

Feng Yue *Editor*

Translation Studies on Chinese Films and TV Shows

 中國社會科學出版社
CHINA SOCIAL SCIENCES PRESS

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ISBN 978-981-19-5999-8 ISBN 978-981-19-6000-0 (eBook)
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-6000-0>

Jointly published with China Social Sciences Press
The print edition is not for sale in China (Mainland). Customers from China (Mainland) please order the print book from: China Social Sciences Press.

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The registered company address is: 152 Beach Road, #21-01/04 Gateway East, Singapore 189721, Singapore

Chief Editor
Feng Yue

Preface

I worked for Fujian TV Station continually from 1992 to 2005, first as a translator and then as a proofreader of translations. I had many discussions with my language consultants, who were native speakers of English, and felt strongly that one man's meat could be another man's poison, both linguistically and culturally speaking. The journalist intends to present his or her thought in a piece of news to audience in one way, while people from another culture comprehend it in another through translation. There will always be problems in this because people from different cultures have different needs and schema. When I was proofreading translations, I was constantly mediating between translators, who more or less represent the writers of the source texts, and the target audience by revising the translations to make both sides happy.

With increasing international influence, China has a stronger desire to disseminate Chinese culture. Historically, Chinese culture had worldwide influence, such Chinese elements as Confucian classics, Chinese Kongfu or traditional Chinese medicine are popular in some circles. While the Chinese have keen cultural consciousness, the international audience, according to our recent research, have a strong tendency for deculturalization. They may like Kongfu, but they don't care which school the Kongfu belongs to or whether the Kongfu masters are Chinese, Japanese, Korean or of any other nation. Chinese Kongfu films are sometimes set in ancient times, which includes numerous Chinese elements such as official titles. These are particularly unwelcome, not because they are Chinese, but because they are so culturally specific that they are difficult to understand. Audience complain that cultural elements hinder their understanding. So translators need to think about serving the purposes of both Chinese films and international audience.

This book consists of five parts. The first is a statistics-based survey on the export of the Chinese film industry. The world influence of Chinese films has been soaring these years, but the audience in developed countries are mostly overseas Chinese. Outside China, Chinese films are shown mostly for free. Chinese films are accepted, but not yet embraced by international audience. Chinese films have not yet taken root on the international stage. The second part is the cultural studies of subtitle translation. Some translators try to reproduce all cultural elements, which are often

poorly received by international audience. Some translators simplify or even eliminate certain cultural elements, which is criticized by researchers at home. Hollywood blockbuster *Kungfu Panda* managed to strike the balance, throwing light on the direction for our film industry. With a strong intention to disseminate a culture so alien to the target audience, the translator risks putting off the audience. The mainstream of deculturalization seems to entrap translators in a Catch-22. Balancing between the purpose of the film and the taste of international audience is a delicate art. The third part is the linguistic study of subtitle translations. All agree that translators should be encouraged to tap into their creativity. But to what extent? The fourth part is the study of film title translation. The fifth part is the study of translation for TV programs, which comes close to film translation. But it could involve more ideological elements since it is regularly related with news and documentaries. A conscious translator keeps ideological differences in mind and bridge the difference through proper diction.

Finally, people come to movie houses to be entertained. What really counts on an international stage is the success of the film art, including technology-based special effects. The audience need to be attracted to the movies before they can learn something about the Chinese culture.

Fuzhou, China

Feng Yue

Acknowledgements

Yue Feng, Ph.D., professor at the School of Foreign Languages of Fujian Normal University, Ph.D. supervisor, and postdoctoral mobile station co-supervisor, is the project leader. He designed and reviewed the entire book. He is the author of Chap. 11.

Zhou Qinchao is a lecturer in the Department of Foreign Languages, Concord University College, Fujian Normal University. He is the author of Chap. 1.

Xie Yuchao, MA, served on the Executive Committee of the *Silk Road International Film Festival* and wrote Chap. 10.

Han Lanhua, MA, a teacher at Fuzhou Tongpan Middle School. She is the author of Chap. 6.

Gao Qingyun, MA, deputy the director of the Free Trade Office of the Management Committee of Jiangyin Gangcheng Economic Zone, Fuzhou, wrote Chap. 2.

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Chen Yan, MA, working for Newland Technology Group. She wrote Chap. 4.

Sun Hongjuan, MA, a teacher at Mudanjiang No. 1 High School, wrote Chap. 9.

Acknowledgements also go to the 2017 MTI students of the College of Foreign Languages.

Contents

| | | |
|----------|--|------------|
| 1 | Review of China's Film and TV Drama Export in Recent Years | 1 |
| | Qinchao Zhou | |
| 2 | Cultural Default and Translation Compensation in the English Translation of Chinese Films: Taking Ang Lee's <i>Family Trilogy</i> as an Example | 21 |
| | Qingyun Gao | |
| 3 | On Subtitle Translation from the Perspectives of Semantic Translation and Communicative Translation | 61 |
| | Liping Lai | |
| 4 | Cultural Default and Transmission of Martial Arts Imagery: The Translation of Cultural-Loaded Words in the <i>Grandmaster</i> | 93 |
| | Yan Chen | |
| 5 | On Film Subtitle Translation from the Perspective of Skopos Theory: Taking <i>Black Coal, Thin Ice</i> as an Example | 137 |
| | Jianxiong Wang | |
| 6 | On Feng's Humor from the Perspective of Equivalent Effect Translation: Taking Feng Xiaogang's New Year Comedies as an Example | 151 |
| | Lanhua Han | |
| 7 | On the English Translation of Culture-Loaded Words in <i>Finding Mr. Right</i> from the Perspective of Manipulation Theory | 193 |
| | Rong Weng | |
| 8 | Translation of Culture-Loaded Words in Audiovisual Translation—Taking <i>Empresses in the Palace</i> as an Example | 213 |
| | Lanting Zhu | |

**9 Meme Transmission and Domestication and Foreignization
in the CE Translation of Film Titles 241**
Hongjuan Sun

**10 Translation for International Film Festival Under
the Guidance of Functional Equivalence Theory 265**
Yuchao Xie

**11 Considerations for CE Translation of TV News and Production
of Foreign-Related TV 283**
Feng Yue

Bibliography 291

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Prof./Dr. Feng Yue is director of the Institute for Translation & International Communications of Fujian Normal University (FNU) and Dean of the Department of Translation and Interpreting, College of Foreign languages, FNU. With about 100 articles, 30 books, 30 projects and nine awards, he is the leading scholar in the field of translation in China. Apart from working for FNU, he is a research affiliate, Yale University (2005), and translation supervisor with Fujian TV.

Chapter 1

Review of China's Film and TV Drama Export in Recent Years



Qinchao Zhou

Owning a large-scale market with unlimited potential, China's film and TV industry has achieved a rapid growth in recent years. The rich and colorful types of film and television programs and the constantly rising productive level are the important embodiment of the soft power of Chinese culture. The financial gains brought by the film and television industry occupy an important position in China's economic development. The export of film and television works is an important part of China's outbound communication, which is conducive to the spread of Chinese culture, shaping the image of a great country, and strengthening her international status. In the meantime, it opens up overseas markets and creates huge economic returns.

According to the annual data currently published on the website of the National Bureau of Statistics, the volume of TV programs exported from China in 2015 was 25,352 h, a total of 381 units (15,902 episodes), a slight increase compared with that of 2014. The total number of copyright exports of TV programs was 1511, which is almost the same as the previous five years, but the total volume of TV programs exported has increased significantly. In 2015, the total export of TV programs in China was worth 513.3191 million yuan. In the previous five years, between 2010 and 2014, the annual average value was around 200 million yuan, and the export of Chinese TV programs increased exponentially in 2015. From 2010 to 2015, the average annual growth rate of television exports was 19.56%.

In 2015, export TV shows accounted for the highest share of all kinds of TV programs, totaling 370.0463 million yuan. Animation grew rapidly, totaling 100.5923 million yuan, up by 215% from the same period last year. In terms of regional exports, the following is ordered from high to low: 370.7228 million yuan in Asia, 69.3754 million yuan in America, 48.5956 million yuan in Europe, 13.6109 million yuan in Oceania, and 11.0144 million yuan in Africa. The fastest growth from last year was

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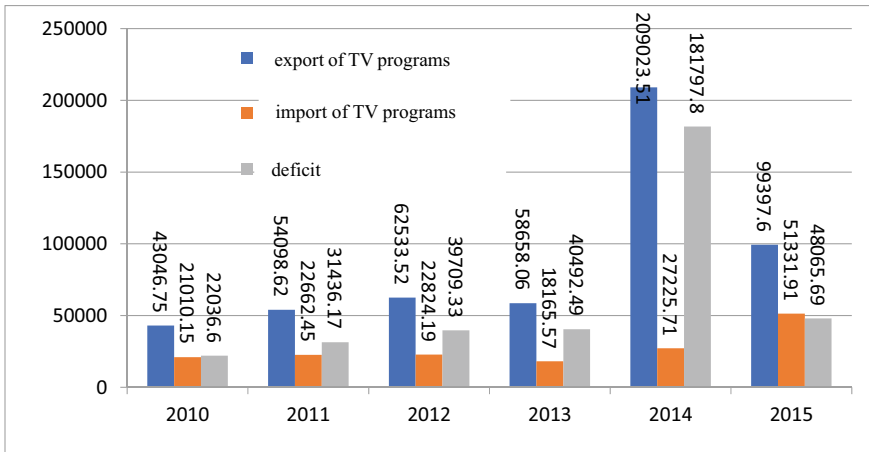
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F. Yue (ed.), *Translation Studies on Chinese Films and TV Shows*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-6000-0_1

in Africa, with a year-on-year growth rate of 3793%, followed by Oceania 987%, Europe 125%, the Americas 115%, and Asia 71%.

Although the total volume of TV programs exported from China has achieved steady growth, there is still a serious trade deficit. In 2015, China’s television program imports totaled 993.976 million yuan, and the trade deficit reached 480.6569 million yuan. As the figure shows, except for 2010 and 2015, the trade deficit in other years even far exceeded exports.



The above data analysis shows that the export of TV programs in China has seen a steady rise, but there also exists remarkable regional differences. The export of TV programs is affected by various factors including the production of TV series in that year and propagation effect, so a large degree of uncertainty is presented.

In the past ten years, China’s film industry has achieved rapid development, and the level of film production has been continuously improved. A number of works have won awards at famous overseas festivals. For instance, Jia Zhangke’s *A Touch of Sin* of 2013 was awarded the Best Screenplay Award at the 66th Cannes International Film Festival. Diao Yanan’s *Black Coal, Thin Ice* won the 64th Berlin Film Festival Best Picture Golden Bear Award in 2014. Qiu Yang’s *A Gentle Night* won the 70th Cannes International Film Festival short film Palme d’Or. In terms of market, while the domestic screen and cinema construction continues to prosper, the number of audiences grow as well. Also, China’s domestic film box office has increased at a high speed. According to the public data of the Film Bureau of the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television, China’s domestic box office had reached 45.712 billion yuan in 2016, a huge increase from 995 million yuan in 2003. However, the overseas income of Chinese films in 2016 was only 3.825 billion yuan, a big increase from 550 million yuan in 2003, but much less significant than the overall development of the domestic film industry. In the international market, there is still a huge gap between Chinese films and western ones. Europe and the United States overseas box office and copyright transfer, video products and other derivative

markets accounted for 70% of their total film revenue, far more than their domestic box office. (Yin & Sun, 2017: 117) Currently, the principal market of Chinese films is still in China, as its overseas market is relatively small.

1.1 Literature Review

Searching with key words such as *China's Film and Television, Export, Overseas* and *Communication* on the CNKI (China National Knowledge Infrastructure), we sifted through a lot of records and finally located more than 200 master's and doctoral theses, journal papers, conference papers and newspaper articles related to Chinese exported film and television since the twenty-first century. Though not complete, it can generally reflect the recent research trends and hot spots of Chinese film and television export.

According to its year-on-year trend, the number of articles is on the increase. However, from 2000 to 2010, the research scale and number of articles and dissertations per year remain small and are unsystematic. Most articles are about conference, reporting, which mainly introduce the acceptance of Chinese film and television abroad, particularly in Southeast Asia and North America. Only a few analytical articles explored overseas market prospects from cross-cultural communication and overseas distribution.

As for studies on films, in November 2004, the *Third China Film and Television High-level Forum* was held at Communication University of China. More than 60 Chinese and foreign experts and scholars were invited to give academic speeches. In the Proceedings, Stanley Rosen's (Professor of Political Science at the University of Southern California) English article *The Chinese Film Industry in the Context of Globalization: Taking the American Market as an example, Perspective on the Overseas Market Prospects of Chinese Film* was included in the conference proceeding titled *Harmony in Diversity—A New Pattern of Film and Television in the Context of Globalization—Proceeding of the Third China Film and Television High-level Forum*. The article contains two parts. In the first part, the author summarizes the market performance of American films in and outside America. It confirms the market advantage of Hollywood films with a large number of box office statistics and analyzes two major factors of Hollywood's success, i.e., winning international market share and making brand films. The second part reviews the performance of Asian films in the United States market. It analyzes the box office data of Chinese films in North America and indicates that Chinese films, especially Kungfu films, have a better international prospect than other foreign language films. But there are also many limitations that affect its development. First of all, Asian films do have a certain international market, but English films with Asian elements are more likely to make a hit. Furthermore, English remake is more successful than the original Asian version (Locke, 2005: 270). Second, the audience has preset expectations for Asian films, and the audience often looks at Chinese films with political vision. After the above analysis, the author thinks that if the day-and-date distribution mode in American

blockbuster is adopted, it will establish the brand effect. However, for films other than Hollywood mainstream films, it is not optimistic. In this case, the most effective way to compete with Hollywood for Chinese Language Films is to cooperate with Hollywood distributors or develop brand films.

After Rosen, Professor Sun Shaoyi delivered the *Annual Report: The Overseas Market of Chinese Film and Evaluation*, in which two successful animated films, *Kung Fu Panda*, and Chinese-American action film, *Kings of Kung Fu* were mentioned. The success of those two films demonstrated the popularity of Hollywood blockbusters with Chinese elements in the global market. The article also reflects the dismal performance of Chinese commercial films and art films in the overseas box office in 2008, especially in the European and American markets. Also, the road ahead for Chinese films is tough and it requires more efforts in terms of production quality and global distribution. Professor Sun's article *Chinese Movies on the Overseas Market in 2009* analyzes the opposite market reaction of the film *Red Cliff* in Asia and Europe, and the United States. Taking the Indian film as the reference, Sun reaffirms that co-production is the main way for Chinese commercial films to infiltrate other international markets outside the Chinese cultural circle.

As for studies on television, the 2008 *TV Research* published the article *Promote TV and Film Culture to Reach International Standard by Branding Strategy*. The author is Ma Runsheng, the general manager of the Chinese Radio, Film and Television Program Center. In this article, the author has reviewed the development and achievements the Center has made over the past decade through participating in various international film and television activities to ensure that lessons can be learned through marketing practices. To enhance the overseas competitiveness of Chinese film and television, we must first build brand programs and professional marketing teams should also be fostered.

The year 2011 marks the 10th anniversary of China's accession to WTO, and the development of the country's cultural industry and its related academic research level have been greatly improved. Since 2011, with the country's strong support for the development of cultural industry and the continuous "going global" practical activities of our film and television, the number of related research projects, monographs and papers is increasing gradually. They cover a thorough analysis of the external communication of Chinese film and television from various angles and disciplines, including communication strategy, industry construction, cross-cultural communication, regional research, case study and translation practice.

In terms of communication strategy, Duan Peng's article *Research on the International Communication Strategy of the Chinese Radio and TV Networks* in 2013 describes the new changes of radio and television international spread under the circumstances of technological revolution, network media and social media. Based on the historical experience of radio and television international spread in western developed countries, this article probes into the status quo, problems and causes of international spread of radio and television in China, and relevant solutions are proposed from macro, meso and micro levels. Based on the strategy of "going global", Wang Gengnian's article in 2013, *Study on Going Global Strategy of Chinese Radio and Television*, discusses the opportunities, challenges, conditions and strategic layout

of China's radio and television export, and puts forward the basic strategy of localization, the corporate mode of operation and the idea of differentiation. From 2014 to 2016, Ding Yaping, director of the Film and Television Art Research Institute of the Chinese Academy of Art, led a key project of the National Social Science Foundation, namely, *Feasibility Study on Competition Strategies in the Overseas Market of Chinese Films* in 2013. During that period, three monographs have been generated, which are, *The Expansion of Great Films*, *The Interaction of Great Films* and *Globalization and Great Films*. In the first book, the difficulties of Chinese films overseas spread are elaborated. Based on the experience and lessons of overseas film promotion in Europe, America, Japan, South Korea and Russia, problems and countermeasures were put forward concerning Internationalization of China's Film and Television Products. *The Interaction of Great Films* expounds the global strategy of Hollywood film and the overseas promotion strategy of Russian film industry and analyzes the aesthetic acceptance of Chinese films by foreign audiences through research. Moreover, in the process of international development, the capital operation, overseas investment and financing, channel expansion and other feasible ways of Chinese film industry have been discussed. The third book, *Globalization and Great Films*, compares and analyzes the development of international film industry and different production strategies in 2015. It has detailed the overseas acceptance of Chinese films and explored the new challenges of and countermeasures for overseas market promotion of Chinese films under the context of Internet plus.

Judging from the number of articles, regional studies are of the greatest interest to researchers. Relevant project results in terms of regional studies include *The spread of Chinese TV dramas in Tanzania*, *Study on the Mode and Path of Chinese Film and Television Non-communication*, *Study on the National Image and Competitiveness of Chinese Film Based on North American Dynamic Database (1980–2014)*, etc. A total of 7 journal articles by Li Fabao (professor at the School of Arts, South China Normal University) were published between 2013 and 2016 to discuss the spread of Chinese TV dramas in Southeast Asia, Japan, Africa, Korea, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and other countries and regions.

The most involved area in regional research is Asia, especially South-East Asia. In addition to a large number of journal articles, three master's theses studied separately the spread of Chinese film and television works in Thailand, Vietnam and Laos in 2015. The authors are either international students from these countries or they have gained more unique perspectives through field investigation. Research on North America is only second to Asia, followed by Africa, while few studies on Europe can be found. A related analysis did not appear in Latin America until 2016. The unbalanced situation in regional research reflects the imbalance of the influence of Chinese film and television works in various countries and regions of the world, and unveils the importance of the geographical advantage in spreading Chinese film and television works.

Research and analysis have been one of the research trends of Chinese film and television output in recent years. Since 2011, in order to investigate the current situation of Chinese films in international communication and the acceptance of

Chinese culture and values by foreign audiences, a research project named *International Dissemination of Chinese Film* was launched by Institute of International Communication of Chinese Culture. The aim is to design questionnaires for foreign audiences and the results are processed by SPSS (Huang, et. al, 2012:9). So far, four books have been published based on the project data analysis under the general title of *Silver Book: Annual Report on the International Dissemination of Chinese Films*, from which the spread of Chinese films has thoroughly discussed from the aspects of its course, path and effect of dissemination.

In addition, the Project has generated six survey reports from 2011 to 2016 and nine articles published in *Modern Communication*. The reports are integrated and continuous, but they individually also have their own different themes and emphases, which intuitively reflect the basic situation and existing problems of Chinese film spread in the form of data analysis. They also form an integral and.

The *2011 Report* covers Europe, America, Japan, South Korea, Australia, India and other countries. It involves the general situation, mode, preference of foreign audiences in contacting Chinese films, as well as aspects such as their recognition of Chinese cultural symbols and values. Moreover, it analyzes the recognition of foreign audiences for the international influence of Chinese films and suggestions on Chinese Film Spread Strategy were given. The *2012 Report* has continued and deepened the previous year's questionnaire, covering 107 countries, including African and Latin American countries, with nearly 40 languages, significantly increasing the size of the sample and the size of the data compared with the previous year, increasing the impact of differences in audience age, gender and education level on watching Chinese films, and comparing and analyzing new changes in the 2012 survey data. The *2013 Report*, coming with the background theme of the Chinese Dream, focuses on the acceptance of Chinese films by viewers in different languages, such as native of English, Korean and French respectively, the differences in viewing channels and the influence of audience's Chinese level on their acceptance of Chinese films. The *2014 Report* covers the five continents, focusing on the impact of overseas promotion on the audience's choice of viewing channels and the role of dissemination of Chinese films on the construction of national image, and makes a detailed comparative study on regional differences. The *2015 Report* examines the acceptance of Chinese film dissemination in countries along the Belt and Road route. Covering six major regions of the Belt and Road Initiative, the report spans Eurasian and African Mainland and covers 46 countries. The communication channel and audience response of Chinese films within BRI regions have been studied, and the obvious regional differences of the research results have been analyzed in the report. The *2016 Report* takes 16 China's neighboring countries as the research objects. It examines the audience's viewing motivation, channel, preference and so on, focuses on the relationship between Chinese films and audience's cognition of Chinese cultural symbols, humanistic feelings, and social values, and analyzes the cognitive differences between different regions and different ages.

Although the scope of sampling, the design of the questionnaire and the final data are different, the six reports together reflect some striking challenges in the process of international dissemination of Chinese films. First of all, the international influence

of Chinese films is still very limited. Although in the pan-Chinese language culture of Southeast Asia, the audience's acceptance of Chinese films is generally better than that of other regions, in general, the overall exposure of foreign audiences to Chinese films is not good. Secondly, watching the film is mainly free. Free websites are the preferred way for foreign viewers to watch Chinese movies, followed by free TV channels and purchase, DVD renting. Few viewers choose cinema, paid websites, or paid TV channels. Finally, as a traditional dominant type of film, kung fu film is still the most popular type among audience.

The research on network communication is still in its infancy, with related research scattered in monographs or periodicals. At present, a more systematic discussion on network communication is a 2013 article *Overseas Spread of Chinese Films and the Construction of Foreign language Network Platform* by Li Daoxin, Professor of School of Art, Peking University. In the book *Globalization and Great Films*, Ding Yaping wrote Chap. 8: *Exploration and Critic against the Background of Internet Plus*. In today's Internet era, the author believes that in the cross-border integration of Chinese film and Internet industry, structural optimization and industrial chain upgrading are realized, and local films are further promoted to go out. With the help of the big data analysis supported by the Internet, the audience-centered word-of-mouth marketing is carried out; the offline ticketing is transferred to the online ticketing; and the offline cinema broadcast is transferred to the paid network broadcast. The Internet has injected new vitality into the traditional film industry. In the long run, the intervention of Internet power, relying on its advantages in business, resources, platform and industrial chain, while realizing its globalization strategy, also creates more opportunities for Chinese films to go international.

For a long time, audiovisual translation research in China mainly focused on inbound translation, i.e., the translation of other languages into Chinese. For example, as early as 2000, Qian Shaochang published *Film Translation—a Field of Growing Importance in Translation in Chinese Translators Journal*. According to his many years of translation practice in foreign language film and television translation, Qian summed up five characteristics of film and television language and seven experiences of translation, which provided valuable experience for the later generation of audiovisual translation practice and research. In recent years, with the Chinese film and television drama being introduced to foreign audiences, the practice of outbound translation, i.e., the translation of Chinese language into other languages, is increasing. Meanwhile the translation problem concerning Chinese film and television spread, has also attracted the attention of scholars and translators. In 2008, Wang Rong and Sun Kun published their article in *Film Review* with the title: *Active Translation—the Only Way for Chinese Film and Television to Go Global*, in which they put forward the necessity of film and television translation, called on the state to set up special translation institutions, universities and scientific research institutions to provide film and television translation with theoretical and technical support, and MTI programs to foster audiovisual translators. Yan Chengsheng, Deputy Director of the Department of International Cooperation of the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television, published a paper in *Chinese Translators*

Journal in 2014 in which he has introduced the progress of the translation and promotion of domestic film and television dramas and the gap with advanced countries, summarized some experiences in translation and spread practices, and believed that it is necessary to select and translate plays that reflect the contemporary image. Attention should be paid to the quality of translation. Progress in overseas promotion can be achieved by connecting government and commercial channels. The 12th Issue of *Today's Massmedia* in 2015 contains an article by Li Guogang with the title: *The Role and Strategy of the Subtitle Team in the International Spread of the TV Series*. After discussing the role of the subtitles team in promoting American TV dramas in China. Li points out that recruiting excellent foreign language talents and setting up subtitle translation team will be operational strategies for going global. In 2016, Deng Ping's article *China's Film Going Global: Strategies for Dubbing and Subtitle Translation* compares and analyzes the translation strategies of English film dubbing and subtitle, covering the translation process, norms and styles of film dubbing and subtitle translation in Chinese context. Deng proposes that the corresponding translation strategies should be formulated according to the national conditions, culture and audience preferences of different exporting countries. In 2017, Zhang Ling's article *Study of Overseas Communication of Chinese Film and Television under the Going Global Strategy* has provided a survey of the translation subject, content, way, audience and effect to discuss the domestic film and television overseas communication mode. In 2017, Li Yu's article *Production and Translation of Fine Chinese Film and Television Programs for Overseas Dissemination under the Background of Going Global* proposes that film and television translation should adapt the "one country, one policy" strategy. In addition, with the continuous improvement of the translation talent training plan in domestic universities, a large number of graduation papers on the subtitle translation practice report of domestic film and television works have also emerged in recent years.

1.2 Strategic Background and Key Measures for China's Film and TV Export

In 2000, China formally established and implemented the Going Global strategy, and the general background of China's accession to the WTO has created favorable conditions and opportunities for it. In December 2001, the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television issued the *Measures for Implementing Going Global of Chinese Radio and Television*. It states that the task is to spread Chinese voice to the world. It advocates active participation in international cooperation and exchange to promote overseas landing of CCTV channels and form overseas marketing teams. It aims to achieve a big breakthrough in overseas broadcasting of Chinese film and television programs in five years. During the 11th Five-Year Plan period, the *going global* strategy was further implemented. In 2006, the Chinese Ministry of Culture issued the *11th Five-Year Plan for Cultural Construction*, aiming to accelerate international

cultural exchanges and trade, enhance the external competitiveness and influence of China's cultural products, put forward a support plan for the export of cultural products, and promote domestic audio-visual products to the international market. In 2009, the executive meeting of the State Council discussed and passed the *Cultural Industry Revitalization Plan*, which outlines the contents and direction of the next stage of Chinese cultural industry development with clear safeguard measures from the height of national strategy. It proposes to foster the development of the three key industries of film, television and animation, encourage cultural enterprises to establish overseas operations, participate in domestic and foreign cultural exhibitions, expand the international market and promote the export of cultural products.

In 2013, President Xi Jinping put forward a major proposal for building the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road (the Belt and Road Initiative, BRI). BRI is in line with the general trend of economic integration on the Eurasian continent and is committed to friendly exchanges and cooperation with countries along the Belt and Road. In 2015, in order to accelerate the process of BRI, the National Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Commerce jointly issued the *Vision and Action for Promoting the Joint Construction of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road*. As an important part of the cultural industry and cultural undertakings, film and television output has been officially listed in the BRI policy. In 2016, the Ministry of Culture issued the *BRI Cultural Development Action Plan of the Ministry of Culture (2016–2020)* that it would improve international cooperation channels, focus on film, television, broadcasting, and digital culture along the Belt and Road regions, and lay a solid public opinion foundation for deepening dual and multi-lateral cooperation. In September 2017, the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television issued the *13th Five-Year Development Plan for Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television*, which committed to strengthening the building of international communication capacity and enhancing China's influence. Specific measures are required to enhance the brand of Chinese film and TV dramas, promote the cooperation between domestic and foreign enterprises, support film and television institutions to participate in the investment, construction and operation of foreign digital TV, and further support the translation and production of excellent film and television works.

Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, China has continuously increased investment in the output of film and television products and industrial policy support, actively implemented various measures to promote film and television works abroad, has achieved remarkable results, built a bridge of cultural communication, and cultivated a number of fixed audiences of Chinese film and television works.

The year 2003 is the beginning of the *China International Film and Television Program Exhibition* sponsored by the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television and organized by China Radio, Film and Television Group. It has become an annual international radio and television gala. With the purpose of enhancing friendship, expanding exchanges, strengthening cooperation

and common development, there are exhibitions, program promotion meetings and seminars for professionals to exchange and trade.¹

In 2004, with the approval of the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television, China TV Great Wall Platform was established, and China TV International Media Co., Ltd., affiliated to China International Television Corporation, was responsible for the full operation of the Great Wall platform. The Great Wall Platform integrated 34 channels from mainland China, Hong Kong and related overseas more than ten Chinese, English, Spanish and French channels, has cooperated with 23 mainstream operators, decades, successively in the United States, Asia, Europe, Canada, Latin America, Southeast Asia, Australia, Africa and New Zealand nine big platform.² The Great Wall platform has both Chinese programs and foreign language programs. Its original purpose is to serve overseas Chinese as well as other overseas audiences and show the style of contemporary China to audiences under different cultural backgrounds. The network TV of the Great Wall platform has more than 70 sets of live domestic Chinese TV channels, 20 sets of Great Wall round broadcast channels. In addition, it also provides on-demand services, tens of thousands of hours of on-demand program content covering film and television, current affairs, economy, variety show, sports, entertainment information and other series.

In 2004, China Film Overseas Promotion Company was established to help Chinese films to participate in international film festivals and assist Chinese film festival exhibitions in various countries. In 2006, China Film Overseas Promotion Company was transformed from the original government agency to a joint-stock company, providing overseas distribution information for Chinese film manufacturers, building an overseas distribution and sales network, and actively promoting Chinese films to the world. In the same year, China Film Overseas Promotion Company became one of the organizers of *Beijing Screening*. “Beijing Screening” Film Exhibition was founded in 1996 by China Film Group Company, which is an annual Chinese film promotion activity. The activity invited overseas buyers to choose films in China, which has become an important window for Chinese films to “go global”. From November 29 to December 2, 2017, the 21st “Beijing Screening” and the 4th Silk Road International Film Festival were held in Fuzhou, inviting more than 40 film buyers, distributors, producers, investors, senior film critics and film association representatives from nearly 20 countries to show nearly 100 excellent domestic films.³

The General Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television has also actively launched various key projects to promote international exchanges and cooperation and to open up new communication channels for Chinese film and television. In 2013, the General Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film

¹ *Introduction to China International Film and Television Program Exhibition* [EB/OL]. [2017-10-19]. <http://citv.chnpec.com/citv/cn/intro.html>.

² *Introduction to The Great Wall platform* [EB/OL]. [2017-10-19]. <http://www.greatwall-tv.com/about/index.aspx>.

³ ① Xiao Yang: *Beijing Screening Promoting Chinese Film Festival Exhibitions* [EB/OL]. [2017-10-19]. http://epaper.yinet.com/html/2017-10/29/content__267,285.htm?div=-1.

and Television launched the *Silk Road Film Bridge Project* (Tong Gang, 2016:11) to create and translate excellent programs for countries and regions along the Belt and Road and held the *Silk Road International Film Festival*. In the same year, the General Administration launched the *China-Africa Film and Television Cooperation Project*, launching 10 TV series and 52 films, 5 cartoons and 4 documentaries to African countries every year, and the China Radio International Film and Television Translation Center is responsible for the localization and translation and dubbing work (Long Xiaonong, 2016:100). China Radio International Film and Television Translation Center was established in 2012. It has 65 working languages and a large number of translators. In 2013, it used 8 languages such as English, French, Swahili, Spanish, Myanmar, translating more than 80 Chinese film and television works. In 2014, China Radio International established a national multi-language film and television translation base, set up a platform for Chinese and foreign film and television exchanges, and actively promoted the overseas communication of Chinese film and TV dramas. Relying on the professional advantages of the translation center, the *China-Africa Film and Television Cooperation Project has made rapid progress*. In 2016, it has translated nearly 5,000 sets of film and television works in eight languages, covering about 600 million African audiences (Development Research Center of the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television, 2016:12).

In 2016, the launching and Summit Forum of the Silk Road Television International Cooperation Community, hosted by China CCTV and China International Television Corporation and organized by China Radio, Film and Television Program Trading Center, was held in Beijing. The Silk Road Television International Cooperation Community is an international film and television cooperation platform with the "Silk Road" as the link, facing countries along the Belt and Road, mainly with program joint broadcast, program trading, international co-production, channel operation, information sharing and other operation modes. The establishment of the Silk Road Television International Cooperation Community has opened up new development opportunities to promote television media cooperation among countries along the Silk Road.⁴

1.3 Analysis of Audiences and Channels of Major Import Regions of China's Film and TV Programs

China's export data show that Chinese film and television works have penetrated the major regional markets in the world, but there is a marked imbalance in the volume and value of exports in different regions. The largest and most active overseas markets are in Asia, followed by the mainstream markets in European and the United States, while the African and Oceania markets are to be developed. The audience's

⁴ The World No. 1 Silk Road Television International Cooperation Community Launched in Beijing [EB/OL]. [2017 - 10 - 19]. <http://www.chnpec.com/cn/2016/08/26/ARTI1472198534361478.shtml>.

aesthetics, values, and viewing needs are different, and there are great differences in the recognition and acceptance of Chinese film, television, culture, and values.

1.3.1 Asian Markets

The major areas of film and television export of China's mainland are concentrated in China's Hong Kong and Taiwan and some Southeast Asian countries. In 2015, China's total export of TV programs to Southeast Asia reached 123.973,9 million yuan, accounting for 24.15% of the total TV program exports. The export to Hong Kong and Taiwan were 93.177 million yuan and 84.1803 million yuan, respectively, accounting for 18.15% and 16.40%, with a sum of 58.7% and nearly 60%. The main viewing group of Chinese film and television programs is mainly overseas Chinese. Southeast Asia is the most concentrated overseas Chinese, accounting for about 70% of the total number of overseas Chinese in the world. Due to its geographical proximity, far-reaching influence by Chinese culture in history and less language and culture gap, Chinese film and television are widely popular in the Southeast Asian market. Viewers can watch domestic boutique programs through cable TV, special cable TV, new media and other ways (Cao Yifei, 2015:10).

Film and television entertainment industry is highly developed in Japan and South Korea with mature overseas markets. Especially Korean dramas have formed a unique style and successfully established a brand in the world. Therefore, the export of Chinese film and television in Japan and South Korea is underperformed. The major export type is costume dramas. Since both countries have been influenced by Chinese culture since ancient times, their audiences are mostly interested in historical dramas such as costume dramas such as *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms* and *The Great Qin Empire*. In recent years, more and more domestic costume dramas with rich themes are viewed by Japanese and Korean audiences.

In Japan, Chinese TV dramas are usually broadcast in audio Chinese and Japanese script. A small number of Chinese TV dramas such as *Cao Cao*, *King of Lanling* and *Wei Zifu* are shown with Japanese dubbing. The promotional video of the Japanese version of the Chinese TV dramas is well-produced with editing, narration and background music at one go, with gorgeous advertising language and refreshing effect. Many of the Chinese TV series broadcast in Japan have been given new translation names. For example, the Chinese version of *Treading on Thin Ice* is named *Palace Officer Ruoxi* in Japan; *Chinese Empresses of the Palace* as *Court Women* in Japan, *Chinese Nirvana in Fire* as *Nirvana in Fire*, *Kylin Talent* in Japan. The leading character in *Nirvana in Fire* is Mei Changsu. The Japanese think that he is cleverer than Zhuge Kongming, a most intelligent strategist in the Three Kingdoms period. Other cases include *Mu Fu* in China and *Gorgeous Family*, *Elegance and Chaos* in Japan; *The Cage of Love* in China and *Famous Love* in Japan; *The War of Beauties* in China and *Famous Wives* in Japan. The Japanese title of *Boss and Me*, a bestseller by Gu Man, is *Cinderella at Noon*. *Love O2O* is based on another bestseller by Gu Man and

the Japanese title is *Cinderella Online*. It can be seen that when translating the original name of the drama, the translator may replace the poetic and difficult translation of the original Chinese text with the main plot and character information, or directly adopts the translation name close to the expression style of the Japanese drama.

Chinese TV series are mainly broadcast in Japan through toll TV channels, such as NECO Toll TV, BS Japan TV, Galaxy Drama Channel, Home Drama Channel, etc. Chinese TV series are not in prime time. Take the Galaxy Drama Channel's 2017 Korean and Chinese Historical Drama Special for example, *Singing All Alone* and *Mu Fu* are aired at 1am or 2am. *The Cage of Love* and *Beautiful Weiyang* premiered at 1 pm Monday through Friday and were rebroadcast at 11 pm. *The Great Qin Empire* was aired three continuous episodes online at 10am on Saturday. The relatively good broadcast time is given to *The Imperial Doctress* and *The War of Beauties*, broadcast at 10 pm with three continuous episodes on Saturday evening. In October 2017, under the Chinese TV series classification of Home Drama Channel, *Tornado Girl 2* and *Love O2O* were broadcast in the early morning hours, and the number of viewers was limited, which was difficult to cause a great impact.

Young Japanese people mainly get information through social networks and rarely watch television. In order to attract young audiences, TV stations have also actively developed new media platforms. The network broadcast platform Abema TV funded by TV Asahi provides live or broadcast high-quality TV programs for free, with a total of 23 live broadcast channels, including the Korean Wave and Chinese TV series channels. Its video section has Korean streaming and Chinese streaming video classification, currently there are only Korean dramas.

