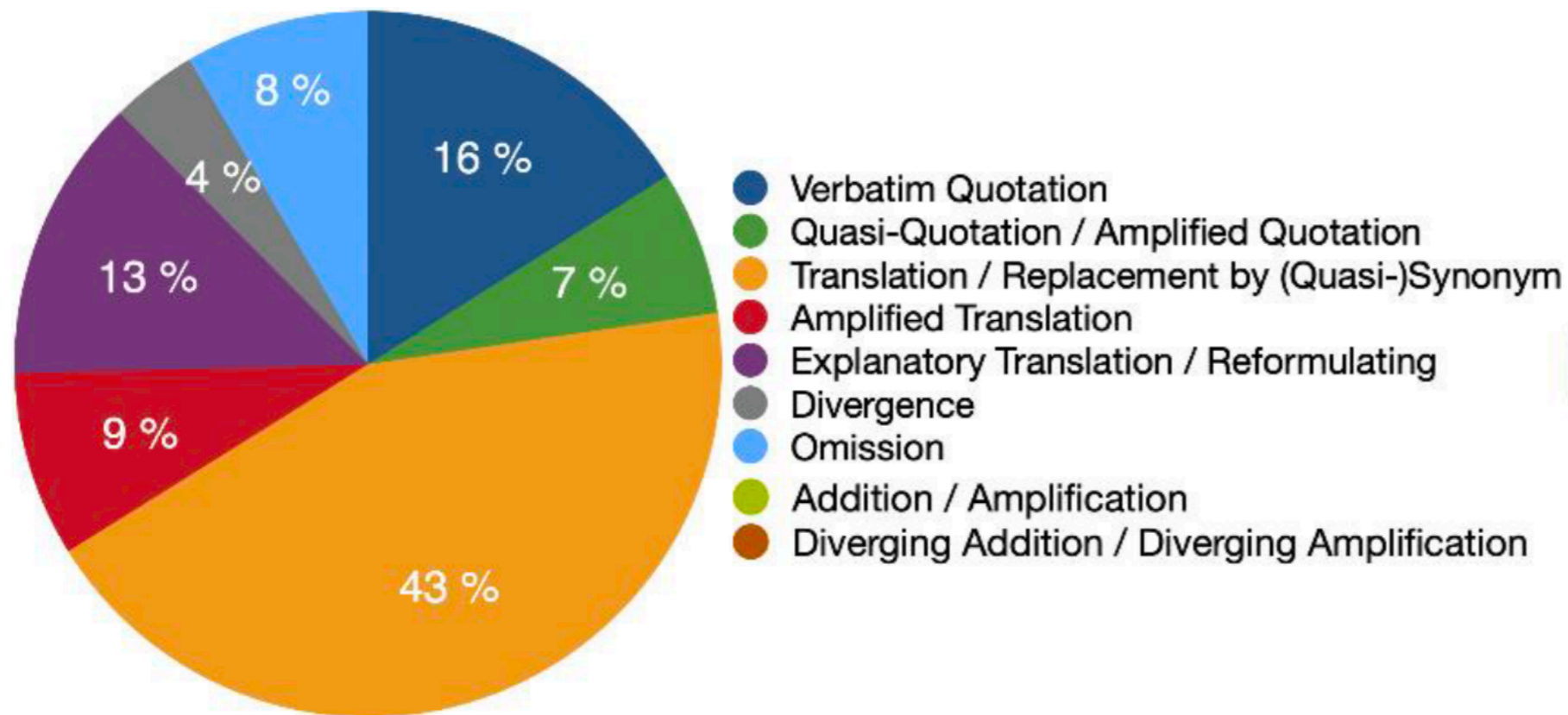


# Distribution of narrative points of view in corresponding TT

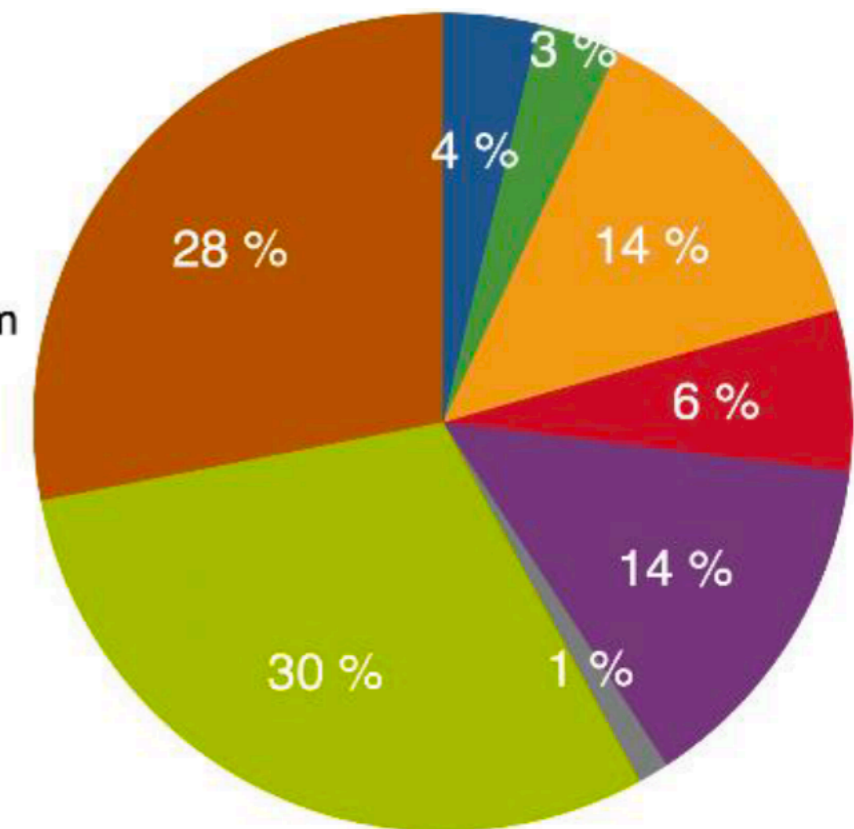




## ST treatment by micro-strategy