Niconico is the largest bullet screen video and live broadcast website in Japan. It has broadcast many domestic film and TV works, such as the parade for the V-Day anniversary of the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression, China's two sessions, Spring Festival Gala, and works such as *City of Life and Death*, *Mermaid*, *Legend of Zhen Huan* and *Ancient Sword*. It is an important gateway for Japanese audiences to understand China.

Japan has strictly copyright control. Regular video websites rarely provide free works, and some provide one or two free episodes with the rest to be paid to watch. Under the classification of Chinese TV series by *Gyao*, a well-known Japanese free video website, there are 30 free works and 166 paid works. Apart from the costume dramas and Taiwan idol dramas, there are also a few Chinese modern dramas that are favored, such as *Sister*, *March*, *Boss and Me*, and *My Sunshine*.

Japanese audiences can also watch the complete Chinese TV series by buying and renting audio and video products. Tsutaya is a well-known national video store chain in Japan, leasing and selling all kinds of audio and audio products and books. According to the ranking of Asian series DVD on its online shopping website, most of the top works are Korean dramas, rich in types, including costume dramas, idol dramas and family dramas. There are only several sporadic Chinese TV dramas, all of costume dramas. The favorites were the 2009 version of *The Divine Romance* and the 2010 version of *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. Among the top 300 are popular costume dramas in recent years, such as *The Legend of Miyue*, *Nirvana in Fire*, *Journey of Flower*, *Long Trip to Beautiful Rivers and Mountains*, *The Imperial*

Doctress, Orphan Zhao, Legend of Empress Wu, etc. *Crown Princess Promotion* is a popular time travel drama in China and is well received in Japan with the title *Crown Princess Rhapsody*.

Because of South Korea's strict protection measures for the domestic film and television market, only a few foreign films can be released in South Korea. Most of them are Hollywood blockbusters. The share of Chinese films is minimum. South Korean audiences of Chinese TV dramas used to be mainly middle-aged or elderly who preferred historical dramas and martial arts dramas and other ancient costume dramas. South Korean audiences are more familiar with American TV dramas and Japanese dramas. After the *Princess of the Pearl* hit in South Korea, for a long time, the rating miracle of Chinese drama did not appear again. In recent years, with the deepening of cultural exchanges between China and South Korea, more and more South Koreans are interested in Chinese language and culture. As the production level of Chinese TV dramas has been constantly improving, and the excellent film and television works have attracted the attention of more and more young audiences.

South Korean viewers mainly watch Chinese TV series through TV channels such as the Chinese TV, HD channel CHING. Launched in 2005, China TV is a comprehensive TV station specializing in broadcasting Chinese programs. With the slogan of "Real China", it purchased all kinds of TV programs such as Chinese TV series, documentaries, and news interviews. After translation and packaging, it was broadcast 24 h through Korean cable TV, satellite TV, network TV and other channels. China TV broadcast the latest popular TV dramas in China, such as *Legend of Ming, Zhao Zilong, Beautiful Weiyang* and *Chinese Relations*, which are works from 2015 to 2016 but broadcast in South Korea in October 2017. *Eternal Love* and *The Advisors Alliance* are works from 2017. *Nothing Gold Can Stay* is to be aired in November. In addition to TV dramas, China TV has also introduced quality programs such as *A Bite of China, Money*, and *Story China*. The CHING HD channel was launched on June 23, 2009, offering programs about Chinese history, martial arts and costume dramas, closely following the trend of TV dramas in China, including the CCTV series of *Lecture Room*.

Young Korean audiences also enjoy watching Chinese dramas on video websites. The South Korean video website TVING offers some popular episodes that have been played on China TV and can be watched for free, including costume dramas such as *Detective Justice Bao, Tracking Knights Phantom, The Empress of China, Yunge from the Dessert, Nirvana in Fire*, and *Solitary Fang*; medical drama such as *Surgeons*; urban romance such *Stay with Me*; suspense spy drama such as *The Disguiser*, and time-travel roman such as *Love Through a Millennium* season I and season II. Movie video site Gomtv offers online viewing and paid download services for film and television works from other countries. On the list of popular films, there are only a few Chinese films, including *The Witness, Xuan Zang* and *Legend of the Naga Pearls*, which were made in recent years. There are a large number of Chinese TV dramas on Gomtv. The total number is 137, far more than Japanese, European or American dramas. Audiences can watch the classic 1994 version of *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, and newer ones such as the suspense drama *The Mystic Nine*;

modern drama such as *Modern Times*, *Ode to Joy*, *When a Snail Falls in Love* and the 2017 version of *Legend of the Condor Heroes*.

1.3.2 *European and American Markets*

The film and television industry in Europe and the United States started early, has a high production level, mature industrial chain and fierce competition. It has formed a strong influence and brand awareness in the global scope. Although Chinese films have made rapid progress in production, they have failed to achieve satisfactory results in the mainstream markets in Europe and the US, due to thousands of marketing strategies, promotion methods and cultural differences. Take *Wolf Warriors II* for an example, it has performed mediocre in the United States compared with the box office myth of nearly 6 billion yuan in China. According to Box Office Mojo statistics, *Wolf Warriors II* was released in US theaters on July 28, 2017, aired in 53 theaters for 12 weeks, with The H Collective Pictures as its distributor, earning \$2,721,100, or just 0.3% of its total box office revenue. When voted by 2,152 global viewers on the US Internet film database IMDb, it gained an average score of 6.7 / 10 points. According to Rotten Tomatoes, a famous American film and television review website, the film received seven positive reviews out of ten, gaining an average score of 4.2 / 5 out of 1,370 votes. Many viewers who gave positive reviews are action film lovers, and some people even praised it as “the best action film in China” and “the best action film of the year”, and regarded the patriotism presented in the film as a direct political propaganda, which is difficult to resonate.

The hits of Chinese-language films at the North American box office took place in the first decade of the twenty-first century, with martial arts films occupying almost the top ten box office in North America. Martial arts films meet the expectations and imagination of western audiences for traditional Chinese culture. They have distinctive national characteristics and cultural colors and are the highest Chinese film type highly recognized by overseas audiences. *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* was released by Sony Pictures Classics in 2000 for 32 weeks in 2,027 theaters, earning \$12,8078,872, or 60% of the global box office, and ranking the 12th of the U.S. box office. The 2002 *Hero* was released by Miramax Films (USA) in the US in 2004 and earned \$5,371,0,019, 30.3% of total revenue worldwide. The 2006 *Fearless* was released by Rogue Pictures (US) for \$2,4633,730, or 36.2% of total revenue worldwide. However, after the martial arts fever receded, it has been difficult for Chinese films to reproduce this glory.

China Lion Film Distribution Company was established in 2010. It is a private multinational film distribution company to promote Chinese films to the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. In North America, China has worked with mainstream theaters such as AMC, Regal, CINEMARK and Cineplex in Canada, targeting overseas Chinese audiences, and playing films with high box office and good reputation in cinemas in Chinese gathering areas. China Lion released 15 Chinese films in the United States in 2016, grossing \$4,600,141, with an average

of \$3,06,676 each. It released 21 Chinese films in 2015, grossing \$5,170,196, on average each \$246,200. China Lion's top 5 films were the late 2015 New Year film *Mr. Six*, earning \$1415,450, 2015 comedy *Goodbye Mr. Loser* \$1,293,626, 2016 drama *Chongqin Hotpot* \$779,818, 2014 road comedy *Breakup Buddies* \$777,896 and 2016 romance *I Belonged to You* \$744,541. Only two films have exceeded \$1 million box office. The number of audiences is limited. The number of theaters is as small as dozens, and airing time is short, the average of which is only 5–6 weeks, and can be shortened to 2.4 weeks. Judging from the box office results, it is not easy for Chinese films to enter the mainstream market.

Well Go USA is an American drama and family entertainment distribution company, promoting popular action, genre and independent films in the United States and abroad to North American, Latin American, Asian and European audiences. Well Go USA's films released in the United States are mainly Asian films, including many Chinese-language films. In addition to martial arts films and Kungfu films, Well Go USA also prefers action films, such as the main police and gangster action film *Operation Mekong*, the police and gangster films *Cold War 2*, and the spy action film *The Taking of Tiger Mountain*. In the past year or two, Well Go USA has also tried to release comedies that have received high box office in China, such as "Lost in Hong Kong" and "City of Rock". But overall, there are a small number of theaters, small weeks, small audiences and mediocre box office results. In 2016, Well Go USA released 13 Asian films in the US, 10 in Chinese, and grossed \$5,052,999, with an average of \$505,300 each. The highest-grossing single was *Ip Man 3*, released in 115 theaters for 5.4 weeks and earned \$2,679,437, or 1.7% of the total worldwide.

It released 11 Asian films in 2015, seven in Chinese-language, grossing \$3,490,290, with an average of \$349,029 each. The highest-grossing single was *Lost in Hong Kong*, which was released in 34 theaters for 3.4 weeks, earning \$1,302,281, or 0.5% of the total revenue worldwide.

In European and American countries, in addition to the various channels of the Great Wall platform on Kirin TV offered to audience, the Chinese TV station is also an important channel to broadcast Chinese film and television works. Overseas Chinese TV was born in the 1970s and 80 s in the United States. The first target audiences were Chinese-speaking overseas Chinese. SinoVision Inc. was founded in 1990, Chinese Television in 1998, Phoenix TV Europe in 1999, Canadian Chinese Television in 2007, and LS Time Movie Channel in 2009 (Li Yu, 2011:11). In recent years, there have also been some overseas foreign language television stations for non-Chinese speaking audiences, such as BON TV. Founded in 2010 by Blue Ocean Media Group, BON TV is the first TV media enterprise in China operated by private capital to provide original Chinese TV programs to western audiences in English. All BON TV programs are about China and made by BON TV. The annual output is about 80,000 min with more than 20 programs such as news programs *The Voice of the Chinese People* and *Media*; financial programs *China Price Observation*, *China Business Consulting*, and *China Economic Express*; sports programs *Sports*, *Visual Youth*, tourism programs *Tips for China Travel* and *Explore China*; talk shows *High-end Interview* and *Chinese Entrepreneurs*; traditional culture programs *Handmade in China*, *Learn to Play Tai Chi* and *Chinese Way to Stay Healthy*; and Chinese

teaching program *Learning Chinese*. The satellite channel of BON TV has covered more than 120 countries and regions in Asia–Pacific, North America, Europe and North Africa. BON TV has grown to be a key national cultural export enterprise and has undertaken the national cultural export project to help cable channels to enter the main cable network system in Europe and America.⁵

European and American audiences can also pay to watch film and television works on the Internet, which is cheaper than traditional TV media and offers more choices to watch films. There are more than 50 Chinese films on Google Play, many of which are newly released in the past two years, such as *God of War*, *Kung Fu Yoga* and *I Am Not Pan Jinlian*, *Railroad Tigers*, and *Operation Mekong*, which costs \$3.99 each to watch. More popular video sites are Netflix and Hulu. One pays just a few dollars in membership subscription per month, which is cheaper than cable or satellite TV. Take Netflix as an example, the Chinese film and television works on the website are all Chinese soundtrack and English subtitles versions. There are about 50 dramas from Hong Kong, Taiwan and the Chinese mainland. Most of them are Taiwan idol dramas and modern drama films, and only a few are mainland TV dramas, such as *The Disguiser*, *All Quiet in Peking* and *The Qin Empire*. The number of Chinese films on Netflix is even smaller, just above 20. They are films made in recent years, such as *The Flowers of War*, *Monster Hunt*, *Breakup Buddies* and *The Monkey King of Journey to the West*.

Due to the lack of works on paid websites, more and more audiences abroad also choose to follow up the latest Chinese film and television works for free on the Internet. YouTube is the first-choice channel for many overseas audiences. It attracts many followers. Millions of people can be watching the same episode of a TV drama. In recent years, with the standardization of management, popular Chinese films and TV dramas have gradually been broadcast on the YouTube platform through legal and formal ways. On YouTube there are a large number of channels related to Chinese TV and films, which can be divided into two categories. One is the channels set up by CCTV and the local Chinese TV stations. In 2013, CGTN China International Television registered on YouTube and currently has 230,000 followers, nearly 300 million views, with videos mainly in English news. In 2014, CCTV registered its official channel on YouTube. Currently it has 230,000 followers and 100 million views. Programs are mainly original broadcast by CCTV, such as *Lecture Room*, *Legal Report*, *Avenue of Stars*, *Voice*, and *A Half Hour of Economy*. No English subtitles are available as target audiences are mainly overseas Chinese. Local TV stations such as Shandong Radio and Television Station, Sichuan Radio and Television Station, SMG Shanghai TV Station, Jiangsu TV Station and Anhui TV Station have all opened official channels on YouTube, and the number of followers is generally tens of thousands. The video content is mostly self-made programs or program trailers, most of which do not have English subtitles. The second is the channels opened by special platform operation agencies or film and television and

⁵ Bluebook of State Administration of Radio, Film and Television. BON TV: New Exploration of Chinese Film and TV Going-out [EB/OL]. [2017 - 10 - 19]. <http://www.bontv.cn/category.php?aid=703>.

media companies on YouTube, such as the official channel of Croton Media, Baena Hot Broadcast Theater, TV Chinese Cinema, official channel of Letv Video, New Set Film, official channel of Huace Film and Television, big drama exclusive broadcast channel, etc. However, only a few of these channels provide English subtitles, with films usually with their own bilingual subtitles, while most TV series are Chinese acoustic especially translated subtitles versions.

In 2012, Viki founded Viki Global TV channel on YouTube, which currently has nearly 600,000 followers and uploaded more than 2,300 TV episodes, which has been watched more than 200 million times. Unabridged videos can be watched on Viki website, and paid Viki pass allows ad-free HD viewing. Viki is a San Francisco-based video streaming media site, founded in 2007. Viki online mainly featured East Asian dramas, and as of October 2017, there were 596 Korean dramas, 65 Japanese dramas, 103 Taiwanese dramas, 34 Hong Kong dramas and 155 Chinese mainland dramas. These Chinese dramas are rich in types, costume films, modern dramas, and closely follow the trend in China. The Viki website has its own subtitle translation community. The subtitles are completed by the cooperative translation of the fans. Each subtitle group is a volunteer team with a clear division of labor, including channel administrator, segmentation editing personnel, language supervisor, proof-reading editing, etc., performing their own duties and translating as many as 20 or 30 languages. Take the most popular Chinese drama, *The Game of Killing*, as an example, the subtitle translation is made by *Gone with the Shirt Team* which has 81 members who participated in subtitle translation of 30 languages including French, German, Spanish, Russian, Arabic, Indonesian, Malay, and Thai More than 4,600 viewers gave the series an average score of 9.7.

MZTV was launched on YouTube in 2013. It is ranked the “comprehensive Chinese TV drama channel with the most subscriptions, views and influence” on YouTube.⁶ At present, it has more than 70 0,000 followers and offers viewing of dramas synchronized with TV stations in China. Audience can watch the latest hit Chinese TV series on the channel such as *Nirvana in Fire* in 2015, *Ode to Joy* in 2016, and *Nothing Gold Can Stay* in 2017.

1.4 A Field Survey of Chinese Film and TV Subtitle Translation

In order to have a better understanding of the impact of subtitle translation on international audience in the process of spreading Chinese film and TV dramas abroad and to obtain first-hand information, a questionnaire survey is designed and carried out by our students on their foreign acquaintances. The purpose is to obtain foreign audiences’ feedback on the subtitle translation or dubbing of the following films and TV dramas:

⁶ He Jiazi. King of the Chinese hit shows, Has the 22nd floor in the eyes of Foreigners actually surpassed *Nirvana in Fire*? [EB/OL]. [2017 -10 -19]. <http://chuansong.me/n/337874843708>.

- (1) *Family Trilogy* by Ang Lee;
- (2) *Monkey King: Hero is Back*;
- (3) *Song of the Phoenix*;
- (4) *Grandmaster*;
- (5) *Black Coal, Thin Ice*;
- (6) Feng Xiaogang's *New Year comedies*,
- (7) *Finding Mr. Right*;
- (8) *Empresses in the Palace*;
- (9) Other movies.

A total of 34 students participated in the conducting the survey and they reached a total of 67 foreigners, 57.7% of whom are male, and the majority are students, accounting for 37.3%, followed by teachers, accounting for 14.9%. It is obvious that the subjects are mainly overseas students and foreign teachers in China.

For the subtitle translation, they believe that the subtitles are translated well, contributing to 25.4% of the viewing experience, mainly in films such as *Seeking Mr. Right* and *The Grandmaster*. Many regard the subtitle translation of *Seeking Mr. Right* is well-done as foreign audiences are not hindered by the translation. In particular, they are impressed by some good translations. For example, there is a case when the word *salty* appeared on the screen. The source text in Chinese can be understood as expressing anger or sadness. The viewers find the target text very idiomatic and matching. They presume that the translator could have been a native English speaker. Another example is in *The Grandmaster*. The word *Battleground* appeared on the screen, which is the target text for Hero's field in Chinese. In the UK, heroes are often soldiers. In China, martial arts masters can also be heroes. *Battleground* may refer to the battlefield of soldiers or the competition field of martial arts masters.

Among the participants, 47.8% of them regard subtitle translation as not good because it has impeded the viewing experience. The main problems focus on the cultural gap and the corresponding inaccurate translation. Take *Empresses in the Palace* as an example, the viewers see that its subtitles basically match the length of Chinese dubbing, but the expressions are relatively simple, sometimes vague. After studying the appellations and poetic expression in the drama, it is clear that hierarchy is very important in ancient China. The subtitles have offered terms such as *concubine*, *consort*, and *attendant*, which are quite inadequate to reflect the status and rank of the concubines in the harem. Therefore, it is difficult to understand the behavior of the palace ladies in the drama. In addition, poetry is also difficult to understand. Without knowing that this is poetry, it appears abrupt in the dialogue, and requires a certain reaction time and the plot background to understand. Another example is *Song of the Phoenix*. Viewers feel that the subtitles are very good, and they can easily follow the subtitles. But they also find puzzling mistakes. For example, the source text is about "*that scene is also big, the momentum is also higher*". The subtitle reads: "*For a really big occasion, important, high energy*". A better version should be "*for a really big occasion, it is important to have high energy*". Some archaic words are used which can be unknown to English speakers. For example, one participant notices the word "kowitz" in the subtitle. She remarks that the word

is not very common in English, and she has not heard of it before watching this film. It is better to use more common words that the audiences understand. If *kowtow* is changed to *bow*, the audience can understand it better.

Among the participants, 26.9% of the them believe that subtitle translation has not affected their viewing experience, especially when watching Kungfu movies such as *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* and *Monkey King: Hero is Back* as their attention is focused on the actions rather than the dialogues and subtitles. Viewers are entertained without having to fully understand the dialogues.

In summary, in the past decade, the “going global” of China’s film and television has achieved certain results under the vigorous support and active promotion of national policies. However, the main overseas audiences of Chinese films and television works are overseas Chinese and foreign audiences who are interested in Chinese culture. The small number of target audience and few translated works are restricting the overseas dissemination of China’s film and television works. In order to further promote the “going global” of Chinese film and television works, it is imperative to accelerate the construction of the curriculum system of audiovisual translation disciplines in colleges and universities, cultivate specialized translation talents, build high-level translation teams, and improve the level of subtitle translation.

Chapter 2

Cultural Default and Translation Compensation in the English Translation of Chinese Films: Taking Ang Lee's *Family Trilogy* as an Example



Qingyun Gao

2.1 Background Introduction

This chapter studies Ang Lee's *Family trilogy* based on cultural default and translation compensation theory. There are many factors causing cultural default, including social thinking, value systems, religious beliefs, and customs. Default cultural information often brings understanding difficulties to the translation audience. To this end, the film subtitle translation must take the appropriate translation compensation. This chapter briefly analyzes some of the lossy translations that lack translation compensation in the English translation of Ang Lee's *Family Trilogy*, by which it demonstrates the necessity of translation compensation in the process of film subtitle translation. And then the chapter proposes translation compensation strategies, namely, paraphrase, amplification, shift of perspective, domestication, concretization, and generalization. The application of translation compensation strategy is of great significance for accurately understanding and translating Chinese film subtitles. Using the above translation compensation strategy, the translator can retain and spread the rich Chinese cultural information contained in Chinese films to the greatest extent.

Culture is the soul of a nation, and cultural soft power is an important part of a country's comprehensive national strength. Today, although China's economic strength has become the second in the world, China's cultural soft power is far behind other developed countries. As a special cultural product, film contains rich cultural connotations and plays an important role in cross-cultural communication. Chinese-language film is an essential way for Chinese national culture to reach the world, so the translation research of Chinese-language film subtitles has also attracted much attention. However, the uneven translation quality of Chinese films has greatly hindered the successful entry of Chinese films from entering the overseas

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film market. How to improve the translation quality of Chinese film subtitles? This is a major problem the translation industry is faced now.

The primary consideration in translation is language factors, because language carries information. Without language, the message is difficult to pass on. Translation, however, is not only the transformation between the two languages, but more importantly the communication and collision of the two cultures. That is to say, translation is a cross-cultural communication activity. The subtitle translation of Chinese films is not only the decoding of the symbols of the Chinese and English languages, but also the transformation and transmission of the culture carried by the Chinese and English languages. Therefore, the translation of Chinese film subtitles needs not only to truly and accurately convey the Chinese language information, but also to present the rich Chinese cultural information to the outside world. Therefore, it is necessary to revisit the film subtitle translation from a cultural perspective.

When film screenwriters create film scripts, they regard people who share the same cultural background knowledge with them as intended audiences, so they often ignore cultural information that is self-evident to source language audiences. When the film goes to the international market, for thousands of translation audiences from different cultural backgrounds, these omitted cultural background information will cause difficulties in their understanding and constitute a cultural default. Cultural default is inevitable. The characteristics of instantaneousness, popularization, colloquialization, and non-annotation of subtitles, coupled with the constraints of three factors, namely space-time technology, language and discourse, make it more difficult to handle the problem of cultural default in the translation of subtitles. The application of the translation compensation strategy largely solves this problem.

As a representative figure of Chinese film directors, Ang Lee's films have been well received in the international film industry. In his films, people can see the cultural differences and contradictions between Chinese and Western cultures, and fully feel the exchange and collision between Chinese and Western cultures. Ang Lee's success is not only because his films contain rich cultural connotations of the Chinese nation, but also because the subtitle translation of his films successfully conveys these cultural connotations. *Family trilogy* is an early representative work of Ang Lee, and it is also a model of excellent Chinese film subtitle translation, among which the translation compensation processing of cultural default factors is worth studying.

Subtitle translation of Chinese films is crucial, which directly affects the success of Chinese films in overseas markets. When actually starting the film subtitle translation, the translator should always bear in mind the characteristics and restrictive factors of subtitle translation, based on the perspective of the target language audience appreciating the production of subtitle translation and fully consider the acceptability of the target language audience. Translators should select the most effective translation compensation strategy to fill the cultural default gaps in the source language text guided by the theory of cultural default and translation compensation in order to convey the most relevant information to the foreign audience in the different cultural knowledge background. In this way, foreign audiences can get the most effective film information with the least effort and then better understand and accept the

film. Furthermore, better subtitle translation in Chinese-language films can finally realize the effective spread of Chinese culture and promote the communication and integration of Chinese and western culture.

2.1.1 Research Background

In the context of globalization, exchanges between countries are becoming closer, and movies have become an important carrier of cultural communication. After the reform and opening up, especially after China joined the WTO, a large number of foreign films were introduced to China. At the same time, with the improvement of China's comprehensive economic and cultural strength, Chinese films gradually began to go abroad to the world. As a bridge for the spread of Chinese culture to the outside world, Chinese-language films can help foreign audiences better understand the profound cultural heritage of the Chinese nation. However, the translation of Chinese films has been one of the biggest obstacles restricting Chinese films into the overseas film market.

When Chinese films are released abroad, most films need to convert the source language (Chinese) into target language (English), commonly known as film translation. Generally speaking, translation films can be divided into two kinds: dubbing translation film and subtitle translation film. In this rapidly changing information age, science and technology are highly developed. Due to its large cost and long production cycle, high technical limitations, dubbing translation film gradually lags behind the demand for translation production in the film market. The subtitle translation film replaces it. The subtitle translation film skipped the gap of post-production of dubbing translation film and directly translated the source subtitles into target subtitles, saving a lot of time and ensuring that the film and television resources can be quickly put into the market to meet the requirements of the audience. At the same time, it also improved the economic benefits of the film and promoted cultural communication between China and Western countries.

Film subtitle translation is an emerging research field in the contemporary realm of translation and plays an important role in cross-cultural communication. Subtitle translation production not only greatly reduces the difficulty and cost of production, but most importantly, it retains the original flavor of the film. It is not only a mutual transformation between languages, but also a cultural transmission, which reflects the differences between different countries, including ways of thinking, value system, religious beliefs, customs, etc. However, the quality of subtitle translation is always uneven, and one of the main reasons is the lack of systematic theoretical guidance. High-quality subtitle translation can help target audiences understand the film better and deeper. On the contrary, low-quality subtitle translation will confuse the audience and make the audience lose interest in the film. How to provide high-quality subtitle translation for the audience? To answer this question, it is necessary to study the field of film subtitle translation further and find reliable theoretical support and suitable translation strategies. This is a major practical subject facing the translation industry.

2.1.2 *Significance and Methods of Research*

Film is the carrier of language and culture. It well explains the ideology and normal life of a certain society and reflects the cultural background of a certain society. Bela Balazs once said that we have to admit that film has influenced more on the thought of a thousand audiences than any other kind of art (Zhang 2008: 8). Chinese films are one of the fastest and effective ways to understand the Chinese language and culture. By watching Chinese films, foreign audiences can understand the Chinese cultural elements in the film, feel the Chinese nation's profound culture, and then be attracted to the Chinese culture.

Although the film plays an essential role in daily life and intercultural communication, unfortunately, it has failed to attract the attention of the translation community. There is a huge gap between the importance of film and television translation and its deserved attention (Delabastita 1990: 97). Many subtitle translators lack expertise and argue that subtitle translation does not require theoretical guidance at all. Most scholars also believe that the subtitle translation is not highly academic and is not worth studying. In addition, most Chinese research on subtitle translation involves Chinese translation of English films and little research on the English translation of Chinese films has been found.

Subtitle translation is not produced in thin air. Instead, it is produced based on a specific context and cultural background. The translation is "seen as a process of negotiation between texts and between cultures" (Bassnett and Lefevere 2004: IX). The same is true for subtitle translation studies. Based on economic principles, the authors of original Chinese films often omit cultural background information that is self-evident to Chinese audiences, that is, cultural defaults, but overseas audiences are completely confused about these cultural defaults. For these target audiences, the more cultural default content in the film, the more difficult it is for them to understand the film. Therefore, in the process of subtitle translation, it is necessary to compensate for the cultural default content in the film to compensate for the lack of source cultural background knowledge lost by the target audience.

Whether overseas audiences can understand and accept films like Chinese audiences is directly related to the success or failure of Chinese films in overseas markets. Gottlieb once mentioned, "*Good subtitles cannot save a bad film, but bad subtitles can spoil a good one*" (Gambier and Gottlieb 2001: 164). Therefore, this chapter will focus on the English translation of Chinese film subtitles from the perspective of cultural default and discuss the strategies applied in translation compensation.

Starting from the definition of subtitle translation, this chapter first explores the classification, characteristics and constraints of subtitle translation and then uses the literature analysis method to sort out the history and current situation of subtitle translation research. By reading a large number of relevant documents and citing previous studies, the author tries to make this chapter as persuasive as possible, improves the scientific nature and rationality of this chapter, and lays the foundation for the full chapter. Later, starting from the perspective of cultural default and translation compensation, the author adopted categorical induction method, description

analysis method and case analysis method, and selected the typical subtitle translations from Ang Lee's *Family Trilogy* as examples to study the cultural default and discuss the specific application of translation compensation strategy in film subtitle translation.

2.1.3 Lee's Family Trilogy Profile

Since the 1980s and 1990s, many Chinese film directors have begun to debut in the international film industry, and their films have gradually attracted the attention of the world film industry. With their own unique perspective and techniques of expression, they showed the profound heritage of Chinese culture to the world and won the world's recognition of this ancient Oriental civilization. Taiwan film director Ang Lee is the outstanding representative of these directors. In his films, people can feel the cultural differences and contradictions between Chinese and Western cultures and experience the collision and exchanges between Chinese and Western cultures. Lee's early representative works, *Family Trilogy* (also known as *Father Trilogy*, including *Pushing Hands*, *The Wedding Banquet* and *Eat Drink Man and Woman*), focused on the integration and conflict between Chinese and Western culture.

Pushing Hands (1992) was the first film in the *Family trilogy* and the debut to establish Lee's directorial status. The film launched the story with the cultural differences between Chinese and western China and the generation gap between the two generations as the main line. It won a great sensation once it was launched and then won the Best Film Award at the Asia Pacific Film Festival. The film describes Zhu Lao, a Tai Chi master, as being received by his son Zhu Xiaosheng to the United States to live with his family after his retirement. Because of his language barrier and different living habits, Zhu Lao could not adapt to the United States. He could only practice Tai Chi at home. His American daughter-in-law Martha could not accept Zhu Lao. His presence made her difficult to concentrate on writing. Martha disliked Zhu Lao, and they always had conflicts. When Zhu was teaching Tai Chi in a Chinese school, he met Mrs. Chen from Taiwan and made a good impression. Once, Mr. Zhu went out for a walk by himself, got lost and couldn't go back home because he was not familiar with the surroundings. When Xiaosheng learned that his father was missing, he was very anxious. He tried to find his father with no results several times and clashed with his wife. Then, Zhu Lao was sent home by the police. Faced with the contradiction between his father and his wife, Xiaosheng, the son, almost collapsed, and reluctantly, he wanted to match his father and Mrs. Chen so that they could keep each other company. Zhu and Mrs. Chen realized Xiaosheng's meaning, so they left a letter away from home and went to the Chinatown restaurant to wash dishes, but then they had a conflict with the restaurant owner and alerted the police. Xiaosheng came to the police station, wanting to pick up Zhu Lao home. However, Zhu Lao did not want to destroy the warm life of his son's family. He would rather live in a rented house alone. He taught Tai Chi in his spare time and finally met Mrs. Chen where he taught her.

The *Wedding Banquet* (1993) is an international work by Ang Lee and has won the *Golden Bear Award* and the *Golden Horse Award for Best Film* at the Berlin Film Festival. The film deals with the issue of homosexuality with the unique ethical viewpoints of the Chinese, vividly depicting the process of a traditional Confucian family facing the cultural differences between China and the West and the conflict of ideas between the two generations. They first feel confused, then helpless, and finally, they accept it. During the process, a possible tragedy turns into a comedy for everyone's joy. The film's protagonist, Gao Weitong, a gay man, lived happily with his boyfriend Simon in the United States, but was constantly urged to get married by their parents in Taiwan. In order to cope with his parents' urging, Gao Weitong accepted Simon's proposal and agreed to a fake marriage with Gu Weiwei, the tenant of his house. Unexpectedly, his parents came all the way to the United States to witness the wedding. In order to cope with his parents, Weitong and Gu Weiwei held a simple notarized wedding ceremony in the city hall, but his parents were very dissatisfied with Weitong's hasty attitude. Simon invited everyone to dinner in order to lighten the mood. The restaurant owner, a former subordinate of his father, insisted on holding a traditional wedding banquet for his "young master" Wei Tong. After the wedding party, Weitong and Gu Weiwei had a real affair under the influence of alcohol and made Weiwei pregnant. Simon learned of the matter and quarrelled with Weitong, and Gao's father was hospitalized. Weitong had to tell his mother the truth that he was gay. And Gao's father actually knew the truth during the argument between Weitong and Simon. This is tacit to Gao's father and mother, and they are unwilling to say anything while treating Simon and Weiwei like their daughter-in-law. Weiwei was eventually moved and decided to give birth to raise his children. Weitong and Simon also reconciled.

Eat Drink Man Woman (1994) was the third play in the Family Trilogy series filmed by Lee after *Pushing Hands* and *The Wedding Banquet*, and it was the first time that Ang Lee returned to Taiwan for filming. The film still focuses on family love and marriage, the generation gap and conflicts between old and new ideas, but the ideological depth is further, and the narrative skills are better than the previous two. The emotional development of father and daughter is seemingly loose, but it overlaps in the family dinner every day a week. It is internationally renowned, won Best Film at the *Asia Pacific Film Festival* and the *Golden Horse Awards* for Taiwan Film Awards, and was nominated for the *Golden Globe* and *Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film*. The film's protagonist, Lao Zhu, a famous Taipei chef, raised his three daughters alone. The more his daughters grew up; the more Lao Zhu felt powerless. Family dinner every week became an important time for the family to maintain relationships. However, at every family dinner, someone announced unexpected things. Hence, every dinner was full of surprises: The shrewd and capable second daughter announced that she would move out to live alone, but later did not do it due to investment failure; the always well-behaved third daughter announced that she had a premarital pregnancy; the old virgin daughter announced a flash marriage; the most unexpected thing was that Mr. Zhu announced that he would remarry with his daughter's classmate Jin Rong. The original intact home was disintegrated, and in the end, the most rebellious second daughter stayed behind in the old house.

Lee's success is not only because of the profound and implicit cultural connotations of his work but also due to the success of the film subtitle translation that makes worldwide audiences generally accept his film language. In general, the subtitle translation of Ang Lee's *Family Trilogy* is smooth and coherent, among which the compensation of cultural default factors is targeted, which is undoubtedly an excellent subtitle translation. The selection of its compensation strategy is worth learning and studying. Therefore, the author chooses Ang Lee's *Family Trilogy* as an example to discuss the cultural default and compensation for translation in the English translation process of Chinese film subtitles.

2.2 Literature Review

With the development of the film industry, the popularity of high technology, and the promotion of globalization, subtitle translation began to attract wide attention from scholars. Subtitle translation research has gradually developed towards specialization and diversification with their efforts. The following sections will review the subtitle translation research by scholars at home and abroad to have a more comprehensive understanding of the history of subtitle translation research and its development.

2.2.1 Review of Foreign Subtitle Translation Studies

After decades of development, subtitle translation research has made considerable progress in the West. Western scholars, especially European scholars, are at the forefront of the research field. Due to their diverse characteristics of history, language and culture, and the close exchanges between countries, the European states have created good conditions for subtitle translation and their related research.

In 1974, Cay Dollerup published an article in *Babel* called *On Subtitles in Television Programmes*. The article profoundly explores the translation of English TV programs into Danish, separately analysing subtitle translation for the first time. However, the academic community believes that Cay Dollerup's biggest contribution is that he first proposed the important significance of subtitles in the field of foreign language teaching (1974: 197–202).

In 1982, Marleau published an article called *Lesous-titres...un malnecessaire's article*, analysing the problems existing in subtitle translation from four aspects: technical, psychological, artistic aesthetic and linguistics. Based on that, he made some suggestions on subtitle typography, with the first focus on economic factors outside of linguistics (1982: 271–285).

That same year, Christopher Titford published an article called *Subtitling: Constrained Translation*, which first introduced the concept of constrained translation. Titford believes that the main problem translators face in film translation is limited by the film and television media itself (1982: 113).

In the 1990s, subtitle translation entered the golden age, and subtitle translation research emerged in theory. Major breakthroughs have been made.

In 1991, Luyken collaborated with four other scholars from Europe to publish *Overcoming Language Barriers in Television: Dubbing and Subtitling for the European Audience*, which analyzed the different translation modes used in the language conversion process of film and television work from a professional perspective, first systematically counted the number of translated programs, labour costs and audience preferences (Luyken 1991).

In 1992, Swedish subtitle translator Jan Ivarsson published the book *Subtitling for the Media: A Handbook of an Art* based on his expertise in subtitle translation. The book gave a fairly comprehensive introduction to subtitle translation, becoming the first work in Western history to specialize in subtitle translation. In 1998, Ivarsson reissued the book, with the help of Mary Carroll, and named it *Subtitling*. These two books by Ivarsson laid the foundation for research in Western film translation.

Since 1995, western film subtitle translation research has developed rapidly, and the academic field related to this has been fruitful. Among them, the more outstanding scholars include Basil Hatim, Ian Mason, Fotios Karamitroglou, Yves Gambier, Henrik Gottlieb, Aline Remael, Heulwen James, Hazel R. Morgan, Jorge Diaz Cintas, Anne Jackel, etc.

In their co-authored book *The Translator as Communicator*, Basil Hatim and Ian Mason explore how the constraints of a particular communicative task affect the use of discourse devices in the translation of source texts and subtitles in the contextual context (1997: 79) and summarize the main constraints faced by the translator during subtitle translation. In the book, Basil Hatim and Ian Mason discuss the role of film subtitle translation and how to provide acceptable translated text to the audience.

Fotios Karamitroglou, in *A Proposed Set of Subtitling Standards* in Europe, constructs a microanalytical model of national subtitle translation practice in Europe. Karamitroglou believes that the criteria for generating and arranging TV subtitles are to maximize target translation appreciation and understanding and achieve the highest legibility and readability value of inserted subtitles (1998: 1–15). In 2000, Karamitroglou published his doctoral thesis: *Towards a Methodology for the Investigation of Norms in Audiovisual Translation*. In the paper, Karamitroglou applied the latest translation concepts to the study of film and television translation norms, extended these concepts' functions, and expanded the possibilities of film and television translation research (Cintas 2004: 58).

In 2001, Yves Gambier co-edited and published the book (*Multi*) *Media Translation: Concepts, Practices, and Research* with Henrik Gottlieb. This is an academic collection of essays on subtitle translation. In the book, Gambier elaborated with Gottlieb on the introduction of multimedia translation as polymorphism and is a new field (Gambier and Gottlieb 2001: xix) challenging different modes of communication and emphasizing the necessary role of translation. In addition, the book also mentions the establishment of multimedia translation evaluation standards.

Henrik Gottlieb takes the translation of English programs into Danish as an example, indicating that subtitle translator always consciously or especially consciously choose during the translation of subtitles (one of four strategies): (1)

complete alienation; (2) uses a language structure with Danish English; (3) uses widely accepted English foreign words and borrowing; (4) fully uses authentic Danish English to mortar (2001: 249).

In *Some Thoughts on the Study of Multimedia Translation*, Aline Rемаel answers three questions: what are the factors in determining subtitle translation patterns; how does language translation interpret film images; and how does this impact traditional translation strategies (2001: 13). Rемаel believes that the acceptability of translation should be more valued than propriety. Translators should focus more on the target language audience than on the source audience.

In his published article *Quality Control of Subtitles: Review or Preview*, Heulwen James analyzed the different expectations of the different parties. He sees audience expectations as the most important of all parties. James proposed that the film subtitle translation quality control “review mode”: quality control should first check the spelling, pre-read the subtitle text, and finally watch the translation film completely, so that high-quality subtitle translation can be achieved (2001: 154).

Hazel R. Morgan explores ways to produce excellent subtitle translation in its published *Subtitling for Channel 4 Television*. Morgan argued that excellent subtitle translation should be quite precise in time, simply conveying the author’s intention in the way closest to the source language, and making one feel that the translation comes from the original film rather than the translated text imposed on the source film (2001: 164).

Jorge Diaz Cintas in *Striving for Quality in Subtitling: the Role of a Good Dialogue List* proposes to control subtitle translation quality (2001: 199). Cintas classifies factors affecting the quality of subtitle translation into three categories: physical limitations, conditions for forced subtitle translation workers, and problems arising in actual language translation.

In *The Subtitling of La Haine: A Case Study*, Anne Jackel explores the English translation of the French film “Angry Youth” (La Haine) into the socio-cultural implications of subtitle translation (2001: 223). She explores the choice of equivalent words in the target language, the factors that determine the subtitle translator’s choice, and the problems in the selection of equivalent words.

2.2.2 Overview of Subtitle Translation Studies in China

Compared with western countries, Chinese film subtitle translation research started late. Strictly speaking, domestic subtitle translation research began in the 1990s. However, domestic film subtitle translation research is still in the preliminary stage due to a lack of theoretical basis and systematic research. Fortunately, in recent years, scholars in the Chinese translation industry have begun to pay attention to the study of film subtitle translation, including Ma Zhan, Zhang Chunbai, Qian Shaochang, Li Yunxing, Li Heqing, Bo Zhenjie, etc.

In 1997, in his article *On the Basic Principles of Film and Television Translation*, Ma Zhanqi analyzed the basic principles of film and television translation from five

aspects. He holds that these five aspects are “*the most important feature of film and television translation is also the most basic principle that translation must follow in its creation. This is the basic guarantee for good film and television translation*” (1997: 84).

In 1998, Zhang Chunbai discussed the relevant characteristics of film and television language in the article *Primary Exploring of Film and Television Translation*, and also analyzed the nature, principles and skills of film and television translation. In addition, Zhang Chunbai also studied the strategies to handle cultural factors and puns in film and television translation (1998: 50–53).

In 2000, Qian Shaochang published the article *Film and Television Translation—An Increasingly Important Field In The Translation Garden*. In this essay, Qian Shaochang analyzed the differences between film and television language and written literary language and summarized the five characteristics of film and television language. After more than a thousand years of practical experience in film and television translation, he listed examples to prove his seven personal experiences. Finally, Qian Shaochang proposed that in the process of film and television translation, among the criteria of “*faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance*”, “*expressiveness*” is the most important (2000: 61–65).

In 2001, Professor Li Yunxing published the article *Subtitle Translation Strategy in Chinese Translators Journal*, summarizing the different classification criteria of subtitle translation, and then he analyzed the characteristics of subtitle translation and its corresponding translation strategies from three aspects: spatial and temporal constraints, information function and cultural factors (2001: 38–39). He argued that subtitle translation should provide the most relevant information in the most efficient manner in limited space–time.

In 2005, Li Heqing and Pu Zhenjie used Tourli’s normative theory to study film and television subtitle translation in the article *Specification and Film and Television Subtitle Translation*. Li Heqing and Pu Zhenjie analyzed the form norms of subtitle translation and the language and text norms in the article. Finally, they concluded that subtitle translation is restricted by language and text specification and inevitably by formal specification, so excellent subtitle translation had to pursue the invisibility of the subtitles to achieve the highest level of subtitle translation (2005: 44–46).

In general, Chinese and western scholars have studied the subtitle translation of film from multiple perspectives, constructed the overall framework of subtitle translation research, redefined the subtitle translation in a multimedia context, solved the confusion of subtitles translation research, and opened the bridge between subtitle translation and traditional literary translation.

However, the subtitle translation study is still in the empirical research stage. Subtitle translation research lacks guidance from the systematic framework and theoretical analysis tools, and it is difficult to fully expand. Therefore, scholars and experts in the field of translation research need to pay more attention to and contribute to the systematic and theoretical studies of subtitle translation (Gambier and Gottlieb 2001: xx).

Additionally, since Western scholars are at the forefront of subtitle translation research, most of the previous studies are based on subtitle translation in Western

contexts, and rarely deal with subtitle translation of Chinese films (especially Chinese to English). However, in practice, judging from the huge differences of western language and culture, the English translation of Chinese film subtitles will inevitably be plagued by cultural default problems. The cultural default in subtitle translation concerns the target audience's understanding of the film, but it is not appreciated. Therefore, in the following section, the author will use the theory of cultural default and translation compensation to discuss the translation strategies that can effectively deal with cultural default in the process of film subtitle translation, and analyze the factors affecting the choice of translation strategies of subtitle translators.

2.3 On Film Subtitle Translation

In this section, the author will outline four aspects of film subtitle translation: the definition of subtitle translation, the classification of subtitle translation, the characteristics of subtitle translation, and the constraints on subtitle translation.

2.3.1 *Definition of a Subtitle Translation*

Multimedia translation, also known as audiovisual translation, abbreviated as AVT, includes TV translation, film translation, radio translation, video media translation, etc. Although film subtitling is the most common type of multimedia translation, it is by no means the same as multimedia translation. Movie subtitle translation is part of multimedia translation and is a new field of translational research. There is no very authoritative definition of subtitle translation. Many scholars have defined subtitle translation, but all of them are not complete.

Jacobson considered subtitle translation as “*an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language*” (1959: 233).

Luyken believes: “*Subtitles are a condensed translation of acoustic dialogue, in the form of text lines, usually under the large screen, with the corresponding acoustic dialogue on the screen and then disappear, and most of them are added to the film picture during post-production*” (1991: 31).

In Henrik Gottlieb's *Subtitling-A New University Discipline*, a detailed definition of subtitle translation is given: “*Subtitling can be defined as a (1) written, (2) additive, (3) immediate, (4) synchronous and (5) polymedial translation*” (Gottlieb 1992: 162).

Birgit Nederland-Larsen sees subtitling as “*a special type of language transfer: a written, condensed translation of a predominantly spoken original*” (1993: 212).

Shuttleworth and Cowie consider subtitling as “*a term used to refer to one of the two main methods of language transfer used in translating types of mass audiovisual communication such as film and television....., subtitling can be defined as the process of providing synchronized subtitles for film and television dialogue*” (2004: 161).

2.3.2 *Classification of Subtitle Translation*

Subtitle translation is a general concept that can be divided into different types from different perspectives.

2.3.2.1 From a Linguistic Perspective

Linguistically, subtitle translation can be divided into two categories. One is intralingual subtitle translation for deaf or hearing impaired or foreign language subtitles for language learners. Intralingual subtitle translation is vertical subtitle translation: it just changes the way it speaks, transforms utterances into text, but it remains unchanged in language, which does not involve the transformation between the two languages.

The other category is interlingual subtitling, where translation between different languages: translators convert the source dialogue into the written translation that appears on the screen. Interlingual subtitling is diagonal subtitling: it not only changes the way it speaks, but also involves transformations between different languages (1994: 104).

2.3.2.2 From a Technical Point of View

From a technical point of view, subtitle translation can be generally divided into two categories: open subtitling and closed subtitling. Open subtitles are non-arbitrary, including movie subtitles and interlanguage television subtitles. It can be used as one of the components of the film to convert the source subtitles into target subtitles, displayed at the time of the film screen, but it can also be separated from the film. Instead, the close subtitles are arbitrary. It adds subtitles to the television signal to be broadcast with the television show in a separate signal before being decoded (Yang 2006: 97).

Open interlingual subtitling is a common subtitle translation and is also the main type of subtitling that will be discussed in this chapter.

2.3.3 *Features of the Movie Subtitle Translation*

Subtitle translation has its uniqueness when compared to other types of translation.

2.3.3.1 Instantaneity

Instantaneity is the most prominent feature of movie subtitles. When readers read a novel, if they can't understand it, they can look back and read it again, because the language of the characters in the novel is printed on paper. The audience watches the movie without that condition. Subtitles are mostly flashed on movies and television pictures. Even if you don't read it, it won't step back and let you see it again, or leave no extra time for you to think. In this case, you can only give up this subtitle, because if you struggle with the last line of dialogue, you may miss the following dialogue. Therefore, *"the translation of film and television shall be smooth and meaningful, so that the audience can understand them without nerve-racking thought"* (Qian 2000: 61).

2.3.3.2 Popularization

The transiency of movie subtitling partly determines its popularization. Film art is destined to be a popular art since its birth (Zhang 1998: 50). The wide range of film audiences requires that the film must be refined, suitable for the old and young. Whether it is a well-educated audience or an illiterate person who does not know several characters, both men, women and young, can understand a film. Therefore, the film subtitles must be easy to understand, cannot be too obscure. The language of film subtitles *"must be appropriate to the educational level of the general audience and must be understandable at first glance. Fudging is counterproductive"* (Zhang 1998: 50).

2.3.3.3 Colloquialization

Movie subtitles are mostly colloquial language, using a large number of informal languages, such as common sayings, slang, etc. The language in literary works such as novels is printed on paper and contains a lot of descriptive languages. But film subtitles are different. They are mainly composed of dialogue and are generally more colloquial. To some extent, subtitle translation is the transforms of spoken dialogue into written form. The translation should avoid using lengthy, difficult language. Perhaps translation may seem illogical and grammatical errors may occur. Still, colloquialization is a kind of *"translation that shall not only achieve written fluency, but also be close to life, easy to speak, in line with the language and cultural habits of the target language audience"* (Zhao 2010: 57).

2.3.3.4 Non-annotation

In the translation of literary works such as novels, the translator can add notes in the translation when necessary to help the readers better understand the text. However,

in the subtitle translation, the translator is never allowed to add additional subtitles or narration to the translation production for the purpose of annotation. Additional subtitles dazzled the audience, and additional narration made the audience confused (Qian 2000: 61). This shows that the subtitle translator can not annotate it in the translation. This poses a considerable challenge to the translator and is the most difficult part of the film subtitle translation. Movie subtitles generally scroll below the screen with very limited space. If too many subtitles occupy too much space on the screen, this will not only destroy the overall picture of the film but also easily distract the audience. Therefore, the translator should give full play to his creative thinking and effectively convey the cultural connotation, information content and artistic situation of the original work through the limited text, so that the target language audience can feel the language and cultural information the same as the original audience (Huang 2013: 149).

2.3.4 Constraints of Film Subtitle Translation

Any kind of translation is inevitably subject to certain factors, and film subtitle translation is no exception. Guardini Paola divides the constraints of subtitle translation into three major categories: technical constraint, linguistic constraint, and textual constraint (1998: 97).

2.3.4.1 Technical Constraint

Technical constraints mean that subtitles are limited by some time and space when displayed on the screen.

Time Constraint

Time constraint mainly refers to the fact that each subtitle has a specific time length on the timeline. Guardini (1998: 98) believes that “*the time of presentation of subtitles is dictated by (a) the duration of the utterance in the original version; (b) the reading speed of the viewers (as the subtitles need to be readable even to slow readers); (c) the visual information given on the screen, which also needs to be perceived clearly by the viewer, and (d) the editing style adopted in the film.*” The popularity of the film means that the film is oriented to all classes of audience. Due to the different degrees of education, the reading speed of the audience varies from person to person, and the time required to read the subtitles must vary. The display of subtitles must take care of the average audience to have enough time to finish watching the subtitles. Therefore, the subtitle translation must take into account the time constraints; the translation should not be too long or too short. If the subtitle translation is too long, and the time it shows on the screen is too short, the audience may not be able to see

the subtitle before it flashes away. If the subtitle translation is too short and stays too long on the screen, the audience may repeat reading the same subtitle, thus losing patience and interest in the film.

Spatial Constraint

The space constraint is determined by “*the size of a television screen in combination with the minimum letter-size legible to the average viewer*” (Gottlieb 1992: 164). To minimize interference with the background screen, subtitles cannot be over two lines at a time and need to be displayed below the screen. Due to the huge differences between the composition of English and Chinese, English subtitles are generally longer than Chinese subtitles, and they naturally occupy more space. In terms of English subtitles, some scholars believe that “*subtitles are generally limited to two lines of a maximum of about 35 characters each*” (Shuttleworth and Cowie 2004: 161). But others argue that the subtitles should not exceed 40 words per line. In terms of Chinese subtitles, Professor Qu Jianlong believes that one section should be only one Chinese line, and there should not be more than 13 Chinese characters per line (Qu 1993: 337). Too many lines in a single subtitle will occupy too much screen space and destroy the overall effect of the picture and affect the viewing of the film. It can be seen that the translator should try to make the translation concise and easy to read when referring to the subtitles.

2.3.4.2 Linguistic Constraint

Guardini further divides linguistic factor constraints into intra-linguistic constraint and extra-linguistic constraint. Intra-linguistic constraint comes from “*syntactic, grammatical differences*” (Guardini 1998: 104) between source and translation. Extra-linguistic restrictions refer to the cultural message conveyed by the source language itself (Guardini 1998: 106). It covers many aspects, including wordplays, idioms, proverbs and translations of slang.

2.3.4.3 Textual Constraint

Textual constraints refer to “change of medium” in subtitle translation (Guardini 1998: 102). Subtitle translation is the conversion of the spoken language in the original film into the translated written text, which means transforming the media, changing the way the language is presented, and greatly adjusting the whole text. When translating subtitles, the translator should, on the basis of effectively conveying the semantics of the source text, try to make the target text as coherent as possible, with natural cohesion and smooth text.

The characteristics and constraints of subtitle translation especially increase the difficulty of subtitle translators. To realize the appreciation value of the film and

reduce the lack of source language information, the translator should fully consider the above various characteristics and constraint factors in the process of subtitle translation.

2.4 Cultural Default and Translation Compensation in Film Subtitle Translation

2.4.1 *Language, Culture and Film Subtitling*

Language and culture are closely related to film subtitle translation, so it is important for subtitle translators to learn more profound about the relationship between the three.

Cultural concepts are extremely abstract and complex that it is difficult to explain in a few words. British anthropologist Edward Burnett Tylor, in *Primitive Culture*, expounds that “*Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society*” (Kantan 2004: 25). Culture, incorporating things of diverse nature, contains almost everything in the world, both material and spiritual. Peter Newmark, a famous British translator, defined “*culture as the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression*” (2001: 94). Thus, as a social product, language is especially suspected to be a part of the culture. Language is closely related to culture. Anthropologist Clyde Kluchhohn once mentioned: “*without language, human culture is simply unimaginable*” (Samovar et al. 2000: 23). Language is the carrier of culture, and culture is the peep of language. Language expresses culture, embodies culture, symbolizes cultural reality, and is an important tool for intercultural communication. The essence of language is culture, which forms and develops along the cultural trajectory, and cannot exist alone away from culture. Any language is rooted in a certain cultural context and is subject to cultural influence. Without culture, language is difficult to exist. Similarly, a culture that is not language-centric cannot exist. Language and text are interdependent, and neither party can be separated from the other. If separated, it is bound to damage the meaning of one of them.

The close relationship between language and culture has doomed the close relationship between translation and culture (Yan and Liu 2002: 8). Translation appears to be like an interverbal communication activity. In this sense, a qualified translator should be familiar with the source language and the target language. But it is not enough to be a good translator. There is no denying that the first consideration in translation is language, because language carries information. Without language, the message cannot be transmitted. Thus, many scholars believe that translation is translating a word, speech, book or other text in written or spoken form into another language. But in fact, by the internal relationship between language, culture and translation, translation must also take into account cultural factors. Translation without

taking cultural factors into account will definitely not be successful because words make sense only in the cultural context in which they act, and it is more important to be familiar with two cultures than mastering two languages (Nida 2001: 82). Susan Bassnett uses a vivid metaphor to reveal the relationship between “language-culture-translator”: “*Language, then, is the heart within the body of culture, and it is the interaction between the two that results in the continuation of life-energy. In the same way that the surgeon, operating on the heart, cannot neglect the body that surrounds it, so the translator treats the text in isolation from the culture at his peril*” (Bassnett and Lefevere 2004: 22). Many problems and errors arising in the translation practice are directly caused by cultural factors. Translation is not only about language; it is also about culture. The translation should not just translate the meaning of the surface language. More importantly, translation is required to migrate between the two cultures successfully. The purpose of the translation is to build a bridge between the two different cultures.

From the above relationship between language, culture and translation, it can be seen that there must be a certain relationship between culture and film subtitle translation. Because the film is not just a way of entertainment, it is also an essential medium of cultural communication. The film is like an encyclopaedia of all cultures and society. It is the epitome of society and culture. By watching movies, one can understand the cultural context of a particular country and region in a particular historical period. On the other hand, most films are presented in language form: dialogue, narratage, etc. Therefore, subtitles, as a written form of film language text, is largely the main embodiment of cultural factors in the film. Translation film subtitles are essentially translating language and culture and promoting cross-cultural exchanges.

In general, language and culture are closely intertwined: language is a part of the culture and the carrier of transmitting culture. Language plays an important role in forming, disseminating, and continuing the culture. On the other hand, the close relationship between language and culture leads us to believe that translation, as a language-dependent activity, must take cultural factors into account. Susan Bassnett and Andre Lefevere identified translation studies as a study of cultural fusion (2004: IX). Translation is not only a transformation process between languages, but also a cross-cultural communication activity. The goal of the translator is to realize the transmission of cultural connotation between source and translation, so as to promote the dissemination and development of culture. Therefore, it is necessary to revisit the film subtitle translation from a cultural perspective.

2.4.2 Cultural Default

2.4.2.1 Definition of Cultural Default

As mentioned above, translation is essentially a transfer and transition between the two languages and cultures. In addition to the language, the translator must also

consider the cultural factors in both languages. The cultural difference between the source language and target language is the biggest challenge facing translators in the translation process. People with the same language and cultural background have common cultural background knowledge. “*Paul Grice has referred to as the cooperative principle. People can generally assume that in conversations in which, for example, the exchange of information is primary, speakers will not say more than is necessary for the purpose of the exchange and will say all that is necessary to convey the information required*” (Kramsch 2000: 31). In communication, according to the economic principle of language use, in order to improve the communication efficiency, they usually omit the relevant cultural background information that is self-evident for both parties. And this part is omitted by both parties as a shared background is called ‘situational default’. Among them, the cultural background outside the language is the cultural default (Wang 1997: 55).

Cultural default is precipitated by a country after a long history, which is different from the cultural background knowledge of other countries. It belongs to a tacit understanding between people who enjoy the same language and cultural background. Each country has its own unique way of thinking, value system, religious beliefs, customs, and so on. All of this is deeply rooted in the culture of a country. Cultural difference between different countries means that the translator will often face the challenge of cultural shortage when translation because the source author faces the intended audience with common cultural background knowledge, so he will unconsciously omit the relevant cultural background information, that is, cultural default. When the source language audience meets this cultural default component, it will consciously activate the relevant cultural background information in the brain, so as to understand the information that the source language author wants to convey. In the translation process, the target audience of the translator faces a different cultural background from the source audience. This tacit understanding between the source author and the source audience is difficult to produce between the translator and the foreign audience. When audiences who do not belong to that cultural background encounter the same cultural deficit, they lack such cultural background knowledge and “*are unable to connect the information in the discourse with the knowledge and experience outside the discourse, thus making it difficult to establish the semantic coherence and situational coherence necessary for their understanding of the discourse - and thus creating a vacuum of sense*” (Wang 1997: 55–56). For example, if the word “*朝堂*” (royal court) appears in a text, the Chinese will naturally think of the scene of the ancient emperors going to the morning court. But for westerners, because they did not understand the habits of the morning courts of ancient Chinese emperors, they could not understand this scene. Therefore, in order to achieve a successful translation, the translator must compensate for the cultural default components omitted by the source author.

2.4.2.2 Cultural Default Factors

It can be seen above that people living in different cultural backgrounds enjoy different cultural background knowledge. In the process of translation, translators will inevitably encounter cultural default problems during the transformation of language and culture. Cultural default is inevitable. However, various factors cause cultural default. In this subsection, the author will discuss the four main factors causing cultural default.

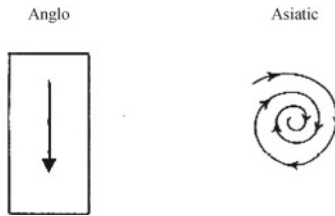
Way of Thinking

Thinking is the product of the human brain through the processing of objects, and then in the form of language or action. There are great differences between Chinese and Western cultures. Among the many differences, the most fundamental is the differences in the way of thinking. *“The way of thinking is formed in a certain social environment. People who have lived in different regions for a long time have different cultural characteristics, and thus form different ways of thinking”* (Lian 2002: 41). Under the action of various historical, geographical and cultural factors, the Chinese and western thinking patterns have undergone different evolution, and finally formed their own distinct characteristics.

Westerners like straight lines, while Chinese like curves. Robert Kaplan graphically shows the differences between Chinese (Oriental) and Western ways of thinking. He believed that Western way of thinking was linear, while Chinese (Oriental) thought was a spiral. Westerners are open and forthright, and are used to expressing ideas straight to the point. They are not polite, but Chinese people are used to conservative and roundabout detours. The idiom *“Wine-lover’s heart is not in the cup (a drinker not really interested in alcohol)”* is the best embodiment of Chinese people’s curve thinking.

Westerners focus on analysis, while Chinese look on the whole. Westerners attach importance to rationality, good at logical thinking, like to pay attention to the specific details of things, pay attention to the individual analysis and research of things while Chinese people emphasize intuition, good at dialectical thinking, like to pay attention to the context and context of things, pay attention to the mutual relationship and overall grasp of things.

(3) linearity vs. circuitry: (cf. Kaplan 1966)



The Westerners are more precise and the Chinese are more vague. Westerners advocate rationality and science, while the Chinese pay attention to practical technology and despise science. Western thinking is one-way, with a precise definition of the concept of things. Chinese thinking is two-way, the lack of careful definition of the concept of things. Westerners seek opposing concepts that things are either one or another. The Chinese, on the other hand, prefer ambiguous mean ideas that everything is especially absolute and the other.

Value System

The content of the value system is complex, covering almost all aspects of our life: it not only exists in the minds of individuals, but also is organically combined with social life, economic system, political system, and cultural background, which is dominant in a social collective and determines everyone's behavior. All levels of culture are inherently restricted by values. It can be said that values are in the core position in culture (Peng 2006: 38). Therefore, the value system is one of the important factors of cultural default. The most important difference between the Chinese and western value systems is in the difference between collectivism and individualism. Western culture takes individualism as the main line, and Chinese culture takes collectivism as the main line.

In the long feudal history of China for more than 2,000 years in China, Confucianism, as the basic value system of social and political affairs, has firmly ruled in the field of ideology for thousands of years (Yang 2009: 62–63). Under the influence of Confucianism, Chinese society has formed a patriarchal system with blood relationships, which emphasizes human ethics over nature, group over individual, righteousness over interests, and channel over the light device (Peng 2006: 38). Confucianism emphasizes group consciousness, advocates collective interests with high individual interests, and the individual consciousness obeys the collective consciousness. When individual interests conflict with collective interests, collective interests should be put first. In Chinese, the idioms of promoting collectivism are everywhere, such as “*If you want to benefit your country, you should not seek wealth and prosperity.*” “*Give up the pawn to protect the commander and take care of the big picture*”, and “*Sacrifice the small for the big*”, etc.

Instead, the West tends to be self-centered. Westerners attach importance to individuals, emphasize human rights, advocate personal interests above everything else, and advocate the realization of self-worth. Christianity is a core component of Western culture and the main source of Western individualism. Early Christian teachings have already shown individualism. This early view of religious individualism, baptized by the Reformation movement in modern European history, was revived. During the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, the thought of respecting individuals developed greatly, and the long-standing individualism in western culture was truly demonstrated (Zhang 2009: 120).

Religious Belief

Religious belief is yet another cultural default factor beyond the way of thinking and value system. Religious belief is a sacred, inviolable part of human culture. The Encyclopedia of Religion summarizes religion as: overall, more or less religious beliefs are contained in each known culture. When different patterns of behavior are established in a specific culture, it will lay a deep historical imprint on this culture. Even if the formal integrity credibility varies from culture to culture, people will inevitably be influenced by religion in society (Winston 2005: 7693). Religion is a part of the cultures of various ethnic groups, which injects life and vitality into the language and culture of a nation. Three-thirds of the people in the world have religious beliefs. Both Chinese and Western cultures are deeply influenced by their respective religious beliefs. This influence is embodied in the respective languages of Central and Western China.

The Chinese people believe in Buddhism and Taoism. Therefore, there is no lack of words and expressions related to Buddhist and Taoist culture in Chinese. For example, the idioms about Buddha everywhere: The idiom of “*not burning incense at ordinary times, holding the Buddha’s feet at the last minute*” is a metaphor for not being prepared at ordinary times, and for coping in a hurry at the last minute; “*saving a life is better than building a seven-level pagoda*” refers to the immense merit of saving a life, and is used to persuade people to do good deeds, that is, to have good intentions and good deeds will have good rewards; and so on. In addition, there are also many idioms related to Taoism: “*Blessed is the evil, and the evil is the blessing*” refers to the mutual transformation of blessing and evil, sometimes the blessing is the evil, sometimes the evil is the blessing, and there are two sides to everything; “*elixir*” refers to a miraculous medicine that is effective, and it is also a metaphor for a good solution to all problems. It also refers to a good solution to all the difficult problems, etc.

Most Westerners believe in Christianity. The Christian holy book—the Bible contains rich cultural connotations of the West. Many figurative allusions and broad words in English derive from the Bible, for example: The *scapegoat* is from the Bible (Book of Leviticus 16:8), *Dove of peace and olive branch* is from the Bible (Genesis 8:11), symbolizing peace. *The eleventh hour*, from the Bible (Matthew 20:6), means the last critical moment.

These idioms are derived from the respective religious cultures and have distinctive cultural characteristics. Translators should pay special attention to them in process of translation.

Social Customs and Habits

In addition to ways of thinking, value systems and religious beliefs, the factors affecting cultural scarcity are also customs. Customs and habits refer to the behavior patterns or norms that people observe from generation to generation in specific social and cultural areas, which are reflected in all aspects of people's common life. Customs vary in history, living environment, especially cultural background. Each nation has formed its own unique set of customs, which is difficult for outsiders to understand. In writing, source writers mostly intend the audience who have a common custom background with themselves, so, when they describe them, they hardly explain these customs. However, these customs are easy to form cultural default for foreigners who fail to know the background. For example, the Chinese and western eating habits are very different, specifically embodied in the diet concept, diet content, cooking methods, eating methods, dining utensils and other aspects. For another example, there are significant differences in marriage habits between China and the West. Western weddings are mainly based on mortar colors, reflecting the sanctity of marriage and the purity of the new couple. In traditional Chinese culture, white usually means sadness and is the main color for funerals, hence the term *white matter*. The same color has opposite meanings in China and the West: in the West it means happy events, but in China it means funeral events. It can be seen that there are great differences between Chinese and Western customs, and translators should pay more attention to them in the process of translation.

The above cultural default factors are infiltrating into every corner of Chinese and western culture, involved all aspects of people's common life. They are familiar to people living in this cultural environment, but they are very strange to foreigners, easy to form a cultural default. Familiarity with the differences in Chinese and western ways of thinking, value system, religious beliefs and customs will make the translator better understand the language and cultural information conveyed by the source author, so as to improve the quality of translation.

2.4.2.3 Influence of Cultural Default on the Translation of Film Subtitles

Film is a special cultural product, it is rooted in the culture of specific ethnic groups, with rich cultural connotation, is an important medium to promote cultural exchanges. Watching movies can not only enrich people's material and cultural life, broaden their horizons and increase their knowledge, but also promote the understanding and communication between different cultures. In short, films play an important role in intercultural communication.

In the wave of globalization, Chinese films have also gradually entered the international market. When those Chinese films with profound Chinese cultural connotations go to the global market, the problem of cultural default can easily arise. Because in the process of creating films, film writers intend the audience with those who share the common cultural background knowledge, so they often ignore those cultural information that is self-evident to the source language audience. However, this cultural information constitutes a cultural default for target language audiences from different cultural backgrounds. This cultural default information often creates difficulties in interpreters' comprehension and sometimes misunderstandings.

For example, "*deposed as a concubine and placed in the cold palace*" (from *Empresses in the Palace*). In ancient China, to be "*deposed as a concubine*" means to be relegated to a commoner, deprived of an official position, title or name. To be "*placed in a cold palace*" means to be sent to an isolated palace, referring to the ancient emperor's placing a concubine who had fallen out of favor under house arrest in a remote palace. Chinese audiences are very familiar with this expression, so the scriptwriter does not need to provide additional explanations. However, the translator faces the problem of cultural default in translating this phrase because there is no word corresponding to "concubine" or "cold palace" in Western culture. If these cultural default words are not handled well, it will easily cause difficulties for the target audience to understand.

Thus, the translator should properly handle the cultural default component of Chinese film subtitles in the translation process. Otherwise, it is easy for Chinese films to "be refused" in Western countries. Therefore, translators should adopt appropriate translation compensation strategy to compensate for the cultural default caused by cultural differences between China and western countries.

2.4.3 Movie Subtitles Translation Compensation

Cultural default is already existing and inevitable, and subtitle translators have to properly compensate them during translation to avoid or minimize the generation of meaning vacuum. In literary works, the most convenient and effective way to deal with cultural deficiency is to add explanatory in the translation. But as mentioned earlier, subtitle translation is a special translation. The instantaneous nature, popularization, colloquial, non-annotation and other characteristics of subtitles, coupled with the constraints of spatial and temporal technical factors, linguistic factors and textual factors, are especially suspected to make it more difficult for subtitle translators to deal with the cultural default components in subtitle translation. The application of the translation compensation strategy largely addresses this puzzle for the translator.

2.4.3.1 Definition of Translation Compensation

Hatim and Mason for communication text, believes that translation compensation refers to “*when the translator encountered difficult direct translation, with the help of the translation language performance, so as to enable the translation to achieve roughly the same effect as the original text*” (Ma 2003: 37). Keith Harvey, referring to literary texts, suggests that “*compensation is a technique of recreating a similar effect in the target language text by using means specific to the target language and/or its text in order to compensate for the loss of the effect of the source language text*” (Xia 2006: 65).

Peter Newmark notes in a broad sense that compensation “*is said to occur when loss of meaning, sound-effect, metaphor or pragmatic effect in one part of a sentence is compensated in another part, or in a continuous sentence*” (1988: 90).

Keping is a pioneer in translation compensation research in contemporary China. He believes that the difference between source and translational cultures makes it little one-to-one correspondence. In order to ensure the priority translation of specific contextual meanings within the translation specification and strive to maximize the equivalence of the original text and translation, flexibility and means must be adopted for compensation (Keping 1991: 23).

Liu Shusen regards translation compensation as a translation technique. In the specific translation process, due to the differences between the source language and the translated language in many aspects and the quality of the translator and other factors, it is inevitable that some contents, phonetic effects, rhetorical techniques and expressive power of the original work are difficult to express and are lost, and the translator realizes that some losses can be compensated by using certain means to minimize the losses (Lin 1997: 168).

Xia Tingde believes that Hatim’s, Mason’s and Harvey’s definitions of compensation are all based on specific text types, and it is difficult to seek universality; Newmark’s definition covers too narrow a range of translation loss. Ko Ping’s definition highlights meaning compensation. Liu Shusen’s definition highlights the sources of loss in translation compensation. Based on the research of several scholars, he integrated the rationality components of it, and made a systematic and comprehensive research on translation compensation in the book *Research on Translation Compensation*. In the book, Xia Tingde proposes that translation compensation “*is a repair or compensation for potential or incurred losses in the translation process, supplemented by other language means in accordance with the purpose language statute or norms, according on the type of text and translation purposes*” (2006: 68).

2.4.3.2 The Lack of Compensated Cripted Translation in Lee’s *Family Trilogy* Subtitle Translation

If there is a cultural default in the source language film, and the translator does not use the translation compensation strategy in the subtitle translation to properly handle the translation, the translation audience will be difficult to grasp the deep

cultural connotation conveyed by the author of the source language film, which will eventually lead to the failure of the subtitle translation. In Lee's *Family Trilogy*, the source language has some cultural defaults in some places, but the translator did not properly compensate for the translation process, making some inadequate translation inevitable for the subtitle translation of the film.

(1) Source Text:

朱晓生: 民主就是没大没小。

Target Text:

Democracy means no big and no little.

(quoted from *Pushing Hand*)

In Example 1, Mr. Zhu thinks that people in the United States are very polite to children and do not treat children as a child. Instead of being treated as kids, children are being equal with adults. Xiaosheng explained to his father, “这里学问大得很。这就叫做民主, 民主就是没大没小” (“There is a lot of learning here. This is called democracy. Democracy means no big and no little”). The expression “没大没小” comes from the 23rd chapter of *Journey to the West*, “好女婿呀, 这等没大没小的, 连丈母娘也都要” (“Good son-in-law! There is no big and no little; you even want to marry your mother-in-law!”), which refers to disrespect to elders or people with high positions. The patriarchal system in ancient China evolved from the paternal patriarchal system of clan society, with strict hierarchies. The Chinese have always adhered to the traditional ideology of respecting the old and loving the young, and the ideology of respecting seniority has continued up to now. However, the West advocates democracy and all people are created equal. The notion “没大没小” violates the traditional Chinese ideological concept of the difference between elders and children, and the translator should make appropriate translation compensation so that Western audiences can understand this. However, in the example, the translator literally translates “没大没小” as “no big and no little”. For Western audiences, the translation is completely off-topic and incomprehensible. Thus I believe it can be translated as “Democracy means no respect for age”.

(2) Source Text:

朱晓生: 不瞒你说, 我从昨早就开始空着肚子, 就等您今晚这一顿。

Source Text:

Come on! I haven't eaten since yesterday morning.

I'm preparing for the dinner you're cooking tonight.

(from *Pushing Hand*)

In Example 2, Zhu Xiaosheng's family and Mrs. Chen's family made an appointment for an outing, and Mrs. Chen cooked to treat them that night. Here Xiaosheng told Mrs. Chen that his stomach had been empty since the morning before, so that he could eat more dishes cooked by Mrs. Chen that day. Xiaosheng's words were obviously a little exaggerated. In fact, he wanted to praise Mrs. Chen's good craftsmanship in cooking and said that he couldn't wait to eat Mrs. Chen's dishes. This is

the embodiment of Chinese hospitality. However, the translator adopts literal translation and translates the source text as “I haven’t eaten since yesterday morning”, which makes the translation too exaggerated, lacking compensation for the default culture of the source text, and Western audiences might not be able to understand the specific Chinese expressions of politeness. Maybe it could be translated as “Come on! I have been looking forward to having the dinner you prepared tonight.”

(3) Source Text:

陈太太: 再看下去啊, 我五脏六腑都给你看透了。

Target Text:

Once you keep diagnosing, all my internal organs will be shown!

(from *Pushing Hand*)

In Example 3, Mrs. Chen’s Zhongchun Disease attacked again during the outing. Since Mr. Zhu knew a little about medical skills, he carefully diagnosed Mrs. Chen. Mrs. Zhu diagnosed that Mrs. Chen suffered from Zhongchun Disease, and illustrated a lot of pathogenesis and symptoms. Mrs. Chen was embarrassed and said that if Mr. Zhu continued to diagnose, he would see through herself. In the sentence, the expression “看透” shall not be decoded literally as see-through instead it refers to diagnosis. Chinese medicine holds that the root cause of human diseases is the imbalance of the five internal organs. Thus “看透五脏六腑” actually refers to diagnosing various physical problems. However, the translator literally translated this sentence as “all my internal organs will be shown”, and did not compensate for the default traditional Chinese medicine cultural connotation of “看透五脏六腑”, which might confuse Western audiences. Just imagine, “all the internal organs will be ‘displayed’,” which is really creepy. I suggest it be translated as “Once you keep diagnosing, you will see through me thoroughly”.