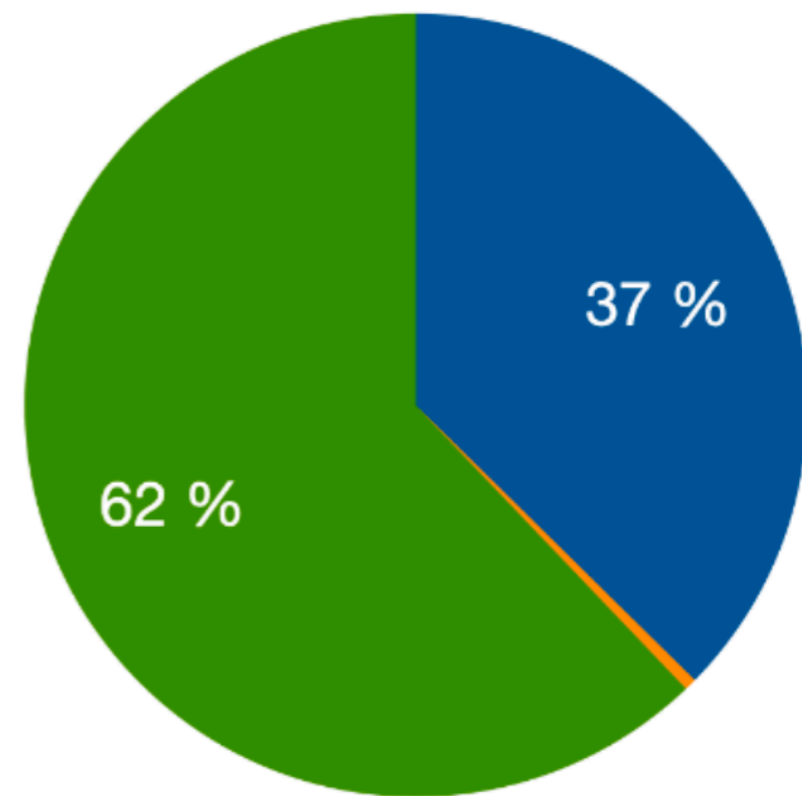
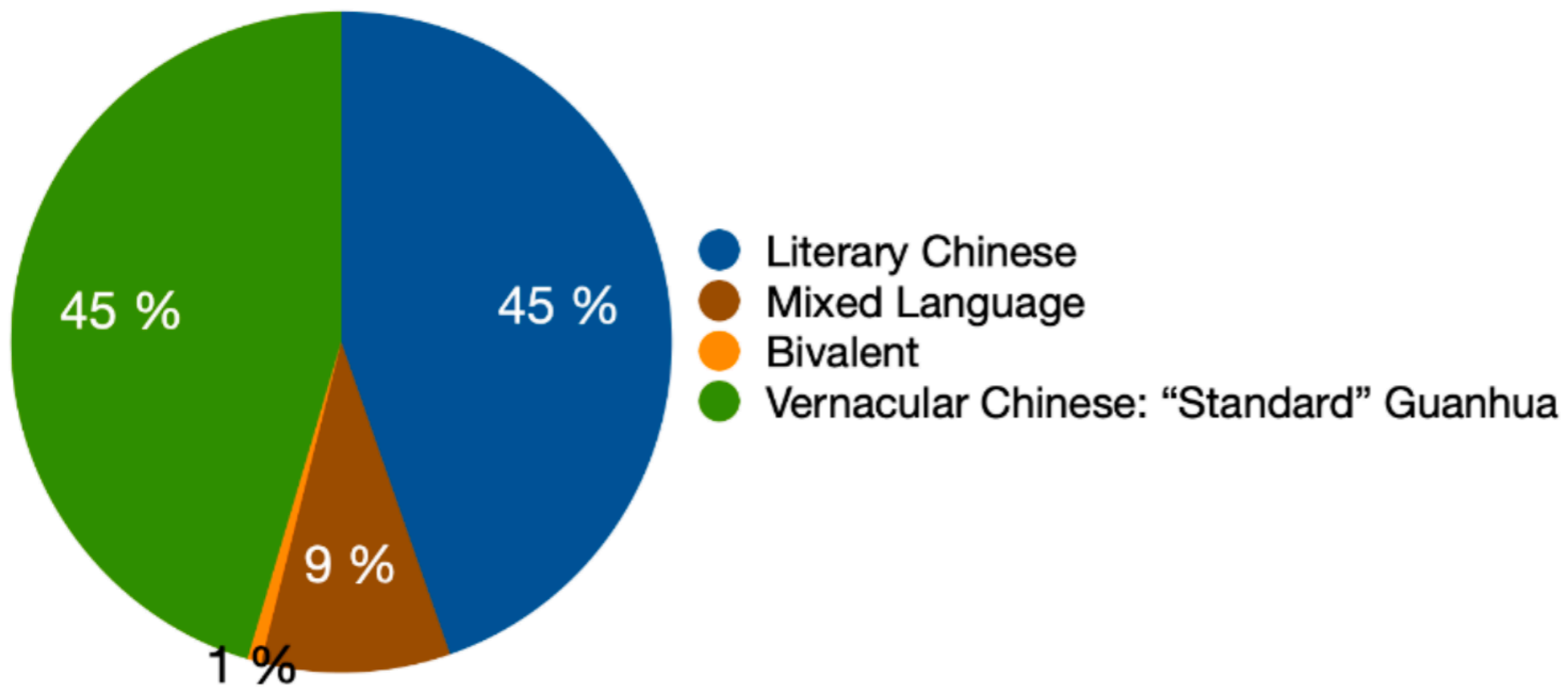