(4) Source Text:

梁伯母: 儿孙自有儿孙福。

Target Text:

Whatever will be, will be.

(from *Pushing Hand*)

In Example 4, Aunt Liang advised Mr. Zhu not to worry too much about his daughter but to think more about himself. The expression “儿孙自有儿孙福” (Children and grandchildren will have their own blessings) comes from the opening poem of the fourth chapter of “《尧让舜舜禹总为斯民》”, saying “百岁光阴似水流, 道高德重把名留。儿孙自有儿孙福, 莫与儿孙作远忧” which means that the children and grandchildren have their own blessings, and the elders do not have to worry about it. Rooted in collectivism, Chinese people value family, and put family first in everything. Elders especially worry about their children and grandchildren. Nevertheless, Westerners emphasize independence and non-interference. Once children can be truly independent in the West, parents will follow their children’s wishes without worrying too much. The translator here changes his point of view and translates the source text as “*Whatever will be, will be*” (go with the flow). As a result, the

translation deviates from the implicit Chinese family-oriented value concept in the source text, and the cultural default in the source text is not properly compensated, which result in the disconnection of the contextual discourse, and the target audience is prone to perceive a vacuum of sense in understanding. I suggest it be translated as “*Parents need not worry about their children too much as children have their own blessings*”.

2.4.3.3 The Necessity for Translation Compensation

To achieve successful communication, both parties must share certain cultural background knowledge. As mentioned above, when creating films, film writers aim at audience who share the same cultural background knowledge. Based on economic principles in Pragmatics, they tend to omit cultural background knowledge that is obvious to both parties (i.e., cultural default). When the intended audience encounters the relevant cultural default, the pre-existing knowledge in the brain will be automatically activated, and then the cultural background knowledge omitted here will be understood. However, audiences in the target language have no knowledge of the cultural background of the screenwriter in the source language of the film, and the cultural default in the source language is like an insurmountable cultural barrier for them.

The subtitle translation of Chinese films is very important, which directly determines whether Chinese films can win audiences and become popular films into overseas markets. From Example 4 listed in the previous section, we can find that if subtitle translators, as the middlemen between the screenwriter of the source language of the film and the audience of the target language, do not deal with the cultural default in the source language, the context of the translated text will not be coherent, and the target audience might not be able to understand the cultural background knowledge to be conveyed in the source text, thus creating a meaning vacuum translation context. If the cohesion is incoherent, the audience of the translated text cannot understand the cultural background knowledge to be conveyed in the original text, thus creating a meaning vacuum. How to deal with the cultural default in the source language text has become a challenge for subtitle translators, and to a large extent, has become the key to the success of the target language work.

When translators deal with the problem of cultural default, various compensation methods are imperative (Tu 1996: 9). Appropriate compensation can make the film better accepted by target audiences in different cultural backgrounds, so as to achieve the purpose of cross-cultural communication. Therefore, it is necessary and responsible for the translator to take appropriate compensation strategies to fill the cultural default gaps in the source text so that the omitted cultural background knowledge in the source text can be reflected in the target text, and the target audience can enough effective information with the least effort to better understand and accept the film.

2.4.4 Translation Compensation in Subtitle Translation of Lee's Family Trilogy

Ma Hongjun, a Chinese scholar, holds that “from the perspective of the overall compensation strategy adopted by the translator in a specific text, compensation strategy can be divided into explicit compensation and implicit compensation: the former refers to explicit comments; The latter means that the translator fully mobilizes various means of the target language (including enhancement, concretization, paraphrase, domestication, etc.) to adjust the original text” (2003: 37). Ke Ping believes that the strategies of adaptation and compensation include annotation, amplification, viewpoint conversion, concretization, generalization, paraphrase, domestication and back-translation (2003: 109–110). As mentioned earlier, subtitle translation is a special kind of translation, whose non-annotation feature means that subtitle translation cannot use annotation to compensate for the source text. I believe that the most commonly used compensation strategies in subtitle translation are paraphrase, amplification, viewpoint conversion, domestication, concretization, and generalization.

Therefore, in this section, the author will use some examples of cultural default in the subtitle translation of Ang Lee's *Family Trilogy* to specifically analyze the feasibility of the above six translation strategies, in order to explore in the case of cultural default, how the translators, under the premise of fully considering the four characteristics and three restrictive factors of subtitle translation, effectively convey the information in Chinese films to foreign audiences in different cultural backgrounds, so that foreign audiences can understand and appreciate Chinese films as much as possible.

2.4.4.1 Translation Compensation and Paraphrasing

“Paraphrasing is not a means of converting the source text into the target language word by word, but a means of directly explaining to the target audience the meaning of the source words in the context. It is widely used in subtitle translation because it can retain the information of the source text, while allowing the translator to express freely” (Ke 1993: 23). Appropriate use of paraphrasing can compensate for cultural defaults in source texts.

(5) Source Text:

朱老: 来, 杰米, 吃块肉, 吃肉长肉。

Here, Put some meat on your bones!

(from *Pushing Hand*)

In Example 5, Mr. Zhu gave his grandson Jamie a piece of fat to eat while eating, and wanted his grandson to eat more meat. The traditional Chinese medicine theory of dietetics believes that “*the shape complements the shape, and what you eat makes up what you eat*”. Zhu Lao saw that his grandson Jamie was very thin, and like his

daughter-in-law Martha, he didn't eat much meat. So he gave Jamie a large piece of meat, and wanted Jamie to eat more meat, so that he could put on flesh. The Chinese all know this saying, and understand the good intentions of Mr. Zhu here. But in Western countries, there is no such thing as "what you eat to make up for what you eat". If you directly translate the expression "吃肉长肉" as "*eat more meat to gain more weight*", it only conveys the meaning that eating more meat is a way of gaining weight, but loses the meaning of "*filling shape with shape, eat what repair what*" (以形补形, 吃啥补啥) in the source text, as well as Mr. Zhu's original intention of thinking that his grandson is too thin, so he should eat more meat and grow more meat. Taking into account the cultural differences between Chinese and Western ways of thinking, the translator translated the sentence as "*Put some meat on your bones!*", expressing Mr. Zhu's expectations for his grandson, and to a certain extent, explaining the meaning of the traditional Chinese ideology "*what you eat to make up for what you lack*" (吃啥补啥), and then compensate for the cultural default element in the sentence, and realize the functional equivalence of the source text and the target text.

(6) Source Text:

朱老:五脏不平,气走不顺,人不就躺下了嘛

Target Text:

The vital organs are not in harmony. The circulation's blocked. That's why one is sick.

(from *Pushing Hand*)

In Example 6, Mr. Zhu got lost on a walk and couldn't find the way home the day before, and he caught a cold after staying outside for too long. He was finally sent home by the police, but when he returned home, Mr. Zhu saw that his son and his daughter-in-law were arguing for him, making the kitchen a mess. Moreover, his son came home drunk in the middle of the night and hit the wall with self-injury, so he was heartbroken and fell ill the next day. In traditional Chinese medicine, the human body is an organism with five organs as the center and meridians as the network. The essence of disease is the imbalance between the five internal organs. *The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine: Plain Questions* says, "*Human beings five internal organs have five internal organs to transform five qi, to generate joy, anger, sorrow and fear*". The five internal organs of the human body specifically refer to the heart, liver, spleen, lung and kidney in Chinese medicine. According to *Plain Questions, Great Theory of Ying & Yang*, "*Anger hurts the liver. Joy hurts the heart. Anxiety hurts the spleen. Sadness hurts the lung. Fear hurts the kidney.*" Changes in emotions such as joy, anger, worry, thinking, sadness, and fear are closely related to the five internal organs of a person. "*Although Emotional injury might relate to each of the five internal organs, if you seek its cause, it all comes from the heart.*" When people's emotions change abnormally, it will lead to the disorder of qi and blood, and then the disease develops. In the film, Mr. Zhu was upset because he saw that he had become the source of the conflict between his son and his daughter-in-law, so his qi and blood were stagnant in his body, and he become bedridden. However, Western countries are the mainstay of Western medicine, and the principles of Western medicine and Chinese medicine are completely different. In Western

medicine, there is no such statement as “*unbalanced five internal organs and unbalanced qi and blood*” emphasized by traditional Chinese medicine. In this case, if the translator wants to retain the traditional Chinese cultural values of the source text, he or she has to adopt the compensation strategy of paraphrase. Otherwise, if translated literally, the translated text will have no meaning to the target audience because Westerners know nothing about this traditional medical theory of Chinese medicine. The translator skillfully interprets “五脏不平, 气走不顺” as “*the vital organs are not in harmony. The circulation’s blocked*”, which compensates for the cultural default in the case of literal translation naturally in English. The compensation part is connected together, leaving no trace of compensation. In addition, the “lie down” (病倒) in the source text means “to fall ill”, rather than simply “to lie down”. Chinese often use words such as “lie down” (躺下) and “fall down” (倒下) to implicitly express “sickness” or “death”. If the translator simply translates “躺下” here as “lie down”, the target text will not be able to connect with the previous text at all, and the target audience will be puzzled. Therefore, the translator here adopts the paraphrase compensation method to directly interpret the meaning that the source author wants to express (sick), so that the context is coherent, the meanings of the preceding and following sentences are connected naturally, and the target audience can overcome the vacuum of meaning that might be caused by cultural default.

(7) Source Text:

餐馆老板: 鸽松生菜呢

Target Text:

Sauteed Minced Pigeon with Sliced Vegetables?

(from *Pushing Hand*)

In Example 7, the owner of the restaurant where Mr. Zhu worked part-time went to the kitchen and saw several employees standing there idle and doing nothing, and asked them if these dishes were ready. “*Sauteed Minced Pigeon with Sliced Vegetables*” (鸽松生菜) was one of them. In the film, the restaurant is a very prosperous Chinese restaurant in Chinatown, and the dishes cooked by the restaurant for customers are also traditional Chinese dishes with Chinese characteristics. “*Sauteed Minced Pigeon with Sliced Vegetables*” (鸽松生菜), also known as lettuce-wrapped pigeon pine (菜包鸽松), is said to have been the top jade food of Empress Dowager Cixi. “鸽” means pigeon, and “Song” (松) refers to the minced food made of lean meat, namely diced pigeon meat and minced pigeon meat. Its practice is to chop the pigeon meat into cubes, marinate it thoroughly, fry it with high heat until it is loose, and then wrap it with green and tender lettuce. It is fragrant and not greasy to eat. In many Chinese dishes, the main ingredients of meat are fried in a pot and used as a filling, and then wrapped with vegetables or bread and other things to eat. But Westerners are not familiar with this kind of dishes, because this way of eating is not popular in the West, and there are few such dishes in the Western. Therefore, if this dish is literally translated as “Minced Pigeon and Lettuce”, the target audience will only know that the main ingredients of this dish are diced pigeon and lettuce, but will not think of the cooking method of this dish, that is, you should first fry the pigeon

meat with a high fire, and then wrap it with vegetables (not necessarily lettuce). The translator uses the paraphrase compensation method here, adding “Sauteed” before the pigeon meat, indicating that the pigeon meat should be fried first, and adding “Sliced” before the vegetables, indicating that the vegetables should be sliced. In this way, the translator explained the recipe of the dish to the target audience, and the cultural default in the case of literal translation was compensated (Note: There are rich traditional Chinese food culture implied in the three films, most of which are translated with paraphrase compensation strategy. Here, the author only cites one example to illustrate the application of the paraphrase compensation strategy in subtitle translation).

2.4.4.2 Translation Compensation and Contextual Amplification

Contextual Amplification, also known as amplification or addition, refers to the clearly stated in the translation that is taken for granted by the source audience but not well understood by the target audience (Ke 1991: 24). This strategy aims to provide the target audience with the necessary information to compensate for the cultural defaults omitted by the author in the source text and to help the target audience more fully understand the information in the source text.

(8) Source Text:

朱家倩:我得回家吃星期天晚餐,不去不行。

Target Text:

I have to get home for the Sunday dinner torture ritual.

(quoted from *Pushing Hand*)

In Example 8, Jiaqian’s boyfriend invited her to visit an art gallery, but was rejected by Jiaqian because it happened to be a Sunday, and Jiaqian had to go home for a Sunday family dinner. Shiwen mentioned that the Chinese value collective interests, have a strong sense of family, and lack the individual consciousness of the West. Therefore, family dinner is a warm moment for family members to get together. Before the film, Duan Jiaqian told her boyfriend that she used all her savings to buy a house, so that she could “leave that house”. For Chinese people, home is a haven for the soul and a safe haven. But when Jiaqian mentioned her home, she looked bitter and hated, pointing directly at “that home”. In Chinese movie, “that” (那) is generally used to refer to people or things that are far away. This distance not only represents the distance in the spatial sense, but also often indicates the distance in the psychological sense. Chinese audiences have a deep understanding of the culture of the word “that” (那), so they can perceive Jiaqian’s dislike to her own family from here, and even regard this family dinner as a form of torture. However, Western audiences could not feel the profound charm of the culture of the word “that” (那), and could not realize that Jiaqian regarded home as a kind of army dragon, a kind of burden, and regarded “Sunday Dinner” as a kind of torture. During the translation process, the translator subtly added “torture ritual” to express Jiaqian’s

voice to Western audiences, indicating that Jiaqian regarded this ritual dinner as torture, which well compensated for the cultural default in the source text.

(9) Source Text:

朱老:天师曰:补肾之方:人参三两,肉桂三两,海参八两。

Target Text:

The best way to increase sexual prowess is to mix 3 ounces of ginseng, 3 ounces of aloe vera, and 8 ounces of dried sea cucumber.

(from Eat Drink Man Woman)

In Example 9, Lao Zhu was studying the formula for “tonifying the kidney” (补肾). “Invigorating the kidney” (补肾) is a term in traditional Chinese medicine, which refers to changing the state of kidney deficiency by means of diet, medicine tonic, etc. When it comes to “tonifying the kidney”, Chinese people think of “tonifying Yang” (壮阳) (regardless of whether this concept is correct or not), which refers to conditioning the body through diet, medicine and other means, thereby improving kidney yang, strengthening yang and strengthening the body, and improving sexual performance. In the film, Mr. Zhu has actually been in a secret relationship with Jinrong at that time. Therefore, he deliberately researched kidney-tonifying prescriptions to regulate the body and warm the kidney-yang. At the end of the film, the plot of Jinrong’s pregnancy seems to echo this scene. However, in western countries, there is no such saying of “tonifying the kidney and strengthening yang” (“补肾壮阳”). If the translator here directly translates “补肾” literally as “tonifying kidney”, Western audiences can only understand the superficial meaning, but cannot think that Mr. Zhu’s invigorating kidney is actually for aphrodisiac. In the process of translation, the translator adopts the method of contextual amplification compensation, and directly translates “补肾” as “increase sexual prowess” (that is, enhance sexual ability). This kind of processing not only enables the target audience to appreciate the meaning of the source text and compensates for the default traditional Chinese medicine cultural connotation in the source text, but also successfully realizes the contextual echoes in the source text.

2.4.4.3 Translation Compensation and Perspective Shift

Shift of Perspective refers to the reorganization of the source language information, to convey information in the source language from a different and sometimes opposite perspective. Translators adopt this technique mostly because there are differences in the way of thinking or cognition between the source language culture and the target language culture (Ke 1992: 24). Through perspective shift, the translator can enter from another angle and reorganize the information in the source text to compensate for the cultural default content in the source text.

(10) Source Text:

餐馆老板:你要是不高兴做,你另请高就。

Target Text:

If you don't do it, others will!

(from *Pushing Hands*)

In Example 10, the restaurant clerk kindly suggested to the boss not to sell shredded bananas, because this dish is not easy to cook, and the dishes on which it is served are difficult to wash, so it is not worth it. But the restaurant owner not only did not listen to the persuasion, but also blame the guy for making indiscreet remarks or criticisms and let the guy leave if he didn't do it. “另请高就” means “*seek another high job*”, which refers to a person leaving the original position to take up a higher position. The restaurant owner ascertained that the employees would not resign (because it was not easy for Chinese to find a job in the United States at that time), so the restaurant positions he provided were actually sweet, and many people rushed to do it. In fact, what the source text wants to express is “if you don't do it, other people want to do it”. “*Please take another high job*” (另请高就) used to be an honorific in Chinese, but it is used here as an irony. Based on their mastery of the meaning of “please ask for another high-level job” and the tone of the restaurant owner's speech, Chinese audiences can figure out that such an expression is used as an irony, and then understand the author's meaning here. However, if the translator adopts the method of literal translation, the Western audience will fail to feel the arrogant and fearless mentality of the restaurant owner that the source text expresses because of the lack of such cultural background knowledge. Therefore, the translator here adopts the perspective shift compensation method, starting from another angle, and directly translates the implicit meaning in the source language, filling the cultural default in the source language.

(11) Source Text:

餐馆老板:反正一切共产,多做也是白做。

Target Text: I know everything's shared there, working more but gets you nothing.

(from *Pushing Hands*)

In Example 11, in order to drive away Mr. Zhu, who was too inefficient in washing dishes, the restaurant owner spoke ill of each other, and his words were full of contempt and disdain for mainland Chinese. “Communist” (共产) here means “collective labor”, and “do” (做) refers to “labor production”. Obviously, the restaurant owner's impression of mainland China is still in the people's commune (commonly known as eating a big pot of rice) period during the transformation of socialist public ownership in the 1950s and 1960s. In that period, all means of production were collectively owned, and a system of collective labor and unified distribution was implemented. Chinese audiences are all too familiar with this historical period, but the capitalist system implemented in the West has not undergone the transformation of socialist public ownership. For Western audiences, all communism, or unified distribution is simply incredible. If the translator literally translates the word “communist” (共产) into “collective labor”, it can only express the meaning of “collective labor”, while the audience of the target language cannot understand the cultural connotation of “unified distribution” related to “collective labor” in the period of the people's commune. Therefore, the translator adopts the perspective conversion

compensation method, changes the perspective, starts from another angle, and translates “一切共产” into “*everything’s shared there*”, expressing the more important and deeper information behind the source text, filling in the intention of the author of the source text that the audience of the target language cannot realize due to cultural default.

2.4.4.4 Translation Compensation and Adaptation

Adaptation refers to the use of words with the same frequency of use as the source language words, but most of them have the cultural color of the target language, to translate the source language words. Its advantage is that it can make the translation conform to the expression mode of the target language and make the translation more authentic and vivid (Ke 1993: 23). Using Adaptation to compensate for the cultural default content in the source text can effectively achieve functional equivalence between the target and the source text.

(12) Source Text:

陈太太:有!中医、西医、按摩、扎针、草本阴阳五行、打针吃药复健, 全部试过了, 就差点没到庙里求鬼画符把它贴上。

Target Text:

Yes. Chinese doctors, western doctors, acupressure, acupuncture, herbal remedies, shots, medicine. I’ve tried everything, but getting a spell cast on me.

(quoted from *Pushing Hands*)

In Example 12, Mrs. Chen suffered from *Zhongchun Disease*, and her right arm often suddenly became disobedient because she was holding something heavy. She told Mr. Zhu that she had tried almost all the methods, but it didn’t work, so she almost didn’t go to the temple to ask for a spell to stick on her shoulders. “Fu” (符) refers to a mysterious image drawn with a red pen or an ink pen, which combines dots and lines, combines both words and figures, and is mainly composed of curved strokes. “Fu” (符) is a unique culture of Taoism, and it is an indispensable and important magic of Taoism. Therefore, “fu” is a faith culture of the Han nationality. When the ancient Chinese encountered unsatisfactory things, they often went to the temple to ask for a talisman, and then affixed the talisman to the corresponding place according to the instructions, in order to call the gods, impeach ghosts, subdue demons and control demons, and cure diseases and disasters. However, Westerners do not believe in Taoism and do not understand the origin and function of Taoist “Fu”, but there are similar cultural witches in the West. “Witches” are superpowers in Western culture that can use witchcraft, magic, and astrology. They are famous for being proficient in spells and magic. The translator here uses the adaptation compensation method to replace the “ghost-painted amulet” in Chinese Taoist culture with “cast a spell” in Western culture, which makes up for the default Taoist cultural connotation in the source text very vividly, and realizes the functional equivalence between the source text and the target text to the greatest extent.

(13) Source Text: 朱老:油反?

Target Text: “Stoky Rice?”

Source Text: 烹饪老师:对啊,油饭啊! 喔,油饭啦!

Target Text: Yes, “Stoky Rice”. Oh yes, STICKY RICE.

(from *Pushing Hands*)

In Example 13, the cooking teacher was inaccurate in pronunciation, and mistakenly pronounced “You Fan” (油饭) as “You Fan” (油反), which Mr. Zhu did not understand. Then she realized that she was wrong, and corrected and emphasized “You Fan” (油饭). “You Fan” (油饭), also known as glutinous rice, is a traditional rice dish in Taiwan and southern China. It is usually made of steamed glutinous rice mixed with stir-fried condiments. Saying “You Fan” (油饭) as “You Fan” (油反) is a typical example of Chinese homophonic rhetoric. Homophonic rhetoric is to use words with the same or similar sounds to form semantic associations in the context, thereby enhancing the expressive power of language and forming vivid and emphasized expressions. Chinese audiences who are familiar with Chinese culture can naturally understand the connection between the contexts here, and understand the funny homonyms of “You Fan” (油饭) as “You Fan” (油反). In the process of translating, the translator should not only retain the original meaning of the traditional Chinese dish “steamed glutinous rice” (油饭), but also best reflect the corresponding homophony in the original sentence, so as to best convey the vivid image and Chinese cultural connotation of the source sentence. Considering that “You Fan” (油反) is not actually a meaningful word in Chinese, the translator did not stick to the form of the original text during the translation process, but adopted the adaptation compensation method and used the English equivalence of “sticky” and “stoky”. The words “stoky” and “stoky” not only retain the expression of “sticky rice”, a Chinese special dish in the source text, but also realize the homophonic correspondence of the translation, which is a good translation.

(14) Source Text:

陈太太:回去做散财童子, 每个人三大件五小件的。

Target Text:

I felt like Santa Claus, giving so many gifts.

(from *Pushing Hands*)

In Example 14, when Mrs. Chen talked about returning to the mainland to visit relatives, she actually returned to the mainland to distribute gifts and wealth. “scattering fortune boy” (善财童子) here is homophonic “good fortune boy” (善财童子). “Good fortune boy” (善财童子) originated from Buddhism, and was named “Good fortune” (善财) because of the natural emergence of various rare treasures in the family when he was born. However, the good fortune boy later saw through the world, regarded money as dung, and swore to cultivate himself according to the religious doctrine, and eventually became a Bodhisattva. Most Westerners believe in Christianity and do not understand the term “good fortune boy”. In addition, the image of “scattering fortune boy” (散财童子) in the source text is similar to that of

“Santa Claus” in the translation, referring to the distribution of gifts (wealth), so the translator here adopts the adaptation compensation method, and it is more appropriate to use “Santa Claus” to construct the image of “scattering wealth boy” in the source text. Although the cultural images of the two are not completely equivalent, the translator’s processing here almost achieves the functional equivalence of the source text and the target text.

(15) Source Text:

高伟同:别看妈平常没精打采的,可是一进了百货公司,精力有如神助。

Target Text:

When Ma enters a department store, she turns into Michael Jordan.

(from *The Wedding Banquet*)

In Example 15, Gao Weitong told Gu Weiwei that Gao’s mother was very energetic when she went to the department store. “Like god’s help” is a metaphor for doing things as if they were helped by gods, and they were very smooth and often performed exceptionally. In order to make the western audience grasp the meaning within a very short time of subtitle appearance, the translator adopted the method of adaptation compensation, which led to the introduction of “Michael Jordan” known to the Western audience (Michael Jordan, American professional basketball player, sports genius, known as “the flying trapeze”, known for his amazing speed and lasting endurance). Such a translation is a good interpretation of Gao’s mother’s energy as soon as she entered the department store. Although “Michael Jordan” and “*energy is like God’s help*” in the source text have a great difference in imagery, it can even be said to be completely irrelevant, but the two is almost equivalent in function, leaving a deep impression of “super shopper” to the audience.

(16) Source Text:

学生:喔!抛绣球哦!

Target Text:

She’s throwing the bouquet!

(from *Eat Drink Man Woman*)

In Example 16, Zhu Jiazhen threw the volleyball that flew into the classroom back to her future husband, a volleyball coach, so the students cheered and said she was “*throwing hydrangea*” (抛绣球). “*Throwing a hydrangea*” (抛绣球) is a custom in some places in ancient China. When a woman reaches the age of marriage, it will be fixed on a certain day, before attracting suitors to the embroidery chamber, the woman would throw a ball, and the man who got the ball would become the woman’s husband. At this time, Zhu Jiazhen actually had an interest in the volleyball coach, and the students were coaxed about throwing the volleyball as “throwing hydrangea”, and Jiazhen was actually happy. Therefore, the translator shall strive to express the shy but happy mood of the Jiazhen when translating. However, there is no cultural custom of “throwing hydrangea” in the West, but correspondingly, there is the custom of “throwing the bouquet” in marriage. “Bouquet” originated from an ancient concept in the West. Ancient Westerners believed that the strong smell of

spices and herbs could protect new couplers from bad luck and disease. Later, this practice was followed in Western weddings, where the bride throws the bouquet to another unmarried woman at the end of the wedding. The woman who receives the bouquet will be blessed and become the next bride to get married. The translator here uses “throw bouquet” to compensate for “throwing hydrangea” in the source text, although the former is to wish others to find a husband as soon as possible, while the latter is to choose a husband-in-law, the meanings of the two are very different, but both contain the meaning of marriage or about to get married, and can reflect Jiazhen’s shy and happy psychology, which corresponds to the plot of Jiazhen’s announcement of lightning marriage in the latter part of the film.

2.4.4.5 Translation Compensation and Specification

“*Specification is a translation compensation strategy that narrows the denotation of a word in the context*” (Ke 1992: 25). Specification aims to concretize, visualize and live the default abstract content in the source text, so as to solve the difficulty of cultural default.

(17) Source Text:

餐馆老板: 几十年来, 就养出了你们这批懒鬼。

Target Text:

Four decades of such thinking has produced all you lazy bums.

(from *Pushing Hands*)

Example 17 is to follow what the restaurant owner said in Example 11. Restaurateurs look down on mainlanders and think that the forty years of the people’s commune period have created the personality of mainlanders who are lazy and lazy. Because Western audiences do not understand this history, they have no concept of the beginning and end of the people’s commune movement. The translator here uses the method of specification compensation to concretize “decades” into “forty years”, making Western audiences aware of the long time span and emphasizing that restaurant owners do not understand the situation in the mainland (the people’s commune system which has been over long ago), but blindly put on a snobbish face of a superior person. This specific compensation content is well integrated with the source text, which greatly reduces the difficulty in understanding the target audience.

2.4.4.6 Translation Compensation and Generalization

“Generalization refers to the compensatory strategy of clearly conveying the meaning of the source text in an omitted and generalized way” (Ke 1992: 26). Generalization is the generalization of elements in the source text that are redundant or self-evident to the target audience. Through generalization, the target language information is clearer, and the structure is more refined.

(18) Source Text:

餐馆老板:你别敬酒不吃吃罚酒, 给脸不要脸。

Target Text:

I'm saving face for you.

(from *Pushing Hands*)

In Example 18, the restaurant owner thought he had generously offered Mr. Zhu ten dollars to let Mr. Zhu leave, but Mr. Zhu was unwilling to leave. The owner of the restaurant thought that he had taken care of his face, but Mr. Zhu was unable to see the fitness of things and was unwilling to leave even been paid to leave. “To submit to other’s pressure after first turning down his request” (敬酒不吃吃罚酒) originates from *The Complete Biography of Hu Xueyan: Stepping into the Sky Volume 2* by Gao Yang, “Huang Futai, a person who always submits to other’s pressure after first turning down his request never eats and eats for a toast. Maybe Maybe this time we may have a different look at Lao Qiu.” The expression is a metaphor referring to someone who refuses to take the initiative to do things that must be done, and as a result, they are forced to do them. “*Shame on your face*” (给脸不要脸) is a northeastern dialect, synonym of “left face”, which means that someone don’t know chalk from cheese. When people offer them kindness, they refuse to accept it, but in the end, they are often forced to accept unpleasant results. Essentially, the meanings of “*To submit to other’s pressure after first turning down his request*” The restaurant owner uses two well-known sayings in a row to emphasize that Mr. Zhu fails to appreciate other’s kindness, and he does not know how to end on good note. In the process of translating, the translator fully considers the time and space constraints of subtitles, and uses the generalization compensation method to appropriately combine these two short sentences, and translate them into “*save face for you*”, which avoids the translation being too verbose, realizes the compensation for the cultural default of the source text, and makes it easier for readers to understand.

(19) Source Text:

高妈妈:这是爸跟妈给儿媳妇的见面礼。

Target Text:

A gift to our future daughter-in-law.

(from *The Wedding Banquet*)

In Example 19, Gao’s mother called Gu Weiwei into the room and gave Gu Weiwei a gift. “Meeting gift” (见面礼) refers to some gifts or coins given by elders to juniors when they meet for the first time. This traditional Chinese custom has been carried down to this day. Chinese people are very familiar with the profound meaning of “meeting ceremony”, which is not common for Westerners. In addition, the background of this dialogue is that Gao’s mother and Gao’s father handed a gift to Gu Weiwei on the first night of his arrival in the United States. The “meeting gift” here is only a gift given on the first day of their arrival, so there is no need to stick to the word “meeting” (that is, a gift presented to someone at the first meeting) in the source text. Otherwise, when the not-long source text is converted into a protracted

and tedious target text, which will slow down the audience's understanding speed and make the audience stay on this translation for a long time. Therefore, the translator here directly generalizes the "meeting gift" in Chinese culture as a "gift" in Western culture and is still loyal to the principle of improving audience acceptability.

2.5 Chapter Summary

With the continuous development of economic globalization, Chinese films are gradually entering the international film arena, attracting world attention. As one of the important ways of cross-cultural communication, the film has set up a bridge between Chinese and Western cultures, showing the profound culture of the Chinese nation to the world in an all-around way. As an indispensable part of the film, the quality of subtitle translation is directly related to the success or failure of Chinese-language films in the international market. A good subtitle translation cannot guarantee the success of a film, but a poor subtitle translation will inevitably ruin a good film. When the original author of the film creates the script, the audience is the person who shares the same cultural background with him. Based on economic principles, the author of the original work often omits those obvious cultural background knowledge, that is, cultural default. Because the audience of the target text is in a different cultural background from the author, it is difficult for the audience to appreciate the rich background knowledge and cultural connotations omitted from the source text. For the audience of the target text, the more cultural defaults there are, the greater the probability of a meaning vacuum, and the more difficult it is for the film to be understood and appreciated. If the translator does not handle it properly, the target audience will not only have difficulty understanding the cultural default content in the film, but may even misunderstand the message of the source text. Therefore, subtitle translators have the responsibility to make appropriate compensation for the cultural default elements in the source text in the translation process, so as to make the film more coherent, reduce the difficulty of understanding the film, and improve the acceptability of the target audience.

Language is the carrier of culture, and culture is the cornerstone of language, both of whom depend on and influence each other. In film translation, language and culture are more closely related. Translation is not only a transfer between two language forms, but also a transfer between cultural information. It seems that the translator only needs to face the language transfer between the source language and the target language. In fact, they shall also need to deal with the cultural differences between the source language and the target language. For translators, it is much more challenging to realize the transfer between cultures than between languages. This means that a qualified translator shall be familiar with both the source language and the target language; meanwhile, they shall have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the source language culture and the target language culture to perceive cultural defaults in the source text. The translator shall clearly grasp the implied meaning between the lines in the source text, and accurately estimate the cultural default content omitted

by the author of the source text, so as to know which cultural default content should be properly compensated in the translation process.

In the actual translation of film subtitles, the translator shall always keep in mind the characteristics and constraints of subtitle translation, fully consider the acceptability of the target audience, and avoid making wrong assumptions about the target audience, which might lead to the failure of translation. Based on this principle, the translator must be based on the target audience, and their appreciation of the subtitle translation, considering the characteristics of the instantaneous, popular, colloquial, and non-annotated film and television language, and the constraints of time and space, language, and context. At the same time, guided by cultural default and translation compensation theory and concrete analysis of specific situations, the translator shall select appropriate translation strategies (such as paraphrasing, amplification, shifting of perspective, adaptation, specification, and generalization) to compensate the source text, to convey the most relevant information most effectively, so that the audience of the target language can accurately grasp the information of the film, obtain similar contextual effects with less effort, and finally maximize the value of film appreciation.

Facing the opportunity and challenge of the globalized context, where should Chinese-language films go? Ang Lee's successful exploration of Chinese-language films has inspired the cross-cultural communication of Chinese films. Ang Lee's success is not only because his works contain rich and profound cultural connotations of the Chinese nation, but also because of the successful subtitle translation of his films, which makes his film language widely accepted by audiences around the world. The translation of Ang Lee's films interprets the original film with the help of translation compensation strategy, so that the target text and the source text can achieve cultural integration, impressing Chinese and Western audiences with the profound Chinese cultural heritage, and successfully realizing the integration of Chinese and Western cultures. The successful translation and introduction of Ang Lee's *Family Trilogy* are worthy of study and reference for Chinese films trying to enter the international film industry.

Chapter 3

On Subtitle Translation

from the Perspectives of Semantic Translation and Communicative Translation



Liping Lai

3.1 An Introduction to the Movie *Song of the Phoenix*

With the deepening of economic globalization and the continuous integration of international culture, the rapid development of science and technology has brought about the rapid progress of the multimedia industry. As one of the main means of cultural publicity, the film plays a very important role in cultural exchanges. In recent years, international films and TV dramas have been introduced to China. At the same time, China is also actively promoting domestic films in the international market. Therefore, in order to enable foreign audiences to effectively understand Chinese culture while enjoying Chinese films, subtitle translation is particularly important. Unlike traditional literary translation, subtitle translation has been a new driver in recent years, and it has achieved rapid development. However, compared with the West, Chinese subtitle translation started relatively slowly, so there is still much room for improvement in the quality of domestic film subtitles.

The mutual penetration of Chinese and foreign film culture has been a popular trend, and the role of film in the external cultural publicity should not be underestimated. An authentic and quality subtitle translation is particularly important. Subtitle translation, as a relatively new field, is favored by more and more scholars. Especially after the introduction of a large number of foreign films, the outbound translation of Chinese film subtitles also continues to develop.

Song of the Phoenix is an excellent film telling a story developed around suona, a horn-like traditional musical instrument in China. The story takes place in northern Shaanxi province. With the passing of time and invasion of foreign culture, suona experienced popularity and decline. Suona players face a difficult choice and challenge in the present society. The dilemma is a projection of traditional Chinese

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F. Yue (ed.), *Translation Studies on Chinese Films and TV Shows*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-6000-0_3

culture concerning its development and inheritance. The increasingly frequent exchanges between China and foreign countries have made Chinese culture more understood in the world. The cultural practices in the film can also give the West a better understanding of traditional Chinese culture.

The author takes the semantic translation and communicative translation of Peter Newmark as the theoretical framework. Based on the corpus built with the subtitles of *Song of the Phoenix*, the author summarizes the three principles of accuracy, simplicity and instantaneous readability in the subtitle translation. At the same time, the author discusses the feasible translation strategy of semantic or communicative translation, including direct translation, substitution, addition, subtraction and retranslation. Of course, the translator should remember that one should not make the semantic and communicative translation completely isolated, but should combine them organically; otherwise, it will affect the translation quality. The influence of translation dualism on film subtitle translation is discussed in this chapter. Moreover, it can provide a reference for future relevant research and enrich subtitle English translation research.

The film *Song of the Phoenix* is directed by Wu Tianming, a China's fourth-generation director. It is about the inheritance and adherence of the national cultural tradition. The film subtitle is a window for western audiences to understand the traditional Chinese culture. But the drawback is that there is always only one version (the official translation). At the same time, the film is set in China's Shaanxi province, and some folk dialect terms are also quite distinctive. By using Newmark's theories on communicative translation and semantic translation as the theoretical support, the author attempts to study subtitle translation in a more comprehensive way and provide references for future translation studies.

3.2 Review of Semantic Translation and Communicative Translation

This chapter summarizes and analyzes Peter Newmark's definitions of semantic translation and communicative translation. A comparative analysis of the differences and connections between the two is conducted so as to explore the way to use them to guidance subtitle translation.

Newmark believes that "*Translation is a craft consisting in the attempt to replace a written message and/or statement in one language by the same message and/or statement in another language*" (Newmark, 2001a: 7). As for what is good translation, he remarks that:

Tyler wrote the first significant book on translation in 1790, stating that 'a good translation is one in which the merit of the original work is so completely transfused into another language as to be as distinctly apprehended and as strongly felt by a native of the country to which that language belongs as it is by those who speak the language of the original work' (Newmark, 2001a: 4).

3.2.1 *Definitions and Comparison of Semantic Translation and Communicative Translation*

3.2.1.1 Definitions

In order to reduce the divergence caused by people's endless debates on the fidelity of translated texts, Newmark has proposed the theory of semantic translation and communicative translation.

He defines semantic translation and communicative translation specifically in *Approaches to Translation*:

Communicative translation attempts to produce on its readers an effect as close as possible to that obtained on the readers of the original. Semantic translation attempts to render, as closely as the semantic and syntactic structures of the second language allow, the exact contextual meaning of the original. (Newmark, 2001a: 39).

“From the definition of Newmark, it can be seen that semantic translation emphasizes loyalty to the contextual meaning of the original text, such as language model, sentence structure, mood, etc. Semantic translation tries to find a balance between the original text and the target text, expressing the author's intention and specific style.” (Wu, 2014: 18) Therefore, translators should try their best to infer what the original context wants to express and follow the author's expression. Semantic translation focuses on the use of word-by-word translation, literal translation and other strategies. However, because semantic translation also emphasizes the importance of the original text while paying attention to the syntactic structure and meaning of the original text, the effect that the original text intends to achieve may be lost during the translation process.

From the definition, it can be known that *“in communicative translation, the translator should try his best to meet the expectations of the target language readers, and the translation should pay attention to the target language background and make it easy for the target language readers to accept. The translation under communicative translation should be better than the original, and the translator has the right to correct the errors of the original text and improve the language.”* (Wu, 2014: 19).

3.2.1.2 A Comparison

In order to make readers have a more comprehensive understanding of communicative translation and semantic translation, the author will analyze and summarize the differences and internal relations between them in this section.

The differences between the two are mainly in the following four aspects.

The first is the difference in translation orientation. Semantic translation is oriented by the original text (original author). Since semantic translation retains and conveys the author's unique style and thinking process, the core of its emphasis is

to maintain the original author's thoughts and meaning. The communicative translation is oriented by the target text (reader). Sometimes, in order to make the reader understand the obscure content in the original text, the translator will even clear the reading barrier for the reader and ensure that the translation is authentic.

The second is the difference in its focus. Communicative translation focuses on the feedback from readers of the target language. Translate according to the cultural background and preferences of the target language readers. In order to achieve the same effect, communicative translation can reorganize or rewrite the ambiguous elements in the original text so that the translator may ignore the original meaning and uniqueness. On the contrary, semantic translation emphasizes faithfulness to the original text, including word meaning, syntax and article structure, contextual meaning, etc. "*Semantic translation is relatively objective and value accuracy.*" (Gao, 2015: 114) Communicative translation is more subjective, focusing on readers' responses, and translators can help readers understand vocabulary (Liu, 2004: 56).

The third is the difference in the quality of translation. Newmark believes that: "*Generally, a communicative translation is likely to be smoother, simpler, clearer, more direct, more conventional, conforming to a particular register of language, tending to undertranslate, i.e., to use more generic, hold-all terms in difficult passages. A semantic translation tends to be more complex, more awkward, more detailed, more concentrated, and pursues the thought-processes rather than the intention of the transmitter. It tends to overtranslate, to be more specific than the original, to include more meanings in its search for one nuance of meaning.*" (Newmark, 2001a: 39).

Finally, there are different attitudes towards culture. Semantic translation focuses on preserving the cultural factors in the original work, and expects target language readers to accept and understand the source language culture. Communicative translation focuses on the target language culture, so in order not to trouble the reader's understanding, it will try to reduce the cultural vocabulary contained in the original text. "*For readers to understand, in communicative translation, the translator must basically clarify the text that may cause ambiguous meaning in the original text. Under semantic translation, if necessary, the translator needs to further explain or comment.*" (Liu, 2009: 16).

In addition to the above differences, semantic translation and communicative translation also have a close internal relationship. The author summarizes the relationship between the two as follows.

Firstly, cognitive translation is their common theoretical basis. Therefore, both should reflect the ideological content of the original and follow the syntactic structure and fixed stylistic characteristics of the target language. "*There are many difficult long sentences in some English styles. Due to the differences in word order and expression, they are usually translated into short sentences when translated into Chinese.*" (Jin, 2014: 60).

Secondly, when the information to be conveyed in the original work is relatively popular and the knowledge level of the target language readers is similar to that of the original readers, semantic translation and communicative translation can be used

at the same time, which is the most ideal way. At this time, the translator can not only be faithful to the original author, but also take into account the target language readers. For example, when translating important religious and social science documents, using any of these theories as guidance will produce similar effects (Ma, 2010: 123).

Thirdly, the two complement each other. In the same work, some places need to use semantic translation as a guide, while others need communicative translation as a theoretical framework to complement each other. *“It is difficult for translators to decide whether to use more communicative translation or more semantic translation”* (Fan, 2012: 10). Therefore, it should be determined according to the specific text. In some cases, the proportion of communicative translation is more and tends to be communicative. However, in some cases, semantic translation accounts for more and tends to the original culture. According to Xu (2008: 192), *“communicative translation and semantic translation have their own advantages and disadvantages. We should pay attention to coordination, otherwise it will affect the quality of translation.”*

3.2.2 Text Types and Semantic Translation and Communicative Translation

Newmark believes that translators should decide whether to use semantic translation or communicative translation as the guiding theory based on the characteristics of the text type (Li, 2005: 29). Text types are introduced in this section as they have a close relationship with the two theories.

3.2.2.1 Text Types and Translation Methods

With the development of linguistics, some translation scholars have reached a consensus that translation is a text-oriented activity. Wilss (2001: 112) believes that *“linguistic communication always appears in textual form..... Texts show different conditions of origin, different structures, functions and they are designed for different recipients or target groups.”*. Reiss (2004: 17) also believes that *“it is the type of text which decides the approach for the translator; the type of text is the primary factor influencing the translator’s choice of a proper translation method”*. Therefore, it is safe to say that the translator can almost decide which translation method to adopt according to different text characteristics, in order to balance the form and content of the original text.

3.2.2.2 Categories of Texts in Translation

Reiss divides texts into three categories:

First, the informative texts that focus on content and convey facts, information and opinions.

Second, expressive texts that focus on the creation of rhetoric and aesthetics. Translators and information is the focus of attention.

Third, operative texts that focus on the intentional effect on the readers, such as discussion, request, and persuasion. *“The translating of operative texts into operative texts should be guided by the overall aim of bringing about the same reaction in the audience, although this might involve changing the content and/or stylistic features of the original”* (Nord, 2001: 37–38). In addition, Reiss later adds a fourth type, i.e., audio-medial texts that enable readers to come into contact with the texts through listening.

On this basis, Newmark divides the text into three categories according to the different content and style of the text.

The first is informative text.

The essence of the informative function is to provide the true situation of the subject of the information. Informative texts include most non-literary articles, newspapers and magazines, informational articles, textbooks, scientific articles, private letters, advertisements, etc. Based on objective facts, informative texts are often not subjective. Therefore, such texts follow the principle of “facts as the first important point”.

Translating informative texts enjoys a high degree of freedom. For example, when encountering ambiguous expressions in the original text, the translator has the right to improve the original text and is responsible for the readers. The purpose of translating such texts is to convey information. Therefore, such texts should be guided by communicative translation. The translator should reduce the negative effects caused by the grammatical rules of the original text, so that the target reader and the original reader can obtain the same reading effect.

The second is expressive text.

The core of the expressive function is the author, who mainly expresses the author’s thoughts without considering the reader’s response. According to Newmark’s classification, there are: 1. Serious imaginative literary, including poetics, short stories, novels, plays, etc.; 2. Authoritative statements, including celebrity political speeches, rules and regulations, legal contracts, and social science works. 3. Autobiography, essays and personal correspondence. This type of text mainly expresses personal emotions.

Semantic translation is suitable for guiding the translation of such texts. Because the translation of expressive texts is based on the author. The translation can only follow the author’s ideas and the style of the original work, and no improvement or modification is allowed. In addition, the translator should attach great importance to the cultural factors in the original text.

The third type is vocative text.

The goal of a vocative text is the reader, and it aims to make the reader or viewer take action and feel the author's intention. Vocative texts include manuals, brochures, applications, brochures, and bestsellers, etc., which mainly serve as vocative functions. Before translation, the translator should consider the cultural background of the source language and its practical effect on the target language culture.

Newmark believes that communicative translation can be used in vocative texts, because communicative translation aims to allow the original author and target readers to communicate, and trigger readers to respond to the original text. What the translator has to do is to eliminate the barriers to comprehension caused by the differences in grammar and vocabulary between the two languages. Therefore, when dealing with the syntactic structure of such texts, translators enjoy greater freedom in addition to retaining the vocative function of the original text.

Newmark says that: "*few texts are purely expressive, informative or vocative: most include all three functions, with an emphasis on one of the three.*" (Newmark, 2001: 42) The hybridization of text classification theory requires the free use of the above two translation theories.

3.3 Analysis of Subtitle Translation of *Song of the Phoenix* from the Perspectives of Semantic Translation and Communicative Translation

3.3.1 Introduction to *Song of the Phoenix*

The movie *Song of the Phoenix* is the swansong of Wu Tianming, a leading director among the fourth generation directors in China. It is adapted from the novel of the same name by the famous writer Xiao Jianghong. Released in Chinese mainland in May 2016, it is an emotional film about the persistence and inheritance of traditional Chinese culture. The film has won many awards, including nominations and a Special Award from the *29th China Golden Rooster Awards*, the Best Feature Film Award of the *1st Silk Road International Film Festival*, and the Audience's Favorite Film Award at the *Tours Film Festival* in France. It has been shown as the selected film at international film festivals, and received favorable reviews everywhere. It is recommended by well-known Chinese directors such as Zhang Yimou and Tsui Hark and other joined in chorus. Oscar winner Director Martins Secco also spoke highly of the film and praised Wu Tianming as a giant in the film industry.

What the film tells is that in Wushuang Town, Shaanxi Province, playing suona, as a long-standing folk art, is used in weddings and funerals. More importantly, at the funeral, it is a demonstration of status and judgment of morality of the deceased person. A common folk's funeral can have two players, four for a better person and eight for the most respected eight. For those who possess noble morality and high prestige can have the play of the *Song of the Phoenix*, which is a most challenging piece of music, and only a suona master can play it. In the whole town of

Wushuang, only the famous Master Jiao, or Jiao Sanye (Founder of Jiao Jiaban, played by Tao Zeru) can play the music. Jiao Sanye is aged and in urgent need of cultivating successors. You Tianming (childhood played by Kevin·Z; Adulthood played by Li Mincheng) and Lan Yu (played by Hu Xianxu) have become his apprentices. Students who can enter Jiao Jiaban must be well-behaved, adhere to the ethics of suona player, and keep suona always nearby. In order to test whether the two apprentices can meet the standards of successors, Master Jiao did his best. Finally, Tianming was recognized by the master with his firm perseverance and pragmatic disposition, and followed in the master's step. However, playing suona began to decline and was gradually replaced by western band music. Overwhelmed by the pressure of life, Tianming's brothers gave up playing suona, and Master Jiao became seriously ill. However, Tianming has gone through hardships and overcome all difficulties, and has been sticking to the inheritance of suona culture. Finally, after suona was listed as a key cultural heritage protection object, Master Jiao died. Tianming played *Song of the Phoenix* for Master Jiao in front of his grave.

3.3.2 Feasibility Analysis of Applying Semantic Translation and Communicative Translation in Subtitle Translation

Newmark is an important figure in the field of translation studies. As an effective translation method and framework, his theory is also widely used in general translation studies. The main reason is that he introduced the theories of functional grammar and cross-cultural communication into translation studies, and focused on the study of the communicative function of language and the processing of the semantic structure of the original text. In fact, his theories are closely combined with translation practice. Therefore, the author believes that Newmark's theory is also applicable to film subtitle translation, because subtitle translation pays attention to the communicative function of information and the semantic transmission of the original text, and subtitle translation is a branch of literary translation in general translation practice.

“It is a well-known fact that audiovisual translation has always been considered inferior to (written) literary translation, most probably because of the lack of cultural prestige in audiovisual mass-media, compared to canonized literature” (Karamitroglou, 2000: 10). However, it is valid to classify film and television translation as a branch of literary translation. The reasons are as follows:

First of all, film and television translation and literary works rely on language to shape characters and describe social phenomena, so as to reflect the creators' emotions or ideas. Compared with the literary language in literary works, the language in film and television works is more complex and diversified, and vivid characters are portrayed through the combination of dialogue of characters and visual pictures.

Secondly, from the perspective of creative process, there is almost no difference between film and television scripts and literary works. In fact, many literary works received rave reviews after being adapted into TV dramas. For example, *Four Great Classical Novels, China*, has been made into TV series one after another, and has achieved good response, and has been repeatedly remake. Moreover, the creation of movie scripts has become a literary style, and has absorbed the excellent elements of traditional literature. Therefore, Piao Zhehao proposed that film and television literature is the fifth literary form after the four traditional literary forms (poetics, novels, prose and drama) (Piao, 2008: 66).

Thirdly, subtitle translation, just as literary translation, is also due to the need of crossing language barriers. Although the communication patterns in film and television works are more complicated than those in traditional literature, their purpose is to convey the author's feelings or opinions, present social phenomena and conduct cultural exchanges, which is also the purpose of translation itself. "*It is true that there are a number of constraints that derive mainly from the audio-visual nature of the original and target products and which distinguish audiovisual translation from (written) literary translation.*" (Karamitroglou, 2000: 10). But both of them are essentially language transformation, i.e., the transformation from the source language to the target language.

Based on the above reasons, the author thinks that subtitle translation belongs to literary translation, so this binary translation theory can also be applied to subtitle translation research, which has certain research significance and can provide theoretical framework and guidance for subtitle translation research.

3.3.3 Application of Semantic Translation and Communicative Translation in Subtitle Translation

Newmark, as a translation theorist with rich translation experience, has made a detailed study of every step in the translation process, such as reading the original corpus to analyzing the translation, choosing translation methods and dealing with possible problems in translation, and summarized his experience and put forward his own opinions to provide guidance for translation research. He pointed out that before translation, the translator's first task is to make a comprehensive and detailed analysis of the text from four aspects, namely, the purpose of the title, the intention of the text, the identity of the reader and the function of the text. On this basis, the author will discuss the application of this theory in subtitle translation from the following aspects, so as to decide which translation strategy should be adopted to analyze case subtitles under the guidance of Newmark's duality theory.

3.3.3.1 Purposes of Subtitle Translation

Newmark clarified five main purposes of translation in his thesis, which can be roughly summarized as “*the political (or the humanistic – there should be no difference), technological, the cultural, the artistic and the pedagogical*” (Newmark, 2006: 45). Newmark believes that different cultural backgrounds should be fully taken into account in translation. Therefore, in a broad sense, subtitle translation has its own cultural and artistic purposes. As one of the main modern art forms, the innate purpose of film is to convey and reflect the culture of a nation or country. Therefore, movies are often regarded as a bridge of communication between different cultures, and audiences also learn about foreign cultures through movies. For example, some Chinese audiences didn’t get to know American culture until Hollywood movies were introduced to China. For the purpose of subtitle translation, the priority is to remove the language barrier, and then let the audience enjoy the movie on the basis of understanding.

3.3.3.2 Textual Intention

Newmark once said that it is impossible for a translator to understand the original content without knowing the author’s intention, because the author’s intention is mainly reflected in the language he uses. In subtitle translation, the author’s intentions are mainly related to directors and screenwriters, and their different intentions determine different styles and types of film and television works. Therefore, when translating different types of film and television works, the translator should decide how to use the expression of the target language according to the source language and culture. For example, the intention of the news column is to record facts or real events, and its subtitles should be accurate and short, without personal feelings, and focus on the information conversion of the events themselves. However, in TV dramas or movies, the director’s intention is to express personal views or emotions through the works. The analysis of the director’s intention is the premise of providing high-quality subtitle translation for film and television works, which can make the translator fully realize the original language style and the director’s intention. Therefore, before translating film and television works, the translator should analyze the director’s intention before deciding the language style of subtitles.

3.3.3.3 Subtitle Audience’s Identity

The analysis of the target readers’ identity is particularly important, which can help the translator “*decide on the degree of formality, generality (or specificity) and emotional tone you must express when you work on the text*” (Newmark, 2001b: 13). From the perspective of subtitle translation, readers refer to the audience of film and television works.

From the perspective of subtitle translation of Chinese films, the audience can be divided into two categories: foreigners and overseas Chinese. Most overseas Chinese have Chinese cultural background, so there is basically no problem to understand films without the help of subtitle translation. However, most foreign audiences are not familiar with Chinese language and culture, so the language and culture with Chinese cultural elements is likely to be an obstacle for them to enjoy films. Therefore, in order to facilitate the foreign audience to appreciate and understand the film at the same time, the translator should give full consideration to different cultural backgrounds while providing the correct translation, and convey the linguistic and cultural meaning of the original to the audience as much as possible.

3.3.3.4 Text Types of Subtitle Translation

From the perspective of subtitle translation, the function of subtitle translation is to help viewers understand film and television works across language barriers. Specifically, subtitles play a role in conveying the relevant information and emotions of the original to the audience. In the practice of subtitle translation, we should first pay attention to the correctness of the translation. That is to say, the center of translation is to convey the spoken content, so subtitle translation has information function and belongs to information-based text. Secondly, with the help of subtitles, it can help the director achieve the movie-watching effect he wants to achieve on the audience. When watching a movie, people are always unconsciously infected by it. In fact, the audience are influenced by the director's intention and plays a vocative role, so subtitle translation is also a vocative text. As one of the art forms, film is to some extent the director's self-expression. When watching a movie, the audience will naturally feel the artistic elements that the director wants to express in the movie. Some of them are reflected in character dialogues, that is, subtitle translation. Therefore, subtitle translation is also an expressive text.

To sum up, the author thinks that subtitle translation is a text that integrates the functions of expressive, informative and vocative. However, in subtitle translation, the vocative function and informative function are its main functions. That is to say, subtitle translation text is mainly reader-centered, and this kind of text focuses on the communication of information content and the acquisition of communicative effect. The author thinks that communicative translation should be the main approach in subtitle translation, and semantic translation should be adopted when subtitle text contains expressive function and the text intended to express the director's thoughts or feelings in movie dialogue. To sum up, in subtitle translation, both communicative translation and semantic translation theory should be used for comprehensive analysis.

3.3.4 Subtitle Translation Principles Guided by Semantic Translation and Communicative Translation

Newmark points out: “a good translation is accurate and economical-that is the only generalization I can make” (Newmark, 2006: 39). According to the limitations and characteristics of subtitle translation and the analysis of semantic translation and communicative translation theory, the author thinks that under the guidance of semantic translation and communicative translation, there are three main principles of subtitle translation, namely, the principles of accuracy, conciseness and instantaneous readability.

3.3.4.1 Accuracy

Newmark puts forward that accuracy is one of the basic principles that translation should follow, which has been recognized by many famous translators. In subtitle translation, it is very important to accurately change the lines of movie characters. “*Subtitle is the main way of film interpretation, and any incorrect translation in subtitle translation may lead to the audience’s misunderstanding of the film*” (Lee, 2011: 35). It has also been pointed out that the subtitle translation text is mainly reader-centered, so the translator should consider the audience’s comprehension ability, context and the director’s intention. Examples:

(1) Source Text:

蓝玉: 我把你吹哭啦?天鸣, 你怎么了?

天鸣: 我想回家。

蓝玉: 你不是刚刚回过家吗?

天鸣: 师父看不上我。

Target Text:

Tianming: I want to go home.

Lanyu: My playing makes you cry? Tianming, what’s wrong?

Lanyu: Weren’t you just there?

Tianming: Master doesn’t like me.

In this scene, because Master gave the suona to Lanyu, but not to him, Tianming thought that Master didn’t like him and he cried when Lanyu was playing the suona. Not knowing this, Lanyu said “*I made you cry?*” The subtitle translator concretized the meaning of the text on the basis of understanding. The subtitle “*My playing makes you cry?*” expresses the meaning of the source text more accurately. If the translator understands the word “play” based on the text instead of the context, there will be a sense of confusion. If the subtitle is rendered as “*Did I make you cry?*” it will not be understood just as well by the audience in the target language. Audiences will wonder why should Lanyu say so because has not done

anything to make Tianming cry. Therefore, the accurate translation of the meaning of the dialogue content in subtitle translation is very important to the audience's understanding. The Chinese word “看不上” means you don't like someone, so the translator literally translates it as “*doesn't like me*”, which is accurate in semantics.

(2) Source Text:

焦师傅: 所以啊, 在咱们这块地盘上唢呐不能断了种。

Target Text: Master Jiao: Thus we can't let the sound of suona be absent from this area.

Here, Master Jiao said that suona is not only for weddings and funerals, but also for laborers to enjoy this kind of entertainment. So I went on to say Example (2). The original meaning of “断种” is used to describe that a person doesn't have any descendant. Here, it's a personification of suona, and “不能断种” means we can't let the sound of suona be absent from this area. Therefore, the translator accurately grasped the meaning of the speaker, instead of sticking to the original content, handled it appropriately, and used the structure of “not be absent” to express the meaning that Master Jiao thinks suona can't be absent in this land. Proper reorganization of the original text and changing the subject of the sentence from “suona” to “we” in English are more in line with the tone of Master Jiao, that is, as suona artists, we have the responsibility to carry forward suona. This translation focuses on the understanding of the target audience from the perspective of communicative effect.

(3) Source Text:

天鸣父亲: 你敢再说这话看老子不撕破你的嘴!

Target Text: Tianming's father: Say that again! And I will cut off your tongue!

In this case, Tianming's father tried his best to make Tianming learn suona to fulfill his unfulfilled wish, so he scolded Tianming after hearing that he didn't want to learn suona. When the translator understands the speaker's tone, he skillfully translates it into English imperative sentences, which serves as a warning here. At the same time, it is more authentic to translate Chinese “嘴” into English “tongue”, because English generally doesn't say mouth, such as “闭嘴” corresponds to English “shut up” instead of “close your mouth”, and English is used to replacing “嘴”. “老子” is generally regarded as a dialect word in the north, generally referring to the father, and here it refers to Tianming's father himself. Therefore, the translator translated this sentence as “*Say that again! And I will cut off your tongue*” is more authentic and accurate.

3.3.4.2 Brevity

It is the technical limitations in time and space that make subtitle translation different from traditional literary translation. In order not to affect the picture effect and visual effect, the time when the subtitles appear on the screen cannot exceed the time when the speaker speaks, that is, the subtitles should be consistent with the

picture. In other words, subtitles should follow the changing speed of the picture, so it is generally not allowed to translate every word in the lines into corresponding subtitles.

On the other hand, due to the transient characteristics of subtitle translation, subtitle translation must be concise. The subtitles can only stay on the screen for a few seconds, so the audience can't watch the subtitles repeatedly. Moreover, besides reading subtitles, the audience also needs to watch pictures, listen to background music and so on. Therefore, concise translation of lines is particularly important. Examples are as follows:

(4) Source Text:

大庄叔: 天鸣最近没回来么?

天鸣父亲: 跟他师父正学着呢好多调调都会了。

Target Text:

Uncle Dazhuang: Tianming hasn't come back?

Tianming's father: He's studying with his master, learning the craft.

In this example, the translator translates the underlined content into a more concise English expression. If translated according to the original sentence, they are respectively "*Hasn't Tianming come back recently*" and "*and he has learned how to play different tunes*". Because the dialogue situation is obvious, the unnecessary adverb "recently" is omitted in sentence 1. If the sentence is translated in this way, the translated version is longer than the original text, which is asymmetrical, and it is unnecessary to translate word by word according to the context. Considering the limitation of time and space in subtitle translation, the original translator simplified the translation of dialogue content without affecting the understanding of the original text, and directly translated many tones into the word "craft", which made the translation more concise.

(5) Source Text:

师娘: 你师父下地去了。

蓝玉: 那我给师娘磕三个头吧。

Target Text:

Master's wife: Your master's in the field.

Lanyu: Then I'll kowtow to you.

In China, it is customary to kowtow for three times. For the target audience, they only need to know that it is kowtow. Therefore, the translator has omitted the quantifier "three" here, which makes the translation more concise without affecting the understanding of the target audience.

(6) Source Text:

天鸣: 你爸啥时候走的?

天鸣: 那你咋不叫我?

Target Text:

Tianming: When did that happen?

.....

Tianming: And you didn't call me to come?

蓝玉: 我哪请得起你啊?

Lanyu: How could I afford that?

This scene is a conversation between Lanyu and Tianming after they met for many years and Tianming learned that Lanyu's father had died. “走” means “run” in classical Chinese and “walk” in modern Chinese, but it also means “leave somewhere” or “refer to someone's death” in specific context. Because the content of their previous conversation is the death of Lanyu's father, the translator here uses the pronoun “that” to refer to the above-mentioned things, and modifies the sentence to make the subtitles and the preceding text more concise at the same time. Instead of literally translating into “*When did your father pass away?*” English pays attention to euphemism, so it is generally not possible to mention other people's sadness in this direct way. The translation adopted by the translator here is more accurate and concise. “*I can't afford you*” means that Lanyu thinks he can't afford Tianming's suona band to play suona for his father, so the translator still chooses the pronoun “that” to refer to “*ask Tianming to play suona for his father*”, which is concise and clear, instead of translating it into “*how could I get enough money to pay you*”.

From the above examples, we can see that conciseness principle is one of the most effective and important methods in subtitle translation when dealing with time and space constraints. Therefore, due to its own characteristics, subtitle translation should be concise and clear, and appropriate conciseness can provide all information accurately.

3.3.4.3 Instant Readability

Instantaneous readability of subtitle translation is one of the basic criteria for high-quality subtitle translation. Subtitle translation is composed of many elements, that is, the context of subtitle translation consists of four parts: dialogue, images, background music and sound effects. As for the audience, they need to pay attention to these four aspects of information at the same time. Specifically, the translation on the screen can't affect the audience's attention. As Mailhac puts it: “*The most obvious amongst them is the sustained effort required on the part of the reviewer to keep up with the subtitles, an effort which diverts his or her attention away from the picture. In order to enable the viewer to deal with the subtitles at an appropriate pace, two criteria must be satisfied: legibility and readability.*” (Mailhac, 2000: 130) Examples are as follows:

(7) Source Text:

天鸣父亲: (天鸣) 前几天回来了, 说师父正准备教他吹那个百鸟朝凤呢。

大庄叔: 哎呀, 百鸟朝凤, 这曲子, 可是多少年都没有听过了。

Target Text:

Tianming's father: A few days ago when he came back, he said his master was going to teach him "Song of the Phoenix".

Uncle Dazhuang: That song is the one I haven't heard for years.

In this translation example, the speaker is lamenting that he hasn't heard this famous suona song for a long time, so the dialogue has been broken several times to reflect the speaker's feelings. If translated according to the sentence-breaking style of the original text, it can be translated into "Wow, *Song of the Phoenix*, This song is the one which I haven't heard for many years." If translated like this, the translation needs to occupy two lines of space, so the audience must make more efforts to keep up with the subtitle speed, which will inevitably cause extra burden to the target audience's understanding in such a short time, which is contrary to the principle of instantaneous readability mentioned above. Therefore, the original translator reorganized the sentence into "that song is the one I have haven't heard for years", omitting the modal particles, the object "which" in the attributive clause and the three parts mentioned above, and directly referring to the repeated *Song of the Phoenix* with the pronoun "that song" when the context is clear, which accords with the concise expression in English.

(8) Source Text:

众师兄弟: 师父!师父!

焦师傅: 把鼓拿过来!

Target Text:

All apprentices: Master! Master!

Master Jiao: Drums!

In this case, due to the decline of the suona and the shortage of players in the suona band, the old Master Jiao played Song of the Phoenix for Tianming. Master Jiao spitted blood when playing the suona. The translator adopts the method of omission, translating "把鼓拿过来" into one word "Drums", grasping its key information and summarizing a sentence in one word to reduce the burden of the audience in reading subtitles. A neat word more reflects the spirit of Master Jiao who, although not feeling well, chose to stay firm and refuse to give up in order to work as a master of suona player. Therefore, no matter what translation strategy is adopted, the translator should guarantee the instantaneous readability (intelligibility) of subtitle translation for the audience.

3.3.5 *Subtitle Translation Strategies from the Perspectives of Semantic Translation and Communicative Translation*

The author has mentioned above the film subtitle translation and reached a conclusion on the principles of subtitle translation. Translation examples have been selected from *Song of the Phoenix* to demonstrate the application of semantic and communicative translation theory to analyze subtitle translation strategies.

3.3.5.1 Transliteration

The three major systems of transliteration includes Chinese phonetics system, Wade-Giles and modern English system. Among them, Chinese phonetics system was created and published by China's Foreign Ministry based on the names of people and places in China in 1979. It plays an active role in expressing specific Chinese terms from *baozi* to *jiaozi* (Li, 2014: 24). There are examples from *Song of the Phoenix*:

(9) Source Text:

天鸣: 爸 (ba2, Shannxi dialect, ring tone in Chinese)

天鸣父亲: 快去给焦师傅磕头去!

Target Text:

Tianming: Dad!

Tianming's father: Hurry up and go kowtow to Master Jiao!

As a special and old-fashioned traditional custom in China, "kowtow" describes one touching the ground with two hands and forehead. Nowadays, this etiquette still can be seen on special occasions in China, however, it is not used in western countries. As the loanword "kowtow" has been known in most western countries, it is added in English directly by using its transliteration of Chinese for convenience. Therefore, 磕头 here can be transliterated which is a translation of semantic meaning of the source text.

(10) Source Text:

天鸣: 我不想学唢呐!

Target Text:

Tianming: I don't want to learn the suona!

It is a scene that Tianming and his father speed along the road to be an apprentice of Master Jiao. Tianming is reluctant to learn the suona, so he says these words in face of his father's urgings. Suona was introduced in China in the year 3BC, transliterated from *surna* in Persian. As a popular folk instrument, there is a

transliterated word “suona (horn)” in English to express the semantic meaning of this word.

(11) Source Text:

大师兄：师父，查老爷子真是德高望重呢！

焦师傅：哼！你们知道查家为啥成为了金庄第一大姓？过去金庄有张王钱李查五个姓氏，这个查老爷子当了四十年村长把其他姓氏的人差不多全挤走了！

Target Text:

Senior Apprentice: Master, Old Zha was really the greatest, the most respected leader!

Master Jiao: Huh, do you know why Zha is the major family name in the village? In the past, there was Zhang, Wang, Qian, Li and Zha, five names.

But in his forty years as village chief, Old Zha drove the others out!

It is conventional to directly transliterate family names. As “family name” has mentioned earlier, those five family names can be transliterated into “*Zhang, Wang, Qian, Li and Zha*” which act in cooperation with “family name” in preceding part of the text. Under the guidance of semantic translation, it not only obeys to principles of exactness as well as express semantic meaning, but also is not burdensome on the understanding of audiences. According to the analysis above, the author thinks that attention can be payed to transliteration of the names of places and people on the basis of ensuring that the audience understands, when laying particular emphasis on expressing text messages. But translator should not use the skill of transliteration just for the sake of equivalence in content and cultural expression between target and source texts. In short, it depends.

3.3.5.2 Literal Translation

According to semantic and communicative translation theory, when the results of the target text can be shown, literal translation is most effective way. It can express the thoughts of the writing author, and translate the same effect with the original to the target audience (Fang, 2008: 52). Literal translation need to be consistent in content, grammar, sentence pattern and so on with the source text (Li, 2014: 30).

(12) Source Text:

蓝玉：柳三你干嘛？

柳三：关你他妈屁事？

Target Text:

Lanyu: Liusan, what are you doing?

Liusan: None of you fucking business!

Liusan is a local ruffian. It is a scene that Liusan wants to enjoy the performance of western band ensemble, however, Tianming and his counterparts playing the suona interferes his enjoyment. So he goes to interrupt their performance. Liusan's words match his position as a local ruffian which stays close to reality and life. Therefore, translator can use literal translation based on semantic translation theory with emphasis on the speaker's tone and underlying meaning. For example, the literal translation here goes to be "none of your (fucking) business". It obeys source text when the translator uses the coarse slang accordingly in English and show the speaker's characteristics. But in some countries and regions with strict regulation of movies, this movie might be limited or X-rated. It is better to replace fucking with damned.

(13) Source Text:

天鸣：哎，答，（方言词）你咋知道哩？

Target Text:

Tianming: Oh! (Dad) How did you know?

Tianming says this sentence to show his surprise when he knows his father's understanding of "Song of the Phoenix" which is a suona solo. There is a Shanxi dialectal word "答" referring to dad in the past daily life. In addition, in northern China, people is used to add "哩" at the end of question sentence and "咋" at the beginning, such as "咋整" and "咋回事儿". "咋" is how in Chinese, and these dialectal words have equivalent expression in mandarin. In order to express accurately the source language, the translator literally translate this sentence.

(14) Source Text:

天鸣旁白：父亲从小就梦想做一名唢呐匠，因为没有师父肯收他，他就
帮希望寄托在我身上。

Target Text:

Tianming aside: My father always wanted to be a suona player, but no master would take him, so he pinned all his hopes on me.

The translator literally translate the underlined part into "*pinned all his hope on me*", which attach importance on expressing the context of the source language from the perspective of semantic translation. The word "pin" strengthens sentimental color. It not only shows his father's high expectations, but also accords with the expressions of English habits as well as obey the principles of subtitle translation.

(15) Source Text:

蓝玉：那你每天都干啥？

天鸣：吸水。就拿这个吸河湾里的水。

Target Text:

Lanyu: What do you do all day, then?

Tianming: Suck water. At the river, with this thing, just sucking water all day.

The translator directly translates “就拿这个” into “with this thing” in English, using the proposition “with” to connect the adverbial structure in order to give information about manner. It corresponds with expression habits in English as well as synchronization principles in subtitle translation. When the subtitles are consistent with the screen and sound, audience is easy to understand what “this” refers to. Even if the translator does not translate “这个东西” into “this reed”, audience would not feel confused. Therefore, this sentence shows the emphasis on semantic translation.

Newmark said that literal translation is not to translate word for word from one language to another, instead “*the SL grammatical constructions are converted to their nearest TL equivalents*” (Newmark, 2001b: 46).

3.3.5.3 Substitution

Substitution refers to replace words and structures in original text with different ones in target text. It plays a significant role in guaranteeing the fluency of the translation and cross the cultural divide (Liu, 1990: 209). There are many words and phrases that should be avoided to translate directly but use other words. Replacement in translation is the best solution.

(16) Source Text:

天鸣父亲：你个狗日的！喊一声！

Target Text:

Tianming's father: You worthless son of a bitch. Come on, shout!

Tianming's father shouts to him in a pet because he does not meet the Master Jiao's requirement. As an absolute peasant, his father is hard to avoid using some vulgar language in Shanxi dialect such as “狗日的” here which is similar to “son of a birth” in English. It will take into consideration that translators should express the same effect between source and target text in communicative translation. Here the

translator doesn't avoid vulgar language but replace them with words having same effect in English to achieve communicative translation.

(17) Source Text:

天鸣父亲: 焦师傅!

天鸣: 师父!

Target Text:

Tianming's father: Master Jiao

Tianming: Master

In Chinese, it is similar between “师父” and “师傅”, referring to persons engage on educational duties. Nowadays, “师父” is used for addressing those working on traditional skills, and “师傅” for all works of life. Both of them are unique in Chinese. Although there are not equivalents in English, they can both be replaced with “master, 大师” to guarantee communicative effect. “Master” is used for speaking to or about who is skilled, and here Master Jiao is a master of suona, so it is suitable.

(18) Source Text:

师娘: 哎哟, 不打娃!

天鸣父亲: 师娘, 你别管。

Target Text:

Master's wife: Hey, don't hit him.

Tianming's father: Madam, don't bother about him.

(19) Source Text:

天鸣: 师娘, 你们家就你和师父两个人吗?

师娘: 师娘有过两个娃。

Target Text:

Tianming: Auntie, is it just you and master here?

Master's wife: I had two children.

“师娘” is also unique in Chinese, and there is only an explanation in English of “the wife of master” but an equivalent. In this sentence, two of “师娘” are respectively translated into “madam” and “auntie”. As his father shows his respect to Tianming's master's wife, “madam” in English also is a respectful address to women, so it obeys the principle of communicative translation. As for Tianming, he is a child and is closer to her. So the translator uses the word “auntie” which is suitable for a kid and accurate as well as easy for target audience to understand.

(20) Source Text:

天鸣父亲：这位是文化局的“副”局长。

傅局长：我姓傅，是正局长。

Target Text:

Tianming's father: This is the Vice-Secretary of Cultural Bureau for the country.

Director Fu: Ah, my name is Fu (word denoting second-in-command), I'm actually the Head Secretary.

In this scene, Tianming's father doesn't know another speaker is the Head Secretary of Cultural Bureau but only his second name. So he says these to Tianming. There are many special official titles in Chinese which is not equivalent to English ones. Sometimes one title in different departments maybe have different translation, for example, “局长” can be translated into “director”, “secretary” and “director general”. From the perspective of communicative translation, it is suitable to translate “文化局副局长” into “Vice-Secretary of Culture Bureau”.

3.3.5.4 Amplification

Huang Zhonglian concluded that complementary translation (also amplification and annotation) is to add the underlying information which actually has its special meaning in source text from notion, figure of speech, syntax to background. It plays a role in expressing content and information faithfully and style (Huang, 2013: 64). Dong Xiaobo (2012: 97) thought that complementary translation refers to a strategy of adding some words or sentences from one language to another influenced by two kinds of thought pattern and idiomatic expression. In film subtitle translation, translators usually add some necessary explanation to help audience's understandings. There are some examples:

(21) Source Text:

焦师傅：唢呐匠的规矩你知道。

天鸣父亲：我知道，知道。

焦师傅：这娃看起来不像是十三的样。

Target Text:

Master Jiao: You know the rule of suona training.

Tianming's father: I know. I know.

Master Jiao: With that baby-face, he doesn't look thirteen yet. (Tianming's father tells Master Jiao that he is already 13 years old, but Master Jiao thinks he is not yet 13.)

From their dialogues, Master Jiao hesitates that Tianming is not yet 13 years old because of his baby-face. The translator adds “*with that baby-face*” in translation as the adverbial structure for explanation after his own understanding to the source language. From the perspective of communicative translation, making the sentence as a whole not only expresses the underlying meaning, but also give the reason why Master Jiao says that to show his preciseness.

(22) Source Text:

焦师傅：唢呐不是吹给别人听的，是吹给自己的！

天鸣：师父！师父！

师娘：从没见过他这样过。看着你来了，高兴的。

Target Text:

Master Jiao: You don't play the suona for other people. You play it for yourself.

Tianming: Master! Master!

Master's wife: I've never seen him like this. You are here, and he is so happy!

In this example, the translator adds “you” and “I” from the perspective of complementary translation. There is no need for subjects in Chinese, but it will result in obscurity of speakers when there is no subjects in English. Especially here she missed two subjects (she and her husband), so the audience may be confused these two persons if the translator didn't show the subjects during translating. Therefore, in view of communicative effect, translator adds the missing subjects in order to make audience understand the subtitles and the speaker's meaning.

(23) Source Text:

天鸣：秀芝，二师兄手咋了？

秀芝：在木材厂打工的时候那根手指头被电锯切掉了。

二师兄：这辈子是吹不了唢呐了。

Target Text:

Tianming: Xiuzhi, what happened to my second-seat player?

Xiuzhi: His finger was cut off by a rotary saw in a lumber mill.

Second senior apprentice: I can never play the suona again, not for the rest of my life.

Same as the last example, it is necessary to add the subject “I”. In addition, the speaker feels regret and remorse that he can't play the suona anymore because of

his finger. The translator knows his underlying meaning, so he adds “*not for the rest of my life*” for repetition. It can arouse the audience’s sympathy after adding words to explain the speaker’s inner feelings and emotions.

3.3.5.5 Omission

Omission (also called the subtractive lexical method) is to use grammar or rhetoric as the starting point to subtract some unimportant target words. Its role is to make the translation naturally smooth (Huang et al., 2013: 68). Omission mainly refers to translation According to the language habits, thinking patterns and expression forms of the Japanese slogan, the writer deletes individual words and sentences to make the language of the translation concise and clear, avoiding the length and complexity of the translation (Wang, 2015: 18). Therefore, considering the coherence of the movie plot and the audiovisual effect According to the language habits of Japanese slogan audiences, the translator should omit individual words and sentences in subtitle translation. Examples are as follows:

(24) Source Text:

焦师傅: 磕头?磕啥头?他是嚼给我磕头?这个头不是谁都能磕的!

Target Text:

Master Jiao: Kowtow?What for?Why kowtow to me?You’re not my apprentice yet.

(25) Source Text:

众师兄: 好!好啊!

二师兄: 师父, 恭喜你了!

Target Text:

Apprentices: Bravo!

Second senior apprentice: Master, Congratulations!

(Scene: After Lan Yu and Tianming performed, they were praised by the master and other apprentices)

(26) Source Text:

小孩甲: 哪有唢呐匠自己拿东西的道理?无双镇没这规矩, 你还是给我吧。

Target Text:

Child A: How can a suona player carry any load? That’s not the way of Wushuang Villages. Come on, give it to me.

In the above three examples, the translator has adopted omission. Without affecting the semantic expression of the original text, the personal pronouns in the sentence are omitted without translation. In Example 24, the translator did not translate “*Why should he kowtow to me*” but simply omitted “he”. In the film, Tianming’s father asked Tianming to kowtow to Master Jiao, but Master Jiao felt that he had not yet agreed to accept Tianming as a disciple, so he was a little confused and angry with Tianming’s father. Therefore, the translator performed a

provincial translation of the personal elements in the original text, and deleted the speaker's words to make them more brief, fully expressing the mood and tone of Jiao that Master Jiao was angry with Tianming's father and did not want to speak any more. In example 25, the apprentices said "good, good" in succession to express their appreciation to the two juniors. In order to strengthen the tone of the Chinese, they often adopt the method of repetition, but in English, it is the opposite. Try to avoid repetition, so the translator only uses one. The word "Bravo" is a compliment that directly reflects the mood of the speaker, and can also bring the same viewing effect to the audience in the target language. At the same time, the subject is omitted in the second sentence, and the English "congratulations" is used directly, which is concise and clear, making the subtitles instantly easy to read, and at the same time expressing the excitement and joy of the speaker in the play. In Example 26, the subject "you" is omitted, and the English sentence begins with a verb prototype, which can better reflect that the speaking child actually adopts a suggestive command tone towards Tianming.

(27) Source Text:

焦师傅: 几岁了?

天鸣父亲: 十三, 十三了。上个月十五刚满十三。

Target Text:

Master Jiao: How old are you?

Tianming's father: Thirteen, he's thirteen. Just turned thirteen last month.

In this example, the translator omitted 十五 and only translated "last month". The reason is that cultural differences and communicative effects drive translators to adopt this subtractive translation method. First, 十五 is the "lunar fifteen", which is the traditional Chinese name for time nodes, while foreign countries only talk about the solar calendar, that is, the Gregorian calendar. There is a difference between the two. Secondly, foreigners do not understand the meaning of the Chinese lunar calendar. In order not to cause unnecessary burden of understanding, there is no need to translate it in the original text, just explain the approximate time. Therefore, it is appropriate for the translator to choose the subtraction method here to omit and not translate the "Lunar fifteen".

(28) Source Text:

天鸣母亲: 你和秀芝捏咕好一块儿骗我!

Target Text:

Tianming's mother: You and Xiuzhi have betrayed me!

Originally, Tianming's mother wanted to use Xiuzhi to trade a wife for Tianming. But then Tianming helped Xiuzhi to go to the city to work without telling his mother, so his mother said this to Tianming. 捏咕 is actually a northern dialect, meaning to conspire together and negotiate secretly. Although dialect words are involved here, they can be omitted and not translated, and there will be no suspicion of unclear meaning. Therefore, under the guidance of communicative

translation theory, the translator should appropriately rewrite the original text and omit the dialect words used as adverbials, which is appropriate. At the same time, it is understandable to use “betray” here, because in Tianming’s mother’s eyes, Tianming treated her unkindly and she will inevitably feel angry, so 欺骗 is also possible to be translated into a heavier “betray”.

(29) Source Text:

大庄叔: 我还真没看出来, 天鸣这孩子还是块吹唢呐的料!

天鸣父亲: 我是想了一辈子唢呐, 没吹上唢呐。

Target Text:

Uncle Dazhuang: I never thought that your son was the sort who could become a suona master.

Tianming’s father: I always wanted to, and I never did.

In this example, the translator omitted “suona” twice. One of the reasons is that the context is all talking about suona, so omitting suona without translating it will not result in ambiguity in semantic expression and will not affect the target. The audience’s understanding is a burden. Another reason is that Chinese is accustomed to expressing with repetitive words or vocabulary, while in English, repetition and cumbersomeness are generally avoided. Therefore, the translator follows the principle of conciseness of subtitle translation and performs appropriate subtraction, not constrained by the content of the original text, and more consideration is given to Japanese expressions.

3.3.5.6 Adaptation

According to Fang Mengzhi and Mao Zhongming, adapting refers to a certain degree of change in the original text or major adjustments in form during translation, so as to adapt to the target culture (Fang, et al. 2004: 300). The adaptation translation method is adopted in the subtitle translation, mainly to satisfy the audience’s understanding effect.

(1) General adaptation

(30) Source Text:

百鸟朝凤 (片名)

Target Text:

Title: *Song of the Phoenix*

The Chinese name of the movie is “百鸟朝凤”, and Chao is to meet, and 凤 refers to the phoenix, the bird king in ancient legends. 凤 is also used as a metaphor for people with high morals. So according to its literal meaning, it can be literally translated as “Birds paying homage to the Phoenix”. If translated literally, the audience may mistakenly think that this film is about the animal world and is not

attractive enough. Therefore, the translator adopts the method of retranslation, translated the title of the film as *Song of the Phoenix*. The author believes that the reason is as follows. According to the plot content and background of the film, because *Song of the Phoenix* is a famous suona song in this film, this translation reflects this. come out. At the same time, Song of the Phoenix is also a metaphor for people of high morals. In addition to this famous song, the film also involves some people of high morals, so if it is literally translated into “*Birds paying homage to the Phoenix*”, such intended meanings will be lost.

(31) Source Text:

天鸣父亲: 您老答应啦?

焦师傅: 答应啥?

Target Text:

Tianming's father: So, what's your answer?

Master Jiao: What answer?

In this translation example, the translator retranslated “您老答应了” and “答应啥” into “What's your answer” and “What answer” respectively, and translated the customary expressions and honorifics in Chinese, and contrasted with each other. Therefore, the revised translation here conforms to the coherence in English expression, and the conversational questions one after the other can be smoothly connected, thus showing the smooth logic in the original text and the translated text.

Edit relationship. At the same time, the part of speech is converted, and the verb “答应” is translated into the noun “answer.” As a result, at the same time, the translator's use of modified translation here is based on the understanding of the Japanese audience. The modified translation is a translation method with a domestication orientation, and the text after the modified translation is more readable. In this way, both Accurately conveying the meaning of the original text and facilitating the understanding of the target language audience can be described as killing two birds with one stone. And if you translate it literally into “Have you agreed?” and “Agree what?” It follows the sentence structure of the original text, but fails to achieve the two effects embodied in the revised version in terms of expression effects.

(2) Adapting of colloquialisms and dialects

(32) Source Text:

天鸣父亲: 你妈个腿!

Target Text:

Tianming's father: That's bull!

In this picture, Si Xi (a friend of Tianming) tells Tianming's father that Tianming plays sixteen Tai(suona). In fact, there are only eight suonas at most, so Tianming's father said this to Sixi. This is a vulgar term in the northern Shaanxi dialect, but in fact this is not really cursing Sixi, but showing Tianming's father. Feeling a little

angry at Sixi's nonsense and ignorance of *suona*, Tianming's father's intention was to say that the other party was talking nonsense, so the translator avoided vulgar language. Translate it into "*That's bull*" and "*You are talking nonsense*". First, it conveyed the meaning of the sentence, and secondly, it did not adopt literal translation because the communicative effect of the subtitles was taken into consideration, so that the audience of the subtitles could understand it.

(33) Source Text:

天鸣父亲: 啥?狗日的!你这是烂泥扶不止墙!你这是!

Target Text:

Tianming's father: Fuck! You worthless, dumbass kid!

His father said this after mistakenly thinking that Tianming was driven away by the master. "烂泥扶不上墙" is a Chinese proverb, which basically means that the mud is too thin to stick to the wall. It is used to describe someone who has poor ability and cannot become a climate. The translator takes into account the differences in the communicative effect and expression of the two cultural factors. In this example, the translator adopts adapting method, which is translated into "worthless", rather than adopting a literal translation method, because it is obvious that the literal translation method will be used here. Appearing abrupt and inexplicable, it will cause the audience to not understand the meaning of his words. Tianming's father is obviously scolding Tianming for how to suddenly turn to the relationship between mud and wall, which will make foreign audiences who do not understand the meaning of this sentence feel. Puzzled. "Worthless" is useless to scold someone. It has a heavier meaning in English. It also conforms to Tianming's father's words and expressions, and it also reflects Tianming's father's inner hatred in hope that Tianming will improve.

(34) Source Text:

(天鸣妈妈为了给天鸣交换媳妇逼秀芝去相亲,嫁给西头刘家的哥哥,于是天鸣对母亲说了这句话。)

天鸣: 强扭的瓜不甜。秀芝不愿意就别强迫她!

Target Text:

Tianming: Being hard on her isn't going to work. Xiuzhi doesn't want to, so don't force her.

"强扭的瓜不甜" metaphors that if you try to do something when the time is immature, you usually won't get what you want. Obviously, it is definitely not feasible to adopt a literal translation here. Firstly, there are cultural differences. And secondly, the original text actually implies a metaphorical technique, that is, Xiuzhi is likened to a "*troubled melon*". Because communicative translation theory puts more emphasis on conveying the implicit meaning of the original text to the target audience. For the communicative effect, it can be rewritten appropriately, so after the translator adopts the modified translation method, it is more coherent with the context, expressing Tianming's intention to use colloquialism, that is, Tianming wants to explain to her mother that it is impossible to force Xiuzhi to go on a blind

date. Get what you want. So translated as “*Being hard on her isn’t going to work*”, the purpose is to say that the audience can better understand what the speaker wants to express.

(35) Source Text:

焦师傅: 吃吧!

师娘: 娃儿他爸是交足了饭钱的。再说娃儿正在吃长饭呢!

Target Text:

Master Jiao: Eat!

Master’s wife: Come on, his father has paid for his meals, and he is a growing boy who needs to eat well.

In the picture, Master Jiao chopped most of the rice in Tianming’s bowl into his own bowl because Tianming did not meet his requirements during training, so Mrs. Jiao said this. In the text, “吃长饭” is a colloquial expression in Chinese. It is commonly known as the food that children need to eat when they are in the developmental stage. Because the food that children eat when they are in adolescence is easy to grow, people call meal that could help children to grow as “吃长饭”, which is a noun. In the original text, “吃长饭” has been flexibly used as a verb, so the translator did not adopt a literal translation method after fully understanding this colloquial saying and usage, in order to better enable the target language audience to understand the meaning of this cultural colloquial. The translator translated it into “*a growing boy who needs to eat well*”. This translation fits the emphasis of communicative translation, that is, to be oriented towards the target audience.

3.3.6 Critic of the Subtitle Translation of Song of the Phoenix

As an important component of translation theory, “*translation criticism is an essential link between translation theory and its practice*” (Newmark, 2001: 184). Newmark’s translation criticism is mainly aimed at language mistranslation and referent mistranslation. The mistranslation of the referent means that the translation fails to accurately reproduce the facts and opinions in the original text. For example, “*the earth is flat*”, “*the earth is the only planet in the solar system*” and so on are all mistranslations of the referent. This kind of mistranslation stems from the translator’s lack of relevant knowledge or the direct copy of the original author’s fallacy. Language mistranslations are mostly caused by the translator’s poor speaking literacy, including errors in vocabulary, grammar, and idioms. Therefore, the author classifies the wrong translation examples or poor translation examples in the movie subtitles and proposes criticism and suggestions for improvement.

3.3.6.1 Improper Use of Transliteration

(36) Source Text:

焦师傅: 咱这八百里秦川恐怕找不到第二支!

Target Text:

Master: There's no other like it in all of Qinchuan!

(Scene: Master Jiao took out the suona and said to Tianming.)

The original meaning of “八百里秦川” refers to the Guanzhong Plain in Shaanxi, which is an inherent geographical rice language in China. But Master Jiao here means the entire Shaanxi region. The direct translation of it as “Qinchuan” in the translation can be said to be confusing to foreign audiences. What does “Qinchuan” refer to will cause obstacles to the audience's understanding. The author suggests to change the translation to “*You can't find another great one like this in our (Shannxi) province*”, to blur it into the concept of province instead of direct transliteration. Firstly, it can avoid the understanding obstacles caused by direct transliteration to the target language audience. Secondly, the audience can understand what it refers to.

(37) Source Text:

焦师傅: 这是大清朝道光年间的唢呐。

Target Text:

Master Jiao: This is a suona from the Daoguang period of Qing Dynasty.

In the translation, the translator used literal translation to translate “大清朝道光年间” into “*The Daoguang period of Qing Dynasty*”. The author thinks that the literal translation of this sentence is a bit inappropriate. First of all, the main purpose of the original text is to convey the age of this suona. In fact, there is no need to translate it verbatim according to the original text. First, the subtitles are mainly for the target language audience, and the target language audience does not understand the history of the Chinese dynasty. Therefore, the translation does not correctly convey the original idea, but also causes semantic nuisance to the Japanese audience, and it is not clear about the translation. meaning. Therefore, it can be translated as: “*This is a suona from the nineteenth century.*”

3.3.6.2 Defects in Literal Translation

(38) Source Text:

天鸣父亲: 这狗日的, 他就是个娃娃脸。自打十岁就长这样, 不见熟。

Target Text: Tianming's father: Yeah, the son-of-a-bitch has this baby-faced look. He's looked the same since he was ten. Doesn't age.

Master Jiao felt that Tianming did not look like he was thirteen years old, so Tianming's father immediately explained about it. In fact, Tianming's father here is a little bit ridiculous or angry about Tianming's baby face. "Doesn't age" means not getting old, and obviously the semantics are different from the original text. "不见熟" is generally used to mean that something is not familiar yet when the time comes. Tianming's father described Tianming as 不见熟, and the "materialization" of Tianming more embodies the meaning of "piggybacking and burying". Moreover, in the previous article, "娃娃脸 (baby face)" and "十岁就长这样 (just like this when ten years old)" have been emphasized twice that Tianming is slightly immature, so the author believes that the translation method can actually be modified here, plus the expression of emotions can be enhanced. We could retranslated as "*He doesn't grow up*".

3.3.6.3 Problems with Adaptation

(39) Source Text:

天鸣: 去西安打算干啥?

蓝玉: 还没想好, 骑驴看唱本走着瞧呗。

Target Text:

Tianming: Xi'an? What will you do there?

Lanyu: We don't know yet. You know, just ride in and see what works out.

The example contains a Chinese allegorical saying, meaning that there is no idea of what will happen next. We can't draw a conclusion yet, so we can only take a look while walking. Because of cultural differences from a communicative perspective, if it is limited to the original text and translated literally, the target language audience will definitely be confused. In this translation example, the translator did not follow the meaning of the original text very cleverly, which is worthy of recognition. The author thinks that it is unclear for the translator to add "just ride in" here. Should it be included in the analysis of literal translation examples? So the author put forward my humble opinion, and translated the line drawing part into "*just go for it and see what will work out.*" Going to the big city of Xi'an is also the dream of Lanyu and their group, so the author is "go for it" It can reflect Lanyu's own desire for dreams and inquiries about Xi'an.

(40) Source Text:

天鸣父亲: 回来做啥?

天鸣父亲: 师父让我回来的。

Target Text:

Tianming's father: Why are you back?

Tianming: Master sent me back.

(Scene: since Master Jiao didn't take Tianming along, his wife saw that Tianming was upset so she gave Tianming a few days off.)

In this translation example, the translator translates “师父让我回来的” into “*Master sent me back*”. This kind of mistranslation will obviously make the audience feel strange, because at this time, how could Master send Tianming back when he was out for work? So the original translation violates the principle of synchronization in subtitle translation, that is, the content of the subtitles is inconsistent with the sound and picture. At the same time, it violates the semantics of the original text and the communicative effect that the original text wants to convey. In fact, in the scene, it was Master who asked Tianming to come back and stay for a few days. It can also be understood as Master allowed me to come back, so I think it can be translated as “*Master allows me to stay at home for a few days*”.

(41) Source Text:

大师兄：两个小师弟来的时间也不短了，给大家露一手。

Target Text:

Senior apprentice: The two students have been here for a while, so let's see what they can do, OK?

The translator did not understand the speaker well and caused the mistranslation. The sentence in the original text was actually spoken by the senior brother to the two junior brothers. At the same time, the author considered the space limitations of subtitle translation and believed that the translation could be simplified and translated. “*You two have been here for quite a while, so begin your show*”, but I think you can directly translate “露一手” into “Begin your show”. At the same time, the purpose of “begin your show” and the two juniors came here is obvious, that is to learn how to play suona, so no specific translation is necessary here, so the translator's translation into “be here” conforms to the principle of conciseness.

Under the trend of cultural integration, Chinese and foreign film and television works have gradually become one of the main methods of cross-cultural communication. At the same time, due to the continuous improvement of audience knowledge and foreign language level, audiences also put forward higher requirements for the quality of film and television subtitle translation. They are no longer just satisfied with understanding subtitles, but want to understand foreign cultures through film and television works and subtitle translation. Therefore, what kind of translation strategy can be used to better meet the audience's high requirements for film and television translation. This is undoubtedly a more difficult challenge for translators engaged in film and television translation. Therefore, for these translators and scholars in related fields It's a long way to go.

(This chapter is based on the author's 2017 MA thesis *Film Subtitle Translation from the Perspectives of Semantic Translation and Communicative Translation: Taking Song of the Phoenix as an Example*.)

Chapter 4

Cultural Default and Transmission of Martial Arts Imagery: The Translation of Cultural-Loaded Words in the *Grandmaster*



Yan Chen

4.1 Introduction to *the Grandmaster*

When Chinese martial arts films go abroad, they are faced with the problem of how to transmit the cultural images of Chinese martial arts to the western audiences. How to translate smoothly and naturally, while retaining the Oriental charm as much as possible, is a big challenge. Based on the cultural translation theories of scholars Liu Miqing and Nida, this paper makes a comparative study of the film *The Grandmaster* which aims to find out how Linda Jaivin breaks the cultural default phenomenon to deliver cultural images to the western audiences by taking the principle of cultural adaptability as evaluation criteria.

In this research, we find that:

1. For culture-loaded words, translators adopt free translation as the main method, while literal translation, compensation, omission, and transliteration are used as the auxiliary methods to translate the cultural information of the source language. Doing so not only improves the readability of the target language text, but also satisfies the expectation of the target language readers to understand Kung Fu and Kung Fu culture.
2. The omission and modification of the meaning of the original text may lead to the damage of the cultural image of the original text in the translation process, which is not conducive to cultural communication.
3. There are some factors that influence the cultural image transmission of martial arts films under cultural default and the analysis of countermeasures. This study reiterates the significance of emphasizing semantic determination and optimization of expression in translation communication advocated by Mr. Liu Miqing,

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which provides a reference for the study of the transmission of cultural images in martial arts films.

After martial arts films like *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon* directed by Li An, and *Hero* directed by Zhang Yimou in 2002, more and more martial arts films are going abroad, including *the Grandmaster* directed by Wang Jiawei. The film was nominated for an 86th Academy Award for Best Cinematography and Best Costume Design and the 85th National Board of Review Award for Foreign Language Film. These films, to a certain extent, have changed the impression of overseas Chinese and even westerners. They do not view Chinese Kungfu movies as the cheap action movies any more, which only emphasize actions and weaken the plots. And it updates their perception of martial arts films that they are no longer limited to fantastical martial storylines and intense and cool fight scenes.

Realistic scenes of martial arts and literary drama and poetic lines in *the Grandmaster* depict rich and unique cultural images. The process of martial arts films being accepted by western audiences is essentially the process of Chinese martial cultural values being transmitted to the west. The process of the cultural image of martial arts being recognized and accepted is also a process and cultural phenomenon of the integration of Eastern and Western cultures. In this process of cross-cultural communication, to what extent can film subtitle translation breaks the cultural default transmission phenomenon to transmit cultural image of martial arts is a major focus of the author.

Scholar Qian Shaochang pointed out that, “the number of audiences of translated films is far bigger than that of literary works, but on the contrary, the translation circle pays far less attention to translated version of film and television than literary translation” (Qian 2000: 61). This requires more people to study film translation, especially to contribute their own efforts to the study of film translation. I also believe that with the continuous efforts of Chinese and foreign translators, the English translation of film subtitles will strive for perfection, which will contribute to the internationalization of martial arts films.

This paper analyzes the English translation of a large number of subtitles with unique Chinese cultural images in the film *the Grandmaster* released in 2013, and the original subtitles contain abundant culture-loaded words and rich cultural images. This chapter is based on Liu Miqing’s translation theory and Nida’s principle of cultural adaptability to analyze whether the translator’s translation of the original cultural words is appropriate. By comparing the culture-loaded words that are full of cultural images both in Chinese and English and are based on the cultural translation theories of Liu Miqing and Eugene Nida, this paper analyzes the cultural images and translation methods and how Linda Jaivin, an Australian translator, breaks the cultural default in the process of translation to convey the cultural images of martial culture to the western audiences.

4.2 Literature Review

4.2.1 *Review of Domestic Research on Martial Works*

Like *Han Feizi*, *Five Moths* said, “The scholar usually disturbed the law and discipline by writing articles and spreading ideas, while the martial arts practitioner usually disturbed the government by force”. The *Five Moth* refers to the Scholar, the Talker (Political Strategists), the Sword Carrier (Ranger), the Draft Dodger and the businessmen. Those rangers who carry a sword gather all their members to establish moral integrity to show their names but violate the prohibition. Although martial art is transliterated as “Martial” in Chinese, it appears in this sentence for the first time. But the word “Martial” didn’t appear as an independent compound word in that time. In 1930, Liang Qichao founded the monthly magazine *on Novel of the New Novel* in Yokohama. In a column, an anonymous writer “Dingyi” said when he commented on ancient and modern classics, “*Water Margin* is the clank for the Chinese novel, the legacy of the martial arts. The community gained a lot from it, and it’s all thankful for the writer—Shi Naian. This is the first time that a Chinese publication has used the term Martial to celebrate the influence of *the Water Margin*. The following year, Liang Qichao wrote down the *Chinese Bushido* and mentioned the name of martial arts twice in his preface. We can know that Liang Qichao is the first one in China who use the word “Martial”. After “Martial”, there comes “Kungfu”, originally means “martial arts”, which was later extended to mean to have great achievement in a particular field or trade and to be proficient in a particular skill.

“Martial” is a typical concept and culture in China. Chinese martial culture has a long history. It has been widely combined with the thoughts of other schools in its development, such as Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism and Buddhism, as a cultural belief that cannot be ignored in the history of China. Martial arts films are the best way to express and convey this culture. Both the language and the dramatic plots deeply show the essence and connotation of the Chinese martial arts culture, and show the most distinctive Chinese martial arts culture to the world.

As early as 1996, Lingnan University in Hong Kong held a symposium on Jin Yong’s works’ translation into English, marking the formal prelude of the theoretical research on the translation of Jin Yong’s martial arts novels. In 1997, a publication of the collected papers *The Question of Reception: Martial Arts Fiction in English Translation*, contains papers presented by Chinese and foreign scholars, such as John Minford who is the translator of the *Royal Tramp* and Lawrence Wong (1997: 105–124). The paper mainly discusses the possibilities, difficulties and strategies of translating martial arts novels into English. Research on the mainland only began in the early twenty-first century, professor Chen Gang published *Domestication Translation and Cultural Identity—a sample study of the Royal Tramp translation* which presents the prelude to the theoretical study of translation of Jin Yong’s novels into English.

After that, mainland scholars began to study the English translation of Jin Yong’s novels from different perspectives, and the author found a total of 20 papers on

CNKI (China National Knowledge Infrastructure). In terms of the range of works studied, only Xiao Qiang's "English Translation of Chinese Martial Novels and its Research Status" (Xiao 2011: 43–45) and "Reader Acceptance Status and Translation Strategies of English Translation of Martial Novels" (Xiao 2011: 62–64) are the only two journals that study the works of some authors, such as Jin Yong, Gu Long and Liang Yusheng, while the remaining 14 articles take Jin Yong's works as the research object, among which 7 articles take *The Flying Fox on Snowy Mountain*, six on *The Legend of the Deer and the Cauldron*, four on *The Book of Swords and Enemies*, and four on translations of two or more books.

The studies cover six main areas: character language, martial arts descriptions, personal nicknames, weapon names, cultural imagery, and translation strategies. The guiding theories used in these studies include semantic and communicative translation, functional translation theory, purpose theory, ideological manipulation theory, etc. In terms of types, there are 2 master's theses, 1 doctoral thesis, and 13 journal articles. Among them, Luo Yongzhou's article "A Study on English Translation of Jin Yong's Novels—Also on Chinese Literature Going Global" compares the translation of martial arts (Kung Fu) terms in the English translation of Jin Yong's novels and the translation strategies (naturalization and dissimilation) adopted by the translators, analyzes the meaning of the word "chivalry" in Jin Yong's novels and its English translation. The author suggests that the going out of Chinese literature must consider the questions of "what to translate" and "how to translate" (Luo 2011: 51–55). The author argues that "in terms of popularity and exemplarity, Jin Yong's novels are well-deserved literary classics and should be an important topic for Chinese to practice translation into foreign languages. From the existing English translations of Jin Yong's works, the choice between naturalization and alienation does not depend on the translator's nationality, but on the translator's judgment of the degree of cultural integration and the reader's realistic acceptance.

Jin Yong's novels contain profound Chinese culture and literary heritage, and literary translation and cultural translation should pave the way for each other and go hand in hand. Fei Yuying's "*Xiaobao's Journey to the West*" studies the westward transmission of traditional Chinese cultural values. By analyzing and studying Professor Minford's English translation of *The Legend of the Luddite*, he analyzes the characteristics of Jin Yong's novels and the translation strategies he adopts. Meanwhile, he also probes into the translation attitudes of names of chapters, characters' names, poetry, and martial arts moves in Minford's English translation from macro and micro perspectives and makes an objective evaluation of his translation work, and taps into its academic reference value within the existing theoretical framework (Fei 2007: 56–61).

Hao Shenglan's "A Study of Chinese Kung Fu Images in Hollywood Films" points out that the Hollywood Chinese "kung fu images" are the best vehicle for us to study the cultural conflict and integration between China and the United States. This is of great value and significance to our study of Chinese cultural identity in western society (Hao 2013: 49). In addition, the study of Chinese "kung fu images" in Hollywood can also summarize the subtle changes in the image of Chinese people in the American cultural context. Most of the studies on the English subtitle translations

of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon, Hero* and *Ten Faces of Ambush* have focused on translation purposivism, functionalism and associationism theories.

4.2.2 A Review of the Translation of the Movie Subtitles of the Grandmaster

Martial films include three major categories, namely, gods and monsters, swords and Kung Fu, and are not limited to Martial films in ancient costumes. Unlike the development and prosperity of martial arts films in Hong Kong and Taiwan in the 1940s, the ban on martial arts literature in the Mainland was lifted in 1980. The first film was “*The Mysterious Buddha*” directed by the mainland director Zhang Huaxun in 1980. The word “martial arts” refers to the combination of “martial arts, martial virtues and chivalry. After 2000, a series of martial arts movies adapted from martial arts novels, led by Ang Lee’s *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, went abroad. Also there emerged many outstanding films, including Zhang Yimou’s *Ambush from Ten Sides, Hero*, Feng Xiaogang’s *The Banquet*, Wang Jiawei’s *The Grandmaster* and Hou Hsiao-hsien’s *Nie Yinniang*.

Among them, “The Grandmaster” depicts the martial arts in Chinese Republican Era, and its characters are derived from real stories of that era, not from fantasy martial arts novels or folk tales. The purpose of the director’s original language is to present the great beauty of the Chinese people in the Republic of China to the greatest extent possible, the beauty of temperament. Unlike “Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon,” “Ambush,” and “Hero,” the story of “The Grandmaster” is not a fictional story of martial arts characters only for seeking revenge, but rather a realistic portrayal of the lives of martial arts masters in the Republican era and their personal choices in the context of history and society.

The film is full of poetic lines everywhere, such as “If you don’t forget, there will be an echo; the bottom of the leaf hides the flower once, the dream treads the snow several times; the rhythm of Chinese lingers between the lines, full of life philosophy and highly concentrated. The translation of this film is too difficult. The translator for us suffers infinite pains. Some martial moves like “the bottom of the leaf hides the flower, the old ape hangs the seal” are not easy to translate. How to translate these culturally loaded words and convey the cultural imagery to the western audiences as much as possible is the direction I want to study.

From CNKI, I searched for six studies on the subtitle translation of “The Grandmaster” in English, namely, “The Subtitle Translation of *The Grandmaster* from the Perspective of Semantic Translation and Communicative Translation” published by Wang Cunying in December 2013, which is included in the Proceedings of Fujian Foreign Language Society’s Shore Translation Symposium. This book dissects the subtitle translation of “The Grandmaster” in detail from the perspective of translation strategies (Wang 2013: 69–73). “Creative Rebellion in the English Translation of Film Subtitles: An Example of Subtitle Translation of *The Grandmaster*” by

Tan Jinwen and Li Hongqing, analyzes the subtitle translation of *The Grandmaster* from the perspective of creative rebellion (Tan and Li 2014: 122–124). Rina Liang’s “English subtitle translation strategy of moves in *The Grandmaster* was published in 2014 (Rina 2014: 156–157). Yang Xiaojing’s “Talking about the English translation of movie subtitles—Taking “The Grandmaster of the Generation” as an example” published in February 2015, both of which are dedicated to analyze the film subtitle from the perspective of translation strategies (Yang 2015: 225).

Tian Yichen and Wu Kejia’s “*Cultural Faxing* in the English Translation of the Subtitles of the Film *The Grandmaste* - Taking the English Translation of Martial Arts Culture in the Film as an Example”, published in March 2015, analyzes the English translation of film subtitles from the perspective of translation strategies (Yang 2015: 225). The translation strategy of martial arts stances is introduced by using the terms “Bagua Palm”, “single palm exchange”, “double palm exchange”, “Shuyi Quan”, and “Held hands” as examples (Tian and Wu 2015: 842). “From “Farewell My Concubine” to “The Grandmaster”—The interview with Linda Jaivin, a film translator”, by Hina Jin, China Media University, March 2015, analyzes the characteristics and style of Linda Jaivin’s 20 years of film translation, discusses her practice and theory of film translation, and gives the author a better understanding of the requirements and limitations of her operation in the process of film subtitle translation, which is useful for understanding her translations (Jin 2013: 65–67).

It can be concluded from the above that the published papers mainly focus on the translation strategies of the English translation of the film subtitles and the understanding and summary of the translator’s translation practice.

4.2.3 A Review of Foreign Studies on Translation of Martial Works

Foreign scholars have studied the translations of martial arts works, such as *The Legend of the Deer and the Cauldron*, mainly by Minford and Olivia Mok. Barbara Koh, a foreign scholar, argues that the English translation of *The Legend of the Lu Ding* will not be successful because, for example, the translation strategy is too complicated for English readers to accept the dozen pages of names, places, and chronology that the translator introduces before the main text. The translation of the martial arts scenes in *The Legend of Lu Ding* is difficult for readers from different cultural backgrounds to intuitively appreciate the connotations of traditional Chinese martial arts culture. There are many martial arts scenes in the translation, and readers of the translation text may become bored with the description of such content (Barbara 1998: 61).

Laurence K. P. Wong argues that novels with martial arts scenes are common in English works. From the readers’ point of view, he believes that the translation of “Kung Fu” and “moves” in the English translation of Jin Yong’s martial arts

works “fighting skill” and “move” are easy to understand, so that readers can understand, grasp, and even practice, which also satisfies the psychological expectations of western readers for Chinese Kung Fu and Kung Fu culture (Wong 1997: 106–115).

In this respect, the translation has taken a successful step forward. He analyzes the translation strategies of the fighting scenes and martial arts moves in the English translation of *The Legend of Lu Ding*, and concludes that Minford restores the original martial arts actions and moves with vivid language, terminology and action vocabulary. Minford’s translation of the original martial arts moves is more faithful. Minford’s translation work takes simple verb phrases as the description of fighting scenes in original text rather than long descriptive sentences, helping readers to have a better understanding of those scenes. In this sense, Minford’s work is more faithful to the original text’s “move”.

Whether these martial arts terms are accepted by the readers of the translation depends on their attitude in overcoming the reading difficulties and obstacles brought about by cultural differences (Wong 1997: 120–123). If they are willing to take the initiative to understand and adapt to the original language and culture, their understanding of the original work can also achieve the effect of “dynamic equivalence” proposed by Nida. Moreover, the similarity between the themes of Chinese Martial novels and the legend of King Arthur in western literature suggests the acceptability of Martial novels to western readers (Tang 2014: 40).

In *The Reception of Kungfu Fiction: Problems of Register, Problems of Culture*, Barry Asker analyzes the problem of acceptability of Chinese Martial novels to western readers from both linguistic and cultural perspectives, taking the English translation of *The Legend of the Deer Cauldron* as an example (Barry 1997: 161–162). He argues that Minford’s translation is flawed, and that the textual specificity of the translation makes it difficult for the translation to be welcomed by western readers.

Olivia Mok, in an article published in the international journal *Target*, explains that the transmission of martial arts culture in the West is hindered by the cultural hegemony of the target language culture over the source language culture (Mok 2001: 81–102).

As a result of the above studies, foreign scholars have mainly explored the acceptability of the English translation of Martial novels to English readers by studying the English translation strategy and analyzing the cultural factors of *The Legend of Lu Ding*. Their evaluations of the translation are mixed. In terms of translation strategies, the English translation of *The Legend of the Deer Cauldron* is successful in that the translators have restored as faithfully and vividly as possible the martial arts style and fighting scenes of the original work. They make the boring martial arts moves appear as approachable as possible in the translation to satisfy the curiosity and expectation of English readers with different English backgrounds about martial arts and martial arts works.

The translation of Wei-Shou-Bou’s foul language in Minford’s translation is adapted in such a way that readers can understand the local Chinese dialect in the original work. The above discussion shows that the translation can be accepted by western readers to a certain extent. However, on the other hand, the image of Chinese

males and national characteristics and national revenge (e.g., opposing the Qing Dynasty and restoring the Ming Dynasty) in the original work are reproduced in the translation, and the cultural aspects of the description are difficult to be accepted and recognized by western readers, which is also the unsuccessful point of the translation.

Martial arts novels are literary works with special value and significance in Chinese culture, rooted in the soil of traditional Chinese culture and loved by Chinese readers. The English translation of Martial works faces great differences between the source language and the translated language. The translator's processing of the cultural information of the original may lead to the lack of cultural information and cultural image in the process of translation of Martial works.

In order to make the translation smoothly accepted by the readers of the translated language, the translator has to coordinate between the author of the original text and the readers of the translated text, and try to make the martial arts works understood and recognized by the foreign readers.

4.3 Cultural Translation Theories and Guiding Significance

4.3.1 *Cultural Translation Theory by Liu Miqing*

Scholar Liu Miqing believes that cultural translation theory should adhere to the translation as the original position and the language as the external position, and study the culture in translation, focusing more on the translation and language culture and its related depiction, which is a sublimation of the traditional Chinese translation culture.

And in terms of content, Liu Miqing believes that cultural translation must be carried out in conjunction with language and meaning, focusing on the cultural features, cultural meanings and cultural interpretations. In terms of specific methodology, Liu Miqing proposes that "precisely reconciling" does not focus on alienation or naturalization, but emphasizes that cultural translation should respect the ethnicity of culture while reflecting its compatibility (Liu 2005: 65).

In the core idea of Chinese translation theory, "dialectical transmission" is mentioned, that is, translation is no longer a simple correspondence in a static sense, but a "functional compensation" in the sense of dynamic communication, that is, adaptation, to achieve "perfect harmony" in all aspects of meaning, culture and aesthetics. In other words, translation is no longer a simple correspondence in a static sense, but a "functional compensation" in a dynamic communicative sense, i.e., an adaptation that achieves "complete reconciliation" in all aspects of meaning, culture and aesthetics.

However, it is worth noting that Liu Miqing's cultural translation theory believes that culture has national characteristics, and when building a cultural translation theory with Chinese characteristics, we should start from our own national culture, learn to take our own cultural characteristics as the starting point, and select the

suitable theory for our use according to our needs (Liu 2005: 89). Therefore, we do not blindly naturalize or alienate in the process of cultural translation, especially the transmission of Chinese culture to the West, but consider it comprehensively according to the needs such as the aesthetics of linguistic meaning.

“Language is ontologically cultural” (Liu 2006: 40). The level of distribution of cultural information progresses from shallow to deep, from material forms, canonical systems, behavioral customs to psychological activities. He proposes four topics on the cultural level: cultural meaning interpretation, cultural interpretation of the text, cultural translation expressionism, and translation and cultural psychological exploration (Liu 2006: 112), so that the dynamism and solubility of the translator and the text are compatible with each other and reach “just the right harmony”.

Liu Miqing points out that in the holistic integration of cultural information, cultural characteristics, cultural imagery or contexts are grasped, and the translator’s cultural awareness and ability to respond to them are strengthened. When translating a text, the translator is not just dealing with an individual word, but with the overall cultural imagery that integrates words, scenes, events, moods, cultural characteristics of the characters and style of writing. Culture is always evolving, so in order to enhance the perception of cultural information, translators can only enhance cultural acquisition.

Liu Miqing suggests that “cultural adaptability” should be incorporated into translation values (Liu 2006: 73), which refers to three aspects:

1. Accurate understanding of cultural meaning
2. Good reader acceptance
3. Contextually appropriate aesthetic judgment.

According to the Outline of Cultural Translation, cultural adaptability should not be a matter of adapting one culture to another culture. Whether it is the culture of the original language or the culture of the translated language, differences between two different cultures are inevitable, so translators inevitably have to face and deal with different cultural differences. Cultural adaptability is one of the criteria to measure the quality of translation of cultural works.

4.3.1.1 Interpretation of the Meaning of Culture

Cultural translation cannot be separated from meaning and form, otherwise it will be interpreted in a different way. The task of cultural translation is not to translate culture, but to translate the meaning that contains or implies this cultural information (Liu 2006: 83). And cultural meaning contains both macro and micro aspects, which can also be said to be cultural translation in broad and narrow senses. Macro-cultural meaning refers to the cultural meaning translation that contains all cultural information, including grammatical meaning. The micro-cultural meaning refers to the linguistic meaning reflected in the level of cultural information, including vocabulary, phrases, segments, style and linguistic and cultural psychology.

Phrases do not necessarily have cultural meaning, but they can produce cultural meaning through language use. “The cultural meaning of a word is not a figurative reference, but a certain idea or concept”. Non-cultural objects can also be given cultural meaning in language use, but of course, this cannot be done without the cultural psychology of the language users, like the most commonly used names of people, places, countries, etc. For example, the “lamp” mentioned in the text of “The Grandmaster” can refer to the existence of the material noun lamp, or to spiritual beliefs. There is a sentence in its original text: “Ye Wen passes innumerable lamps to others”, and “lamp” here means successor.

In the book, the author mentions that “emotion is culturally significant” (Liu 2006: 137), and points out that the emotional factor always accompanies literature and art. The translation texts are not only to convey meaning but also to convey feelings, which is an equally important task for translators and is inseparable. Liu Miqing points out that “translators should treat conveying sentiment as if it were an important a task to convey meaning” (Liu 2006: 138). Imagine that if the translation completely ignores the original author’s feelings, the original meaning will indeed be conveyed, but the text will still be lost in the end.

This shows that when translators make semantic and cultural arguments for words, both emotion and meaning are indispensable. In translation, both emotion and meaning are indispensable.

4.3.1.2 Cultural Interpretation of the Text

The need for cultural interpretation of the text on the basis of semantic interpretation refers to the macro or micro examination of the text, which enables the translator to gain a holistic understanding of the text, and also makes the bilingual text formally compatible, so that the readers of the translated language can get the original effect. In particular, the author mentions that when dealing with metaphors in texts, it is important to first show the semantic meaning under the literal meaning, and to correctly understand and grasp the true relationship between the text and the inner meaning (Liu 2006: 195).

4.3.1.3 Cultural Translation Representation Theory

Cultural translation representation theory is a systematic study of the representation method, which is based on the interpretation of cultural meaning, cultural interpretation of the text and the exploration of the cultural psychology of the text. The expressive theory of cultural translation must adhere to three major principles of cultural translation.

(1) Cultural adaptability principle

That is, the representation of cultural information should be adapted to the cultural reality and development needs of the translated language (Liu 2006: 259).

(2) Scientific principle

The basic requirement of the scientific principle is to “seek truth from facts” (Liu 2006: 263), that is, the scientific nature of cultural expressionism must be based on the transformation of meaning, not on arbitrariness, arbitrariness or blindness, especially not on the interpretation of the text, which is a joke that a donkey’s lips does not match the mouth of a horse. This is the way how the translator adjusts the expressive style of cultural words, sentences and phrases.

(3) Aesthetic principles

Operation essentials:

1. To grasp the characteristics and cultural temperament of the original language text
2. To imitate the structure of the original text and the characteristics of the original text
3. To adapt—especially in both directions—to ensure the adaptability of the original language culture to the translated language culture. In other words, “dynamic imitation of the original language text” means “obtained through formal, structural, and superficial semantic analysis” (Liu 2006: 296).

Since there is a certain degree of similarity between the symbols of two languages, it is feasible to convert the two languages, but the symbols of the two languages are not identical, so there is sometimes a problem of untranslatability. Therefore, it is impractical to require 100% “originality” and translation will inevitably be “lost” (Liu 2006: 296).

4.3.1.4 Translation and Cultural Psychological Exploration

The human psychological process includes human cognition, emotional process and volitional process, and the most prominent expression of emotional process is emotion and sentiment. The category of cultural psychology contains the value system, cultural behavior system and expression system of cultural psychology (Liu 2006: 218–219). The authors believe that the cultural information is scanned, and the words and phrases of the text are analyzed and interpreted at four levels (material form, canonical system, behavioral customs, and psychological activities). The semantic interpretation and contextual analysis are combined with cultural psychological analysis to make semantic decisions.

4.3.2 Theory of Cultural Translation by Eugene Nida

Nida has pointed out that “translation is the reproduction of the message of the original language by the most relevant and natural equivalent in the translated language, from

semantics to problems” (cf Tan 1984: 10). It is thus clear that translation is faced with a series of contradictions between content and form, meaning and style, and reciprocity and homology. Therefore, a set of focus principles is needed to identify what the focus is and which focus of the original should be selectively handled by the translator.

The author mentions that between contextual agreement and word agreement, contextual agreement is the focus; between flexible equivalence and formal correspondence, flexible equivalence is the focus; between oral form and written form, oral form is the focus; between the form of language common and accepted by the audience or reader and the traditionally prestigious form of language, the form common and accepted by the audience and reader is the focus (Tan 1984:12).

Translation from the reader’s point of view poses a question to the translator and the author of the translation as to whether the translation can be understood by the reader”. The criterion for the comprehensibility of a translation is not whether the words in the translation can be understood by the reader or whether the text conforms to the norms, but what kind of response the reader can get from the translation. “Flexible reciprocity” means that the readers of the translated text can obtain similar feelings or reactions as those of the readers of the original text.

However, due to the different cultural and historical backgrounds between the translated and original languages, it is difficult to achieve complete consistency in response, but only basic consistency. The author believes that flexible reciprocity may deviate from the original text in form, and it is not strictly formally accurate, but the translation accuracy of flexible reciprocity is reflected in the fact that the readers of the translated language and the readers of the original language can respond to the received information in a basic way.

Nida believes that content is the conceptual meaning of the message and the connotation that the author wants to convey, while form is the external expression that carries the meaning of the message, and it is the vehicle that conveys the message between the original author of the text and the reader. For any given information content, there are usually multiple forms of expression available.

When translating information content from one language to another, it is important to translate the information content as much as possible and to avoid losing or misrepresenting the information as much as possible, while form is secondary (cf Tan 1984: 83). Paying too much attention to form will lead to a loss of information. Any translation can lose its content, but Nida states that this should be “kept to a minimum” (see Tan 1984: 84). Nida identifies six problems that may arise in the semantic adjustment of information in translation.

- (1) The translation of idioms
- (2) Translation of metaphors
- (3) Translation of generic and specific semantics
- (4) Handling of superfluous words
- (5) Redistribution of semantic components
- (6) Contextual additions.

In idiomatic translation, there are three ways of adjusting semantics: (1) changing idioms into non-idioms; (2) changing idioms into idioms; (3) changing non-idioms into idioms. And there are also three ways of metaphorical translation: (1) changing metaphorical usage to non-metaphorical usage; (2) changing metaphorical usage to metaphorical usage; (3) changing non-metaphorical usage to metaphorical usage.

Which method should be adopted depends, according to the authors, on the requirements of the readers. As for the readers of the translated film, most of the readers speak English as their native language or their main daily language, and they are not familiar with the traditional Chinese cultural background and cultural imagery, especially the martial arts culture, and are limited by the time limit of the subtitle display when watching the film. The audience has to listen to and watch each scene at the same time. The translator has to consider how to make the optimal combination of images and words seen by the readers of the translated text, so that the readers of the translated text can get the same feeling as the readers of the original text.

The author believes that when there is a difference in cultural form and role between the original language and the object referred to in the translation, the translator must provide context in the translation, which can add the necessary information to help the reader of the translation to achieve an accurate understanding of the content of the text, and also points out that cultural inheritance plays an important role in the translation of information, which determines the extent to which the translation can be adjusted to the original text.

In these three cases, the translator needs to process the cultural factors: (1) they may cause the reader to misunderstand; the translation must be expressed in more accurate terms. (2) The original text is meaningless to the reader and can be omitted. (3) The translation is “semantically overloaded” and cannot be understood by the general reader, especially the reader of the translation; the original text needs to be streamlined.

Nida further points out that the translator cannot arbitrarily add explanatory materials to the translation, and that all that can be added to the translation is the “potential information” in the original language, that is, the potential information that needs to be translated in this part of the original language. The translator’s task is to translate the language, not the culture (Nida 2001: 88).

The translator must do his or her best to improve the connotative meaning of the translated message, which is more difficult to determine and translate than the denotative meaning, but it is a matter that must be taken into account; while ensuring that both the content and the connotative meaning of the text are translated, the translator can take into account the form of the message. However, form can never take precedence over content and language (see Tan 1984: 95).

Nida believes that the translator should not only be familiar with the original language and proficient in it, but also have the ability to “empathize” with the original author’s intention, and “*the translator should be satisfied with imitating the original author, but not surpassing him*” (cf Tan 1984, 114). The translator should have the ability to express himself vividly in language and literary imagination, so that the

reader of the translated language can feel as much as possible the meaning, context and literary pleasure of the text that the reader of the original text gets.

The author further mentions that the translator must try to avoid subjectivity, and make every effort to minimize subjective factors that do not conform to the meaning of the author and the original text, and reorganize, analyze and translate the information in the original text.

4.3.3 Summary of Cultural Translation Theories and Introduction to Major Translation Strategies

In the translation theories of Liu Miqing and Nida, they both mention that cultural translation must be carried out in combination with language and meaning, and Nida even puts forward the statement that the meaning of information translation takes precedence over its content and form. Cultural translation cannot be separated from meaning and form, or else it will be interpreted without real understanding. This establishes the focus for cultural translation.

The task of cultural translation is not to translate culture, but to translate the meaning that contains or implies the cultural message. Nida also points out that the translator's task is to translate language, not culture.

Both point out that all translations are lost and this is inevitable in terms of the limits of translatability of cultural translations, and that the requirement to achieve 100% "originality" does not exist (Liu 2006: 296).

Both Liu Miqing's "perfect reconciliation" and Nida's "flexible reciprocity" seek to achieve a similar feeling or response from the reader of the translated text as the reader of the original, and this is the basis on which we judge the appropriateness of cultural translation.

Feeling or reaction is a subjective level of perception, which can hardly be used as an objective judgment standard. Translation is a science. Translation activities are guided by theoretical principles to better ensure the effectiveness of translation communication and achieve translation goals. Therefore, we use the principle of "cultural adaptability" proposed by Liu Miqing as one of the criteria for measuring the quality of translation of cultural works, including the following three aspects.

- (1) Accurate grasp of cultural meaning
- (2) Good reader acceptance
- (3) Aesthetic judgment appropriate to the context.

These three criteria are essentially Nida's requirements for the translation of information. Nida repeatedly mentions the importance of grasping the meaning of cultural connotation, and points out that the criterion for measuring whether a translation can be understood by readers depends on what kind of response the readers of the translation can obtain, that is, good reader acceptance. Finally, the aesthetic judgment of contextualization is similar to Nida's claim that translators should have the

ability to empathize, suggesting that “cultural adaptability” should be and is applicable to measuring the quality of translations of cultural works. In this paper, the principle of cultural appropriateness is used to analyze the translation and to measure the success or failure of the subtitle translation of *The Grandmaster* (Nida 2004: 68). Guided by this principle, the main translation strategies used by the translators to deal with the English translation of culturally loaded words are.

(1) Literal translation

Literal translation is to select the counterpart of the original language in the target language to translate and reproduce the cultural information of the original language. By selecting the discourse medium with similarity in the original language for the transmission of information, it is conducive to the acceptance of the cultural information of the original language by the readers of the translated text. The counterparts of the original and the translated language are not only identical in terms of cultural information, but also in terms of the cultural imagery expressed. The verbal differences in the original language are preserved, and the metaphors, images and national characteristics of the original language are retained (Cui 2010: 13).

(2) Free translation

The free translation method means that the cultural imagery in the original language can hardly find any corresponding expressions and imagery in the translated language, and the direct translation cannot convey the cultural imagery in the original language, and when the direct translation with notes is not feasible due to the time and space constraints of subtitle reading, the translator can only seek the free translation instead of the direct translation. In other words, the linguistic forms and cultural imagery that cannot be found in the original language are eliminated, and the cultural connotation and meaning of the original language are conveyed in the way of linguistic equivalence, which is similar in cultural meaning: however, the cultural imagery of the original language is eliminated, so the loss of cultural imagery of the original language is inevitable.

(3) Omission

There are subjective omission and objective omission. Objective omission means that the cultural images and information are superfluous, i.e., they have no practical meaning. Therefore, it is not necessary for target language readers to know these cultural image and information. The translator’s subjective omission of cultural imagery in the original language is the result of deleting some secondary cultural imagery that does not affect the overall reading effect of the text, and keeping only the necessary cultural information and cultural imagery. This paper only discusses the effect of subjective omission on the cultural imagery of the original language.

(4) Compensation

This is the compensation for cultural omissions made by the translator in order to ensure the coherence of the translated text and make it easy for the readers to understand and accept the development of the translated text, which can be done by

supplementing the omitted textual plot and cultural information in the original text, thus helping the readers to construct the missing cultural images.

(5) Conversion

This refers to changing the perspective of the translation or the cultural imagery of the original language and transplanting it. Some cultural imagery has a strong national culture, and if translated directly, it may cause the readers of the translated language to fail to understand the cultural imagery of the original language or even cause misunderstanding. Therefore, the translator needs to convert the words with strong cultural color in the original language into words with the same cultural color in the translated language, and this kind of translation is mainly used for idioms and metaphorical words (Bai 2000: 54).

(6) Transliteration

There are often cultural gaps in the conversion of texts between two languages, where some cultural imagery in the original text is non-existent in the target language, and there are no similar cultural words to correspond to it. In this case, transliteration can not only faithfully express the information and cultural imagery of the original text and preserve the cultural color of the original text, but also introduce the cultural imagery of the original text into the translated language, adding cultural color to the translated language. For example, when the translator of *The Grandmaster* translates a famous Chinese boxing technique Bagua simply as *Bagua*, a word with traditional Chinese cultural imagery that is not available in western culture, the transliteration can preserve the unique cultural imagery of the original text.

4.4 Cultural Imagery and Culture-Load Words of Martial Arts

4.4.1 Cultural Imagery

The word “imagery” was first used in *Zhou Yi*: “*establishing an imagery to fulfill the meaning*”. In Wang Chong’s *Discourses on the Dragon*, he proposed “*to set up imagery*”. Imagery is a unique category in Chinese culture, and it appeared in classical Chinese philosophy, aesthetics and poetry at a very early stage. If this is not dealt well with in translation, it is easy to cause the loss or distortion of cultural imagery. The object-image sentiment is the meaning. The meaning and the imagery are integrated, showing the dialectical unity of meaning and imagery. The creation of images is the repetition, reorganization, generalization, and exaltation in the mind of the experience (image) of feeling and perception, and finally to the state of art.

Nida (1993) proposes that cultural image is “*a cultural symbol that has a relatively fixed and unique cultural meaning, some of which are rich in meaning and far-reaching associations; when people mention it, they understand it tacitly and are*

good to communication” (Nida 1993: 75). As long as people mention them, they will understand each other without effort and are easy to communicate from the level of thought. Physical Image and Connotation are the two important components of Imagery. The physical image is the carrier of information and meaning, the objective fact that forms the image; the allegory is the derived meaning of the physical image in a certain linguistic and cultural environment. The function of imagery is to “*express abstraction with the concrete, to enlighten the unknown or difficult with the known or easy to know*” in different contexts (Geng 1998: 173).

Cultural imagery must be rooted in its specific socio-cultural environment and cannot exist apart from the cultural background and cultural environment, just as there are no two identical leaves in the world, the cultural imagery of each nation is also different. The greater the space distance, the greater the difference in language and cultural background. The cultural difference between two ethnic cultures is inevitable, and must be greater than that of countries and nations with similar language and cultural background. For example, the similarity between the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of the United Kingdom and the United States is much higher than that of China and the United States; that is, the cultural differences between China and the United States are much greater than those between the United Kingdom and the United States.

Cultural default is the process of communication in which both parties consciously omit something unspoken or agreed upon in the context of common linguistic knowledge, thus improving the efficiency of communication and helping the imagination of the reader of the language of origin to establish specific cultural imagery. This is very common in Chinese expressions, especially in metaphors, idioms and proverbs, and double entendres. A line in *The Grandmaster* “*flowers hidden beneath leaves*” is a pun, which not only refers to the trick of hiding flowers under leaves, but also uses leaves to accentuate Gong Ruomei, the flower. If it is simply translated as “flower under leaf”, it implies that the flower is under the leaf and the flower is not as good as the leaf, but in essence, when the meeting is held in the Golden House, Gong Ruomei defeats Ye Wen. This line does not use the method of literal translation but uses free translation which helps lead to the beauty and meaning in the original language.

In the process of transmission, the text containing specific cultural images is subject to the translator’s understanding of cultural words in the source text. If the translator’s understanding of the cultural words in the source language is not accurate, then the translated text presented to the readers of the translated language after processing by the translator will deviate from the original text, resulting in the lack of cultural imagery. Chinese characters are about “meaning”, not just shape. Chinese characters themselves are developed from pictographs, which derive various meanings from the appearance of an object, so the specific meaning of the object and the connection between the object and the meaning should not be neglected in the process of information translation.

4.4.2 *Culture-Loaded Words*

According to Edward Burnett Tylor, a British scholar, culture is a complex of knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs, and the abilities and habits that people acquire from society (see Katan 2004: 16). Alfred Louis Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn, American scholars, point out that “Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit of and for behaviour acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiment in artefacts.” (Kroeber 1963: 436). “*Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society*” (Katan 2004: 25). Culture is defined as “the totality of beliefs and practices of a society” by Nida (2001: 78). From the above, it is clear that culture in a broad sense refers to the sum of material and spiritual wealth created during the development of human society. The spiritual wealth includes religion, beliefs, customs, moral sentiments, academic thought, literature and art, and is the invisible culture.

Language and culture are inseparable, and Juri Lotman argues that “*No language can exist unless it is steeped in the context of culture; and no culture can exist which does not have at its center, the structure of natural language*” (cf Bessnett 2004: 23). This paper argues that culturally loaded words are those words in a language system that best reflect the cultural information carried by the language and reflect human social life. In contrast, translation is a communication between two languages and cultures, and familiarity with two cultures is more important than familiarity with two languages (Nida 1993: 109).

4.4.3 *Culture-Loaded Words of the Grandmaster and Classification*

Scholar Liu Miqing points out that the distribution levels of cultural information range from material forms, canonical systems, behavioral customs to psychological activities, from superficial to deep and progressive. Nida divided the cultural factors in language into five categories, and Newmark reclassified them, including ecological culture, material culture, social culture, religious culture and linguistic culture. According to the content of the original text and the research direction of this paper, the author classifies the culture-loaded words of *The Grandmaster* into four categories: material culture-loaded words, social life culture-loaded words, historical allusion culture-loaded words, classical philosophy and religious culture-loaded words.

The material culture-loaded words mainly refer to the material products unique to different cultures, which are the carriers of culture, including unique food, cloth, etc., in its culture. For example, Chinese terracotta warriors, tulou, Chinese costume, cheongsam, and Zhongshan dress are all considered material culture load words.

Social life culture-loaded word includes various aspects of people's life, including local customs, social rules, moral codes, traditions, historical backgrounds, ideology, way of address, etc., such as the Lantern Festival and Dragon Boat Festival. Folk wedding and funeral are social customs. They belong to the social culture load word.

The culture-loaded words of historical allusions mainly refer to the words related to historical allusions, and also include idioms, proverbs, four-character idioms, hiccups, poems and songs, and other words with strong Chinese language and culture.

Classical philosophical and religious culture-loaded words contain Chinese religious culture and philosophical thoughts, the former of which include Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism, while philosophical thoughts include Laozhuang thought, Confucianism, Legalism, Mohism and so on.

Although the language structure varies from nation to nation, and the structural form and narrative style as well as the style may change, the laws of thinking are the same (Liu 2005: 112). The similarity of the laws of thinking indicates translatability for the translation to convey different cultural information and cultural imagery.

4.5 Cultural Default and the Transmission of Traditional Cultural Imagery in Subtitle Translation

4.5.1 Analysis of Culture-Loaded Words and Cultural Imagery Translation of the Grandmaster

The story of *The Grandmaster* is based on the background of the Republic of China martial arts, portraying the story of Gong Yutian, a northern martial artist, who went south to Guangdong to compete and spar with local martial artists with the wish of spreading the southern fist to the north during the Chinese Republican Era until the anti-Japanese period. The background of the story continues to the period of the Northern Expedition and the anti-Japanese period, telling the story of Ye wen, Gong Er and Yixian Tian's life interactions in a remote land (Hong Kong), and the impact on future generations of martial arts.

Wong Kar-wai once said that the masters here do not refer to a single one. They are all very profound in martial arts, but their lives are different, portraying the beauty of the entire martial arts in the Chinese Republican Era. The lines in the film are poetic and philosophical, and belong to a constant text. We take the translation of Linda Jaivin, the translator of this film, as an example to analyze its translation characteristics and translation thinking, translation strategies and translation methods.

The Grandmaster is a martial arts film of the Chinese Republican Era, depicting the martial arts world of the three grandmasters and other characters around them. In 2013, the film won numerous national and international awards upon its release and was named one of the top ten best films of the year by Time magazine. The English translation of the film *The Grandmaster* is examined through the lens of

cultural translation theory to provide certain implications for the English translation of Chinese martial arts films and further enrich the study of translation. This thesis analyzes the translation of the cultural load words of the original text from four aspects: material culture, social life culture, historical culture and religious and philosophical thoughts.

4.5.1.1 Translation of Material Culture-Loaded Words

Material culture refers to the material products created to meet the needs of human survival and development and the culture expressed by them, including food, clothing, architecture, production tools, etc. The discussion of material culture in this paper mainly refers to kung fu and the material expression of Kung Fu culture. The rich martial arts cultural imagery in *The Grandmaster* can be divided into the external forms of martial arts, that is, martial arts kung fu, moves.

1. Literal translation

Literal translation is completely faithful to the original text from language content to form.

(1) Source Text:

三姐: 单换掌是单刀

双换掌是双刀

Target Text:

Third Elder Sister: Single reverse palm is a single blade.

Double reverse palm is a double blade.

The translator uses the direct translation of “Single reverse palm” and “Double reverse palm”, and introduces the Kungfu words in the original text directly into the translation, which not only retains the cultural vocabulary of the original text, but also enriches the cultural color of kungfu in the translation.

2. Free translation

(2) Source Text:

所谓脱枪为拳

灯叔: 咏春听桥?好功夫

Target Text:

It uses the fist as a spear.

Uncle Deng: Such sensitivity - impressive!

In the part “It uses the fist as...”, the word “off” here means “from”. If the translator directly translated it as “come out of”, it is easy to make the target language readers misunderstand the meaning. It is also too cumbersome, which is not as simple as the translator’s manipulation.

The translator directly replaces the word “sensitivity” with the word “listen to the bridge”, which means “sensitivity, perceptiveness”, matching the action of “listening” on the screen. The action of “listening” tells the audience that Ip Man’s ear is good at “listening”, but the omission of “Wing Chun listening to the bridge” in the original text also causes the loss of cultural imagery.

(3) Source Text:

叶问: 小念头

寻桥

还有标指

Target Text:

Ye Wen: The Concept,

The Bridge,

and Darting Fingers.

Comparing (2) and (3), we can see that the translator adopts the method of free translation for martial arts concept terms, taking the “meaning and image” of the original text as the first priority, searching for the most suitable words in English to convey the meaning and image of the original language, and paying attention to the reading experience of the target language readers. In example (3), the words “small idea, bridge, and finger” are translated as “concept, bridge, and fingers”, but they are better understood by the target language readers. The concept of Kung Fu in the original is transformed into an epithet familiar to the readers of the translated language, but the cultural imagery of the original is lost in the transformation.

(4) Source Text:

叶问: 我知道宫家卧虎藏龙

Target Text:

Ye Wen: I know how much talent is there.

Crouching tiger and hidden dragon also refers to the the hidden talent. If the translator uses crouching tiger and hidden dragon, it will easily remind the reader of the film *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* by Ang Lee, which may make the target language reader misunderstand what the connection between the plots of the two films is. In fact, the stories of the two films are different. The translator uses “much talent” to summarize its meaning, which, although it may lose the elegance of the

original text and the cultural imagery of the source language, conveys the content and meaning of the original text as much as possible.

(5) Source Text:

马三: 是武林的一句老话

意思是能人背后有能人

凡事让人三分

Target Text:

Ma San: show respect

There's always someone better.

To yield is not to lose.

The term “martial arts” is used here to refer to all schools of martial arts. The translation of “is an old saying in the martial arts” as “show respect” is concise and clear, but it also omits the cultural image of the original word “martial arts”.

3. Omission

(6) Source Text:

宫羽田: 老猿挂印回首望

Target Text:

Gong Yutian: It's looking back in reflection.

It's looking back in reflection. “The old ape hangs its seal and looks back” is called “monkey hangs its seal”, but it is actually a pose of looking back. So this move is translated as “It's looking back in reflection.”, which means “It's looking back”, pointing out the meaning that the movement is looking back, omitting the “old ape hangs its seal”. The reader of the translation grasps the core connotation of the original sentence, but the translator adopts the semantic partial omission method, resulting in the absence of the cultural imagery of the original text “the old ape hanging its seal” in the translation.

(7) Source Text:

账房先生: 一手叶里藏花, 更是防不胜防

Target Text:

Mr. Accountant: Her moves are deadly.

The word “move” is used here, which is concise but lacks the rhythm of “hand” and “hiding flowers in leaves” in Chinese. The vivid and imaginative expression of the original text is lost in the conversion of the word move, and the cultural imagery of the original text is lost. The bottom of the leaf hides the flower, said the leaf (Ye Wen). In fact, to accentuate the bottom of the hidden flower and to convey the meaning that the leaf makes the flower more noticeable.

(8) Source Text:

叶问: 我这个人喝惯了珠江水
 这日本的米
 我吃不惯
 真揭不开锅, 我还有朋友

Target Text:

Ye Wen: I'd rather starve
 than eat Japanese rice.
 I won't collaborate.
 I have plenty of friends.

The Pearl River water and *Japanese rice* here figuratively show that Ye Wen would rather starve than compromise with the invaders and their spokesmen. He is used to drinking Pearl River water means that he only recognizes himself as a Chinese from the beginning to the end who always drinks the Pearl River water, and is not used to eating Japanese rice, and will definitely not eat the same pot of rice with the invaders and traitors. "I have plenty of friends; I still have friends", expressing Ip Man's unwillingness to compromise with the Japanese invaders. If the Pearl River water is directly translated as "Pearl River water", it is a bit abrupt for the target language readers to understand. As Linda Jaivin said, "Sometimes, translators have to translate subtle lines more nakedly". For example, "I'm not used to eating" is directly translated as "I won't collaborate". It may lose the rhetorical flavor of the original, but at least it is more concise and clear, because "it is a message that the translator has attached to the author".

4. Conversion

(9) Source Text:

福星: 奉了道
 你这一辈子就不能嫁人
 不能传艺, 更不能有后

Target Text:

Fu Xing: If you take those vows,
 you'll never be able to marry
 teach, or have children.

The film's screenwriter Xu Haofeng explains that Gong Er's path is called "the way of solitude", which is the tradition of Eastern martial artists. Gong Er is dedicated to the Way of Dokkyo, showing his determination to protect the martial arts of the Gong family. The translator cleverly uses "take vow" to express the perception of "vow and wish" which is common to both Eastern and Western cultures, so that the target language readers can fully perceive the content and meaning of the original author on the basis of language acceptability.

(10) Source Text:

宫羽田: 它是一片英雄地

Target Text:

Gong Yutian: it was a battleground.

“It was a battleground, a place where heroes gathered”. In the original text, the Golden Building was not only a place for the entertainment of dignitaries, but also a place where these martial arts peers regularly met and planned important events. It means that the martial arts masters who gather here are also heroes. Here, we do not use a word like hero, but the image of hero in the movie picture is very strong, so that the target language readers can understand at first glance.

(11) Source Text:

宫羽田: 一般人看金楼是个销魂处

Target Text:

Gong Yutian: People saw it as a pleasure palace.

There are emotional people in the “金楼”. People see it as a place of ecstasy. The word “销魂” comes from the poem of Yuan Haowen. “莫道黯然销魂处, 平常人看金楼是销魂处”, which is often used to refer to the dissipation of the soul for something or someone. The translator uses “a pleasure palace” to indicate the golden building. Therefore, the golden building is likened to a palace, and the substitution here is for the convenience of the western audience, so that it is easier for the target language readers to read.

5. Transliteration

(12) Source Text:

三姐: 八卦掌取法于刀术
你们咏春就三板斧

Target Text:

Third Elder Sister: Bagua is based on swordplay.
Your Wing Chun is a three-trick pony.

“Bagua Palm” and “Wing Chun” are both martial arts terms, referring to Kung Fu boxing moves. The translator uses phonetic translation to express Bagua Palm and Wing Chun in order to reduce the reading burden of the readers of the translated language, retaining the original Kung Fu cultural imagery and satisfying the readers of the translated language’s curiosity about Kung Fu and Kung Fu culture.

(13) Source Text:

叶问: 分定寸?洪拳啊

Target Text:

Ye Wen: That move, isn’t that Hung Gar?

“分定寸、洪拳” used different translation strategies. The former directly uses “that move” to refer to it, while the latter adopts a phonetic translation. As Linda

Jaivin, the translator, once said, “I tend to make Chinese easy to understand. If the word sounds good in Chinese, there is no need for it to appear in a twisted way in English” (see Jin 2013: 66–67.) Therefore, the author has made a reduction of the information here, as “Fen Ding Cun” is only one kind of Hung Gar stance. The translator’s use of the existing counterparts in the translated language can easily resonate with the target language readers.

To the target language readers, the word “fractional inch” is subsidiary to “Hong Quan” and is a secondary information, so even if its specific name is omitted, it does not affect the development of the storyline in the translated language. The author uses “that move” to achieve the connection between text and image, simplifying the translation to make it easier for the target language readers to follow the plot.

6. Compensation

(14) Source Text:

马三: 入庙拜佛, 得先进山门
要见真佛
得先过我马三

Target Text:

Ma San: To worship at the feet of the Buddha
first pass the Guardian of the Gate.
That’s me.

Since Christianity is prevalent in western societies, there are many churches in and few Buddhist temples in the west. Western audiences may lack the cultural background and linguistic context of “entering the temple to worship the Buddha” in Buddhism. The translator adopts a compensatory method to preserve the integrity of the cultural imagery of the original text. The original text uses “Ma San” as a metaphor for “the gate” and “Miyabata” as “the true Buddha”, so the author compensates the translation as “the Guardian of the Gate” and “worship at the feet of the Buddha”, which is convenient for the target language readers to obtain a coherent understanding and is a compensation for the cultural imagery of the original text.

(15) Source Text:

宫羽田: 咱们宫家的门槛高
但是不出小人

Target Text:

Gong Yutian: Our high standards in martial arts
apply to character as well.

The threshold originally refers to the horizontal bar at the lower end of the door frame or the knack of doing things. Here it is used as a metaphor for standards and requirements. The original text refers to the high threshold of the Miyagi family—high in martial arts but also high in character. The translator uses the compensatory method to convey the cultural message of the original text, which is more direct and clear, but the cultural imagery of the original text is missing instead.

4.5.1.2 Translation of Social Life and Culture-Loaded Words (Behavioral Customs, Rules of the Martial Arts, Decency, Martial Appellation Culture)

1. Literal translation

(16) Source Text:

灯叔: 武行四大忌

和尚、道士、女人、小孩

Target Text:

Uncle Deng: The Martial World has four taboos:
monks, Taoist priests, women and children.

Jin Yong and Gu Long's novels have countless characters in these four categories, such as the Yi Deng Master, Shaolin monk, Wudang Zhang Sanfeng, the ancient tomb school Li Mo Chou, and the free school Tianshan Tong Lou, so people should not underestimate them. The translator directly translates the original text, retaining the content related to Kung Fu culture in the original text, and conveying the original meaning of the "four taboos of the martial arts" to the audience, preserving the cultural flavor of traditional Chinese Kung Fu and martial arts cultural imagery.

(17) Source Text:

丁连山: 唉, 人呀, 此一时彼一时

过什么河, 脱什么鞋

有多大屁股就穿多大裤衩

Target Text:

Ding Lianshan: People - they change with the times.

Wear shoes that suit the crossing,
and underpants that fit your ass.

The phrases "here and there", "what river to cross, what shoes to take off" and "how big your ass is, how big your underpants are" are all idioms. The original language is simple and easy to understand. The translator uses direct translation to convey the information and cultural imagery of the original language.

2. Free translation

(18) Source Text:

马三: 宫家的东西至金至贵

要取

必须得是宫家的人

你是许了亲的人

没资格

Target Text:

Ma San: His precious teachings are mine now.

You want them -
 send a member of the family.
 You'll be marrying out.
 You don't count.

These lines show that martial arts schools also pay attention to the traditional feudal three principles, that is, father, son, son, king, minister, and married daughters do not count as people of the Gong family. Ma San said that people who have promised to marry are not eligible to take things from the Gong family. In traditional Chinese culture, a promised marriage is a person who has married out and is no longer a member of the original family. The translator, Linda Jaivin, uses the word “merry out” instead of “marry” in order to let the readers fully understand the meaning of this sentence, which conveys the cultural message and cultural imagery of the original text. This is conducive to the understanding of the plot by the target language readers.

(19) Source Text:

福星: 他说我煞气重, 能压邪
 后来还给我改名叫福星
 他是希望二小姐, 永远都有福星相随

Target Text:

Fu Xing: My fierceness would protect her.
 He nicknamed me Lucky Star,
 so fortune would shine on her always.

When Chinese people name their daughters, they want a good name with good fortune. By using “福星”, Gong Baosen wants his daughter to always have a lucky star. In traditional Chinese culture, the “lucky star” is a deity of Han Chinese folk beliefs, symbolizing a person or object that brings happiness and hope, and is known as the “god of fortune, prosperity and longevity” along with the star of Lu and Shou. In English language, it has the phrase “lucky dog/ number/day”, according to which the translator can accept “lucky star”, which conveys the meaning of the original, but also ignores the cultural imagery of the original.

(20) Source Text:

宫羽田: 言必称三, 手必成圈

Target Text:

Gong Yutian: Never put yourself first,

The phrase “言必称三” is a kind of modest expression in traditional Chinese titles. Swallow Li San (燕子李三), who refers to himself as San, in order to respect other capable people and to show that ‘there are more capable people other than himself’. Here, three is a kind of general semantics. The inner meaning of “words will be called three, hands will be circled” is that martial arts practitioners should be modest instead of being arrogant. In this sense, the translator omits “three”, using “Never put yourself first”. The translation method expresses the original content but also leads to the lack of cultural imagery in the original text.

(21) Source Text:

旁白: 大路通天, 各走一边

Target Text:

Narratage: Keep to the side.

The phrase “the road leads to the sky, each one goes to the side” indicates that each one goes his own way and does not interfere with others. In western society, it is difficult to find the corresponding linguistic symbols, and is not easy to make the target language readers better understand, so the translator uses “Keep to the side”.

The translator adopted the literal translation method to convey the content of the original text in a way that the cultural imagery of the original text is missing.

3. Transliteration

(22) Source Text:

宫二: 老姜呢?

姜叔在里面陪着他们

Target Text:

Gong Er: And Jiang?

He's keeping them company.

The transliteration of “姜叔” is the name for the elders, which is translated as Jiang, keeping the surname of Lao Jiang, simplifying the identity of the original “Lao Jiang” and “Uncle Jiang”. The translation of the Chinese socio-linguistic symbols can be easily understood by the readers of the translation.

4. Omission

(23) Source Text:

福星: 听说您回来

东北的同门同道都到了

三爷、五爷也从关里赶了过来

Target Text:

Fu Xing: The whole clan

heard you were coming

and raced in from all over.

The words “third master” and “fifth master” represent the elders with high seniority. The words “third” and “fifth” refer to the third and fifth in line. The translation omits them and only retains the word “clan” in the previous sentence to express “the same family and the same way”, omitting the cultural information in the original text.

5. Conversion

(24) Source Text:

三爷五爷: 师妹要杀师兄

二姑娘, 你可来了

Target Text:

Third Grandpa and Fifth Grandpa: and the daughter kills her brother-in-arms?

Miss Gong, it's good you're here.

师兄” is translated as “brother-in-arms”. In the original text, brother refers to the elder people of the same discipline. The word “brother-in-arms” has the meaning of a comrade in arms. Although there is a common battle, it does not reflect the seniority of the two sides. The cultural imagery of the original text has been changed in the translation.

The translation of “second girl” as “Miss Gong” means “Gong Ruomei is the second in line”. “Girl” is used to address an unmarried woman (Huiyu 2004: 573). “Miss Gong” expresses such a meaning and omits the ranking of Gong Er, which is good for the target language readers to accept the information of Gong Er’s identity. However, the cultural information and imagery of the “second girl” is missing in the translation, which is not conducive to the transmission of cultural imagery in the original language.

(25) Source Text:

众人: 西方正路

诸神引领啊...

Target Text:

Everybody: Oh ye gods and spirits

guide this soul to Paradise!

Chinese society mainly believes in Buddhism and Taoism, while the West is dominated by Christianity, and the gods referred to by different religions are different. Here, the translator uses “gods and spirits” and “paradise” in Christianity to take place of the “Right god in the west” and “all immortals” in China. Although this is good for the target language readers to understand and accept, the cultural imagery of the original text has been transformed in the translation.

(26) Source Text:

福星: 女人

断发就是断头

为了给老爷报仇

她断了发、奉了道、不婚嫁、不传艺

这是她发愿前

剪下自己的头发烧成的灰儿

Target Text:

Fu Xing: For a woman,

taking vows is a kind of death.

To avenge her father,

she vowed never to marry or teach,
 These are the ashes
 from when she cut and burnt her hair.

Hair is also called green silk. In the chapter of “filial piety - the beginning of filial piety”, there is a line of “body hair and skin, received by the parents, do not dare to destroy, the beginning of filial piety also”. The allusion to “cut the will to sleep on pay and taste gall” said that Gou Jian in order to revenge, cut off his own hair to clear the will.

In order to show her determination to follow the Way, Gong Er cut off her hair and burnt it into ashes and sealed it in a box, and made a vow in front of the Buddha to show her determination. The translator uses flexible equivalence instead of literally direct translation, such as “cutting hair is a kind of death”, because there is no such thing as cutting hair is a kind of death in western society. The author’s treatment of “taking vows is a kind of death” converts the cultural imagery of the original text.

(27) Source Text:

宫二: 可是跟我爹磕过头盟过誓
 折过鞋底子的兄弟

Target Text:

Gong Er: he treated you
 all like brothers.

The word “kowtowed” and “vowed” refer to a kind of worshipping ceremony in Chinese society, which indicates that people who do not know each other unite through such a ceremony as brothers and sisters. This is a term unique to Eastern culture. Western societies do not have a similar cultural background and language context for such a worshipping, so it is difficult to find similar English language symbols to describe it. Therefore, when the translator deals with the cultural information here, the overloaded words with cultural default nature are omitted and only the word “brother” is retained. This is easy for the target language readers to understand and keep in line with the connotation of the original text.

6. Compensation

(28) Source Text:

丁连山: 我们都老了
 你一辈子的名声不容易
 跟晚辈抡拳头挥胳膊的事就别干了

Target Text:

Ding Lianshan: We’re getting old.
 Don’t risk your reputation.
 Ip is more than he appears to be.

“Don’t do anything about waving your fist and arms with the younger generation” is Ding Lianshan’s warning to Gong Baosen. It means one should not get involved

with the younger generation, but cherish fame. The translation “Ip is more than he appears to be” means “Ip is more capable than we think”. Here the author uses semantic compensation to supplement the cultural information of the original text.

4.5.1.3 Translation of Historical Culture-Loaded Words

1. Omission

(29) Source Text:

三爷五爷: 这不是一窝子不仁不义的畜生吗?

Target Text:

Third Grandpa and Fifth Grandpa: A pack of wild animals?

“不仁不义” refers to people who do not talk about benevolence and morality and have a despicable character. From Zhu Xi of the Song Dynasty, “Zhu Zi Yushu - University III”: “Harming people and wearing holes in the wall, because they are not benevolent and unrighteous.” It is a four-character idiom, but the author directly omits this idiom in the translation but uses “A pack of wild animals” in the translated version. The target language readers can understand the connotation of the original text, but the cultural image of the idiom “inhumane and unjust” is omitted in the translation.

(30) Source Text:

宫二: 人生如棋落子无悔
我们之间本来就沒恩怨

Target Text:

Gong Er: In life, as in chess,
a move once made stays on the board.

In one of the phrases “there would have been no enmity between us”, “enmity”, means human relations in Chinese society, and is explained in the Modern Chinese Dictionary as “favor and hatred”, and the equivalence in English are “grace/favour and resentment”. However, there is no independent English word in the target language that can fully correspond to the connotation of “grace and resentment”. This expression will easily lead the target language readers to ask “what does Gong Er mean by grace and what does he mean by resentment?” It is difficult for the readers of the translation to understand the connotation of the original words, but the omission method also omits the cultural imagery of the original.

(31) Source Text:

宫二: 人不辞路, 虎不辞山
这些年, 咱们都是他乡之人

Target Text:

Gong Er: a tiger never quits the mountain.
We’ve both been living on foreign soil.

This is from the article *The Former Residence of Ye Shenglan* in Xiao Fuxing's book *Blues: Memories of Old Peking*. The translation here omits "people never cease the road" for brevity, and only says "a tiger never quits the mountain". If we translate it word by word as "People never cease the road, as a tiger never quits the mountain.", it will be too long for the movie subtitles and redundant for the readers. The translator uses the semantic omission method to omit the content of the original text and the corresponding cultural imagery.

(32) Source Text:

宫二: 丝不如竹, 竹不如肉

Target Text:

Gong Er: no instrument is as lovely as a voice.

In *A New Account of Tales of the World*, a book from China's Wei and Jin dynasties, there is the saying "*silk is not as good as bamboo and bamboo is not as good as meat*".

The words "no instrument" are used here to cover both silk and bamboo. Here the semantic omission method is used. If the translation is as long as "for voice, no stringed or bamboo instrument can be better.", it would be out of place for the movie subtitles, but it also omits the cultural imagery of the original words.

(33) Source Text:

叶问: 郎心自有一双脚, 隔江隔海会归来

Target Text:

Ye Wen: My heart will carry me back to you.

The original text means that my heart cannot let go of my attachment to my wife and family. No matter how far apart they are, my footsteps will definitely go to my home and I will come back. The translation converts the phrase "my heart has a pair of feet" into a single phrase "my heart", and the phrase "has a pair of feet" is completely omitted. "This is also an omission of the cultural imagery of the original text.

2. Free translation

See in example (29): "Animal" refers to a vile or bestial person, and also refers to a domesticated animal. The translator uses "wild animals" instead of "beast" to express the cultural information and cultural imagery of the original language, which is in line with the free translation method.

(34) Source Text:

三爷五爷: 欺师灭祖

Target Text:

Third and Fifth Grandpa: to betray one's teacher.

It is a four-character idiom with a dynamic-object structure, which refers to bullying one's master and betraying one's ancestors, and describes betraying the

original teacher-group system. “Teacher” and “group” are in a parallel relationship. “Bullying” and “destroying” are verbs. When combined with the original text, it means “Ma San killed his master”. The translator expresses its connotation in the information translation, but the cultural image of this idiom is missing in the translation.

(35) Source Text:

马三: 兵无常势, 水无常形

Target Text:

Ma San: A warrior molds himself to the times.

The “兵无常势, 水无常形” is from “The Art of War by Sun Tzu: Imaginary and Reality”. The meaning of this idiom is that the flow of water varies according to the height of the terrain, so a warrior should adopt the appropriate strategy according to the actual situation. The translator uses the phrase A warrior molds himself to the times to indicate that the warrior is good at keeping up with the times and seizing the opportunity. Literal translation of cultural words often fails to convey their connotations, but leads to confusion among the target language readers. The translator’s expression conveys the cultural meaning of the original language on the one hand, but the cultural imagery conveyed by “soldier” and “water” in the original language is missing in the translation.

(36) Source Text:

宫二: 千古无同局

Target Text:

Gong Er: It went your way this time.

“千古无同局” is an idiom in Go-chess game and means there is no identical game from ancient times to the present. There are 361 intersections in the nineteen paths of Go. Even if one of the pieces is different, it will have an effect on the whole game.

The translation of “*It went your way this time*” is “*This time you are right*”. The original meaning of “*The situation can’t be the same*” is not the same as the one about the same game. The translator’s use of the paraphrase “*It went your way this time*” makes it easier for the reader to understand the translation, and gives the reader an account of the missing information in the original text through the paraphrase, while also causing the loss of cultural imagery in the original text.

(37) Source Text:

宫羽田: 但凡一个人见不得人好

见不得人高明

是没有容人之心

Target Text:

Gong Yutian: Not to see the good in others,

not to admit their talent,

is to lack generosity.

“容人之心” is from “Zuo Zhuan”. A gentleman has the capacity to accommodate others, while a villain has the heart of jealousy. It is often used to refer to the tolerance of others. The translation “lack generosity” refers to “lack of inclusiveness for others”, which is an acceptable treatment for the target language readers. It is more appropriate than the direct translation “a heart with no tolerance”, but it does not convey the cultural imagery of the original words.

(38) Source Text:

叶问: 因为她说出口有时会伤人
两夫妻, 要无声胜有声

Target Text:

Ye Wen: because she knew their power.
We understood each other well.

The original poem is based on the poem *Pipa Xing* (琵琶行) by Bai Juyi, which describes when the sound of a pipa that a woman is playing fades away, the player's feelings of sorrow and hatred become stronger. The original poem uses the phrase “no sound is the best sound” to contrast this emotional expression. The example here refers to “a couple can get along with each other without many words”. Here, “We understand each other well” has lost the artistic conception of “sound”. “Silence” wins “sound” in the original sentence, resulting in the absence of cultural images.

(39) Source Text:

账房先生: 一手叶里藏花, 更是防不胜防

Target Text:

Mr. Accountant: Her moves are deadly.

“防不胜防” refers to “difficult to prevent”, while “deadly” emphasizes “fatal, lethal”. The two words do not convey the same meaning. However, the translator's treatment is very concise to ensure that the readers of the translation can accept the connotation of the original language, but the cultural imagery of the original words is missing in the translation.

(40) Source Text:

宫二: (一约既订, 万山无阻)

Target Text:

Gong Er: Deal is made, nothing will stop us.

The original text is rich in number words, such as “one”, “ten thousand” and “nothing”. These are all turned into abstract meanings in the translated version, leaving only “A deal has been made, nothing will stop us”, which reads concisely and clearly.

(41) Source Text:

宫二: 可你们却反过了头
拿了他的话到我这儿来说三道四

Target Text:

Gong Er: Instead you come here
as his messenger.

The translator uses the conversion method to cleverly translate the Chinese phrase “*took his words and came to me to talk about three things*” into the English word “messenger”, which also causes the loss of cultural images in the translation of the original text. The only thing left in the translation is “*A deal is made, and nothing can stop us*”. If the numerals of the original text are kept in the translation language, the structure is symmetrical and the meaning is not lost. My humble opinion is that if it is literally translated into “*A deal is made, even thousands of mountains can’t stop us*”, it is not as concise as the translator’s version, but is more cumbersome, which also leads to the loss of cultural image of the original sentences in the translation.

3. Conversion

(42) Source Text:

宫羽田: 风尘之中, 必有性情中人
其中不少是藏身不露的高手

Target Text:

Gong Yutian: Good men can be found among rogues.
And hidden masters too.

Good men are people who express their true inner nature. The translator uses “good men” to express this. “There must be people with good feelings in the dust” is used to express “风尘之中, 必有性情中人”. The word “dust” is replaced by “rogues” by Linda Jaivin, which is better than the direct translation of “palace/pavilion”, because the target language readers can understand the semantic meaning by comparing “good men” and “rogues”, but the cultural imagery of the original text is not revealed. In other words, the cultural images of the original text are lost in the omission of “风尘” and “性情中人”.

(43) Source Text:

叶问: 勉强求全等于固步自封

Target Text:

Ye Wen: It holds you back.

It refers to someone who learned to walk in Handan in the past, but did not learn the local posture and footwork, and forgot his original footwork, so he had to creep back. Here it holds you back to emphasize the regression. It holds true that you have not learned the advantages of others, and you have lost your own strengths. For film subtitles, simplicity and evocativeness are the first priority, so the translator’s treatment is more concise than the direct translation of “Be complacent and conservative” in the New Century English-Chinese Dictionary (Huiyu 2004:581).

“Holds you back” means to block you/hinder you. Here, the message of “obstacle” is presented; however, they do not embody the meaning of striving for perfection.

When striving for perfection they become complacent, and their cultural images are missing because of the translator's omission and transformation.

(44) Source Text:

宫羽田: 你的脾气啊就是爹年轻的时候

(同上): 眼睛里只有胜负

(同上): 没有人情世故

(同上): 人要往远看

(同上): 过了山

(同上): 眼界就开阔了

Target Text:

Gong Yutian: I once had a temper like yours:

Gong Yutian: winning was everything.

Gong Yutian: But life's bigger than that.

Gong Yutian: Take a longer view.

Gong Yutian: Past the mountains

Gong Yutian: the world opens up.

“人情世故” come from a poem by Wen Tianxiang's in the Song Dynasty, which refers to the methods and skills of behaving in the world. It is a unique linguistic symbol of the Eastern society, different from the Western society and culture. Eastern people generally talk about human feelings and kinship, and everyone's social relationship is a net, in which all people are involved.

In the absence of the corresponding cultural background and soil, the translator adopts an abstract way to express “*but life's bigger than that*”, leaving the explanation to the following “*people have to look farther*”, so that the target language readers can understand and accept the replaced information. However, the cultural imagery of the word “humanly wisdom” in the original text is missing in the conversion. In my humble opinion, it can be translated as worldly wisdom/human interests.

(45) Source Text:

叶问: 叶底藏花一度, 梦里踏雪几回

Target Text:

Ye Wen: I dream of seeing the 64 Hands, again in the snow.

The translation of “叶底藏花” as “64 hands” can be seen from the fact that Ye Wen wants to see the 64 hands again and again, so he can use the 64 hands for the sake of consistency. If we translate it word by word as “once seen the skill, leave me a dream to meet you again”, it is not only too redundant, but also difficult to accurately convey the meaning of “*flowers hidden beneath leaves*”. “叶底藏花” is directly replaced by 64 hands, making it easier for the audience to understand the Kung Fu here.

(46) Source Text:

问哥:我打杂家的
你们咏春就三板斧

Target Text:

Brother Wen: I'm a jack of all trades.
Your Wing Chun is a three-trick pony.

The translator looks for English words and phrases with the same linguistic sense in the cultural information translation, such as the word “miscellaneous” is directly translated as ‘a jack of all trades’, which is clear to the target language readers, and the expression is both visual and concise.

In the text, the word “three-trick pony” reminds people of one trick pony, which is a small trick. Here the phrase is used in English, which can instantly make the readers understand the meaning. This is the cultural translation mode of “from idiom to idiom” (cf Tan 1984:84), in which the idiomatic allusions in the translated language are skillfully used to impress the target language readers with the help of similar language background and context.

(47) Source Text:

三爷五爷:得饶人处且饶人呀,二姑娘

Target Text:

Third Grandpa and Fifth Grandpa: It's better to let it go, Miss Gong.

“Let it go” means to go with it. Generally, it means to go with the nature of everything without forcing. The translator's expression is in line with Nida's “from idiom to idiom” expression, using culturally similar words to express the meaning of the original; while taking into account the reading experience of the readers of the translated language, in line with the principle of cultural adaptability, and conveying a cultural message similar to the original.

(48) Source Text:

号称太子进太监出
可以让你千金散尽

Target Text:

Enter a prince, exit a pauper.
You'd spend money like water.

The translation of “*Enter a prince, exit a pauper*” of “太子进太监出” is taken from Mark Twain's *The Prince and Pauper*, which rhymes with the syllables of prince and pauper, making use of western allusions and common cultural words to let the target language readers understand and accept the original message, but the cultural imagery conveyed by “太子”, “太监” and “prince”, “pauper” is different.

The poet Li Bai of the Tang Dynasty wrote a line in *Bringing in the Wine*, and the whole line is “*I was born to be useful, and a thousand pieces of gold are scattered and come back*”. It means that even if a thousand pieces of gold are used up, you will have them again. Here, the phrase “spend money like water” is directly adopted

from the English phrase “spend money like water”. The word “thousand gold” is omitted according to the semantic omission method. Similar cultural words are used in the translation so that the target language readers can obtain similar understanding as the source language readers, but there are still differences in the cultural imagery between the two.

(49) Source Text:

金楼店主: 反正都是不义之财
不拿白不拿, 都是熟人

Target Text:

Shopkeeper of Golden House: Dirty money paid for it.
No point in waste. We're old friends.

“Ill-gotten gains” refers to the money that is not deserved or obtained by improper or dishonorable means. The translator uses the word “不义之财” to describe the black money in the western society, both of which are to describe the improperly obtained money. Therefore, the use of dirty money, which is familiar to the target language readers, defuses the cultural meaning of the idiom itself and makes it easy for the target language readers to understand and accept.

(50) Source Text:

宫二: 姓叶的不识抬举

Target Text:

Gong Er: This Ip doesn't deserve it.

“不识抬举” means a man does not appreciate others' kindness. The translator transforms “Ip Man doesn't do not appreciate other's kindness” into “Ip Man doesn't deserve it”, which is a semantic conversion. The translator uses “This Ip doesn't deserve it” to convey the original message, but the cultural imagery of the source language is missing in the conversion.

(51) Source Text:

旁白: 千回百转, 一悲一喜

Target Text:

Narratage: All those tales, happy and sad...

The phrase “*All those tales, happy and sad...*” is from Yuan Fan Juzhong's *Autumn Meditation*. Here “*All those tales, happy and sad*” is not the same as “*a thousand twists and turns*” in the original text. The plot, the ups and downs make people sad and happy. Here if we literally highlight the language charm of “thousand, hundred” and translate “千回百转” into “thousands of twists and turns”, it will make the target language readers confused of what “twists and turns” mean. The translator uses the semantic substitution method. All those tales are more straightforward, but the cultural imagery of the original language is lost in this way.

(52) Source Text:

宫二: 我爹常说, 习武之人有三个阶段

见自己

见天地

见众生

Target Text:

Gong Er: My father said mastery had three stages

Being,

Knowing.

Doing.

In the first stage of learning Kung Fu, the martial artist must first focus on whether his Kung Fu has progressed. Only when the Kung Fu is improving and the opportunity of sparring with others begins, will the martial artist know that there are people outside the sky and that there are others outside the world, and that he has opened his eyes to heaven and earth and will not be complacent. “*To see all beings*” means to have all beings in your eyes. The translation goes from “being” to “knowing” and then to “doing”. The translator adopts the conversion method and directly converts the verb-object structure of the original text. The translator uses the conversion method, which directly reduces the verb-object structure of the original text to a verbal structure between “seeing + person”, resulting in the cultural imagery of the original text being missing in the translated version.

4. Compensation

(53) Source Text:

丁连山: 暗事好做

(同上) 明事难成

Target Text:

Ding Lianshan: The South may secede.

Ding Lianshan: It's no time for diplomacy.

This is from Ding Lianshan and Gong Baosen's dialogue. Ding Lianshan advised Gong that lifetime reputation is not easily earned, so he should not easily agree to fight with young people (IP Man), so as not to damage his goodreputation.

The idiom of *an honest man doesn't deal underhand* is from the third fold of Wu Changling's *Zhang Master* in Yuan dynasty. The translator uses the semantic compensation method to explain to the target language readers that the South may secede from the central government and there is no time for diplomacy in the South.

The South conspired to maintain the autonomy of the joint provinces and intended to secede from the central government, so here the dark matter is translated as the South may secede to let the readers better understand the social background. “明事” is directly translated as “*It's no time for diplomacy.*”, which is a compensation for the hidden cultural imagery in the original text.

4.5.1.4 Translation of Classical Philosophical and Religious Ideological Expressions

1. Literal translation

(54) Source Text:

三爷五爷: 许多事情不在人事

三爷五爷: 在天意

宫二: 或许我就是天意

Target Text:

Third Grandpa and Fifth Grandpa: Some things are out of our hands.

Third Grandpa and Fifth Grandpa: It's the Will of Heaven.

Gong Er: Maybe I am the Will of Heaven.

Confucianism believes that heaven is the origin of moral concepts and principles, and that the ruler is the “Son of Heaven”, sent from heaven, and that the will of heaven is irreversible. The providence here includes not only the authority of the ruler, but also all irresistible nature and providence. Here the translator uses “*the will of the heaven*” instead of the western concept—“God”. It is more appropriate for the Chinese context here, because different religious beliefs in the East and West refer to heavenly gods differently.

2. Free translation

(55) Source Text:

叶问: 对我而言武术是大同的

千拳归一路

Target Text:

Ye Wen: The martial arts belong to all.

We're all on the same quest.

The ideology of “大同” is from *the Book of Rites and Rites of Passage*, which tells that Confucianism preaches that the world is public. It advocates harmony and goodwill, social order and stability, and the social model of not closing the house at night and not picking up the pieces. If it is literally translated as “*All the martial arts are the same. They can be united*”, it will make the target language readers think that this is a story about the unification of martial arts, which is obviously inconsistent with the original text.

3. Conversion

(56) Source Text:

叶问: 有的

只是一段缘分

Target Text:

Ye Wen: What we have
is simply fate.

“缘分”, is a religious concept from Buddhism, which is different from Confucianism and Taoism. It refers to the invisible connection between people, with a hint of destiny. Western societies also use the word “fate” to refer to “destiny, providence, predestination”, indicating that the East and the West have similar linguistic and cultural backgrounds in the term “fate”. The translator uses the word “fate” to express the connotation of “destiny” in the original text, which is also acceptable to the readers of the translation, but does not translate the rich cultural imagery of the original word.

4.5.2 Strategies for Breaking Cultural Default to Transmitting Martial Arts Imagery

The author summarizes the factors that may cause cultural default and proposes countermeasures from the following three aspects.

- (1) The culture of the source language and the culture of the target language are very different, thus leading to the differences between the two cultures from the surface to the deeper levels. The surface layer of culture is the surface expression of culture, such as cultural customs, social habits, etc. The deeper cultural differences refer to cultural thinking, cultural identity, cultural psychological activities, cultural belonging, and embracing the image of the country and the nation. The author would like to point out that as exchanges between different languages and cultures become more frequent, and therefore the compatibility and permeability between cultures are gradually strengthened. The use of film and television works as a medium to drive the dissemination of national and ethnic cultural images is also a way to narrow down the cultural differences between languages. That is, active cultural exchange can promote the integration and conversion of different cultural thinking.
- (2) Relying on the mutual evidence of the contextual background in the communication, it helps the target language readers understand the culturally loaded words and the cultural imagery behind them. A single culturally loaded word loses its dynamic nature as a language when it loses its context. Words only become clearer in meaning when they are used, and only then do they make their exact meaning more understandable to the target language readers. This is a feasible approach for subtitle translation. The translator of *The Master of the Generation* has said that subtitle translation should reorganize the fragmented information of the original text into a coherent language (cf Jin 2013: 65), and use language as a medium to convey and construct ways to help the target language readers understand the cultural imagery—the context.
- (3) Translators should pay attention to the concept of semantic determination and optimal representation of the original language proposed by Liu Miqing. If the

translator's subjective understanding of the cultural load words in the original language is different from that of the author of the original language, it may lead to missing, misplaced or distorted cultural imagery in the process of translation. Therefore, translators should pay special attention to the semantic determination of the original text and optimize its expressiveness, so as to create favorable conditions for the readers of the translated text to understand the cultural imagery of the original text.

4.6 Chapter Summary

While Chinese martial arts films are going out to the world, how to appropriately convey the cultural information and cultural imagery in them is an urgent question for those who are engaged in the translation profession to think about. Most of the studies on the translation of literary works have been conducted on novels, and less attention has been paid to the study of translations (Qian 2000: 61), but it cannot be denied that translations have a more convenient mode of transmission than novels.

And they can easily and quickly convey the cultural information and imagery of the original text to the target language readers, just as the Western society's understanding and obsession with Bruce Lee and Kung Fu culture began with the martial arts movies starring Bruce Lee. After *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, as well as *Ambush and Hero*, translation can play an indispensable role as a bridge between the two languages and cultures, if martial arts movies can truly spread Chinese traditional martial arts culture to the world after Bruce Lee's Kung Fu movies.

Scholar Liu Miqing puts forward the cultural strategic considerations of "Chinese national rejuvenation" and "multicultural development", advocating the importance of semantic determination and optimal performance in communication, and translating the cultural imagery based on an accurate understanding of the original message (Liu 2005: 60). This requires the translator not only to be familiar with both languages, but also to have a thorough understanding and grasp of the culture behind the language.

Translators should stand from the perspective of cultural pluralism and establish correct translation values. They should not limit themselves to specific translation theories or translation strategies. They should not blindly follow western theories, but should truly base themselves on the needs of Chinese translation theories. They should take the revival of Chinese culture as their responsibility, and also pay attention to the learning of the advanced translation theories and the accumulation of the translation practice experiences to achieve exact harmony.

As an Australian sinologist and translator, Linda Jaivin has been a member of the Chinese translation community. As an Australian sinologist and translator, Linda Jaivin, the translator of the subtitles of *The Grandmaster*, has translated many famous Chinese films, including *Farewell My Concubine* by Cheng Kaige, *Mei Lanfang*, *Wind and Moon*, and *Hero* by Zhang Yimou, etc. Her translation strategies and

methods have certain practical significance for us to study the translation of Chinese films.

Scholars Hatim and Mason summarized four limitations of subtitle translation:

- (1) The conversion from discourse to subtitles cannot reflect changes such as alternation of discourse power and conversion of source language style;
- (2) Limited by the time and space magnitude of subtitle presentation, the target language readers only have a very short time to look at the written information of subtitles. Therefore, it's difficult for them to make it clear at a glance about the short words with rich information;
- (3) The loss of cultural information and cultural imagery happens due to the translator's deletion of information from the original text;
- (4) The linguistic information presented in the subtitles must match the picture of the original text, so that the target language readers cannot be affected by the contradiction between the linguistic information and the plot of the picture (see Zhao and Dong 2006: 26).

In order to ensure that the target language readers can enjoy the picture while watching the subtitles, the length of each sentence on the subtitles must be limited to 33–42 characters (Jin 2013:65), and the duration of each sentence in the translation is 2–7 s (Hina 2013: 65), so adding notes is not very useful for the translation of films.

Linda Jaivin, the translator of this film, has stated that in addition to the four factors identified by Hatim and Mason (2000), subtitle translation is subject to two other constraints: the cultural similarities and differences between the two languages, Chinese and English, and the requirements of the film's director in terms of subtitle style and message interpretation (Jin 2013:66). Among them, the cultural differences between Chinese and English are factors that cannot be ignored by translators in dealing with the interpretation of cultural information and cultural imagery, and are the focus of this paper.

The subtitle translation of *The Grandmaster* adopts mainly the method of free translation and conversion, combined with direct translation, omission, phonetic translation and compensation to convey the cultural information and cultural imagery of the original language, which can satisfy the curiosity and expectation of the target language readers about Kung Fu and Kung Fu culture while achieving good readability of the target language text.

However, at the same time, the translator's omission and alteration of the cultural imagery of the original text also leads to the damage of the cultural imagery of the original text in the translation process, which adversely affects the traditional Chinese martial arts culture and the Chinese culture to which it belongs to go abroad and strengthen the cultural exchange between China and foreign countries.

Linda Jaivin, the translator of *The Grandmaster* subtitles, has said that translation is a kind of trade-off. No matter how it is expressed, the loss of connotation is inevitable. For example, she said that the phrase "flowers hidden beneath the leaf" was initially considered to be translated as "flower under the leaf", but the subtlety of the original text lies in the fact that the flower is hidden under the leaf, and in order

to contrast with the final ending where Gong Er wins over Ip Man, “under” contains the meaning of “under the”, so this translation is not appropriate. The essence of martial arts culture—the essence of martial arts, is weakened in the process of translation.

Compared with the omission and phonetic translation, the free translation and conversion method can, to a certain extent, play a positive role in transmitting the cultural imagery of the original text in the subtitle translation. They can evoke the understanding and recognition of the target language readers with similar cultural background and context. However, it also depends on the translator’s familiarity with the two cultures and flexible conversion ability.

《红菱艳》(*The Red Shoes*), for example, is more culturally meaningful than 《红舞鞋》, which is a cultural transplantation of the original cultural imagery in Chinese culture, making the film title more acceptable to the readers of the translated language.

In general, the translator of *The Grandmaster* handles the cultural load of martial arts culture flexibly, reorganizes and transforms the semantic meaning of the original text to make it conform to the principle of cultural adaptability. This not only expresses the connotation of the original text but also makes the translation well accepted by the target language readers, taking into account the aesthetic factors such as the context of the original text. It is simple, natural and smooth.

However, the translator has omitted, compensated and replaced the cultural imagery of the original text, resulting in the loss of the cultural imagery of the original text, which is not conducive to the full communication between the two languages and cultures. This is a lesson for future translations, especially for Chinese films, to avoid the loss of cultural imagery in the absence of cultural information.

This study reaffirms the importance of the concept of semantic determination and optimal representation in translation communication advocated by Mr. Liu Miqing, which provides guidance and reference for the study of cultural imagery transmission in martial arts films. Translation workers must not forget to look at translation from a cultural perspective, constantly revise their translations in terms of semantic selection and optimization of expression, and make unremitting efforts to convey traditional Chinese cultural imagery.

Chapter 5

On Film Subtitle Translation from the Perspective of Skopos Theory: Taking *Black Coal, Thin Ice* as an Example



Jianxiong Wang

5.1 Skopos Theory and Subtitle Translation

Based on the Skopos Theory and its three basic rules, i.e., the skopos rule, the coherence rule and the fidelity rule, this chapter mainly discusses the application of translation strategies and of the rules of the Skopos Theory in the film—*Black Coal, Thin Ice*. The practical significance of applying Skopos Theory in the film subtitle translation is aimed at helping audiences overcome language barriers to enjoy films by building a bridge of intercultural communication.

In addition, this chapter, from the perspective of the Skopos Theory, focuses on the translation strategies adopted in this film including domestication, foreignization, omission, addition, adaptation, and conversion. By analyzing the examples, this chapter arrives at a conclusion that the application of translation strategies in the film subtitle translation is based on the language custom, thinking mode and expression mode between different languages and is aimed at helping audiences trespass the language barrier to enjoy films by building a bridge of intercultural communication. Meanwhile, this chapter makes a certain contribution to the research of the contemporary film subtitle translation.

5.1.1 Summary of Skopos Theory

The formation of functional Skopos theory has gone through four stages. Its landmark theories are Reiss's Functional Category of Translation Criticism, Vermeer's Skopos theory and Beyond, Manttari's Theory of Translation Action and Nord's Functional and Loyalty theory (Zhang Chenxiang 2008: 12).

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Back in 1971, Reiss' *Possibilities and Limits of Translation Criticism* was regarded as the origin of German translation academic research. She proposed three functional text types, i.e., *informative text* (Content-focus), *expressive text* (Form-focus), and *vocative text* (Appeal-focused). Meanwhile, on the basis of equivalence theory, Reiss created a translation criticism model based on text function, which is mainly based on the functional relationship between the source text and the target text (Jia Wenbo, 2012: 36).

On the basis of the equivalence theory, Vermeer formulated Skopos theory. The theory holds that any form of translational behavior, including translation itself, is a purposeful behavior (Vermeer, 1989: 173–189). Guided by the expected audience, translation is to create a text for the target language purpose and the target language audience in the target environment (Vermeer, 1987: 25–33).

Finnish translation theorist Manttari put forward the theory of translation action based on the criterion of behavior theory. The theory aims to cover all cross-cultural transformations, including those that do not involve source and target text (Zhu Zhaowei 2005: 86). Manttari defines translation behavior as the process of producing a specific information transmission medium to serve the high-level behavior system of coordinating behavior cooperation and communication cooperation.

According to Nord, “*translation is not a reproduction of the source language, but a functional re-creation in the target language while selectively processing the information source of the source text*” (Nord, 2011: 20). The reason behind is that the translation purpose of the source language author, target language audience and translator may be different. Therefore, the translator has the responsibility to coordinate the traditional equivalence translation theory with the thorough functionalist translation method, so as to achieve the required translation purpose (Zhang Xi, 2013: 17).

5.1.2 Three Principles of Skopos Theory

In Skopos theory, translation must conform to three principles, that is, the skopos rule, the coherence rule and the fidelity rule. The skopos rule refers that the purpose of the translation act determines the process, strategy and outcome (Nord, 2001: 30). Therefore, a translation's intended function and purpose in the target language context largely depends on the final form (Hatim, 2001: 74). Translation, as a human act, apart from the purpose of action, also includes the results of the action, which is translation, a “*special form of target text*” (Baker, 2001: 238). The main purpose of film and TV drama translation is to help the masses cross the language barriers, understand the film, and enjoy watching it. The following three examples could reflect the purpose of the translation of movies and TV dramas to transfer information and help the audience understand the film.

(1) Source Text:

张自力: 你说那个车咋跟错了。一个是E, 一个是F, 就差一横。

Target text:

Zhang Zili: I had the wrong bus. F should have been “E”, not “F”. I mixed up the plates.

In this example, the translator does not use literal translation, but uses adaptation, especially in the translation of “就差一横”. There is no stroke in English, so literal translation will certainly cause misunderstanding. Taking into account that the purpose of film subtitles is to convey information, the translator translates “就差一横” into “*mix up the plates*”, thus forming a contrast with the previous “*had the wrong bus*” and realizing the purpose of conveying information in its translation.

(2) Source Text:

张自力: 有些事儿.....我想解释一下。

吴志贞: 不用解释。

张自力: 我说——你别这样。

Target Text:

Zhang Zili: I want to explain.

Wu Zhizhen: No need.

Zhang Zili: Hear me out. Don't be like this.

This dialogue took place in the police car. Zhang Zili explained to Wu Zhizhen that he approached her not just to investigate the case, but Wu Zhizhen did not want to listen to his explanation. “*Hear me out*” here vividly conveys Zhang Zili's hope that Wu Zhizhen can listen to him.

(3) Source Text:

吴志贞: 98年, 他第一次抢劫, 就失手把人杀了。当时他怕得要死, 不知怎么就想出个替身的办法, 让你们永远也找不到他。结果他把你们骗了, 可自己永远也回不来了.....

张自力: 算他运气好, 那时候DNA不是哪里都能做的。