## Resulting TT by micro-strategy

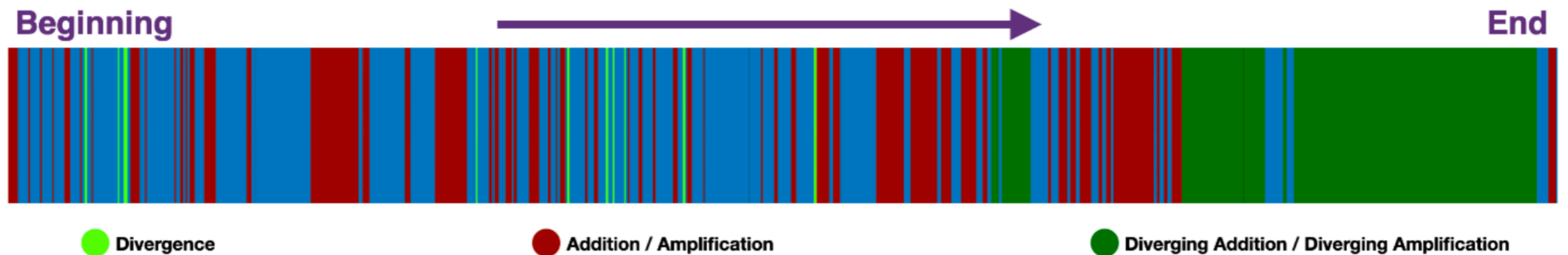


TT language distribution in amplified translation

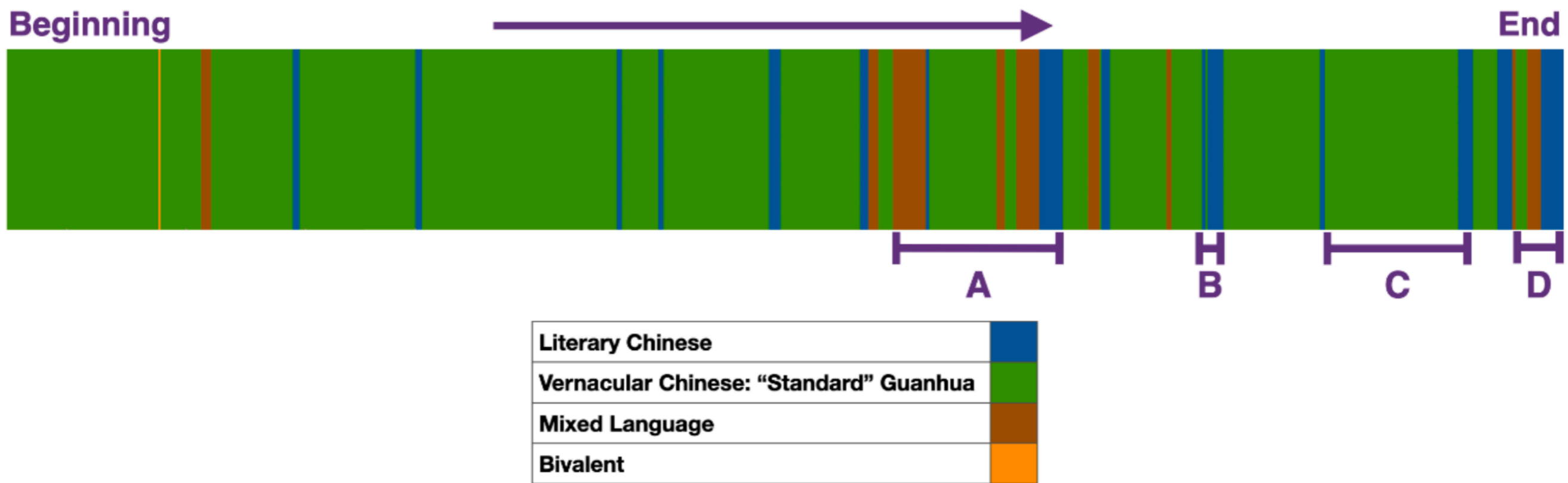
TT language distribution in Explanatory translation







# Position of Additions/Amplifications, Divergences, and Diverging Additions/Amplifications along the TT narrative continuum











# Language register distribution along the TT narrative continuum



## LINGUISTIC CHARACTERISTICS

-  Classical Chinese
-  Vernacular Chinese: “Standard” Guanhua
-  Vernacular Chinese: Dialectal
-  Mixed Language

## NARRATIVE POINT OF VIEW

-  1st Person Narration
-  3rd Person Narration
-  Dialogue
-  Inner Monologue
-  Reported Speech
-  3rd Person + Dialogue Combination
-  Rhetorical Dialogue / Storyteller’ s Stock Phrase
-  Inserted Verse / Inserted Depiction

## TEXTUAL TRANSFORMATION MICRO-

## Section 1



卻有一個以烈成節的榜樣，這便無如蘇州

ST	TT
	

## Section 2



昆山縣歸烈婦，烈婦姓陳。他父親叫作陳鼎彝，

ST	TT
<p><b>Huang Ming cong xin lu</b></p>   <p>歸烈婦者，太倉陳鼎彝之女，崑山</p>	

Comment by Philippe Pons:

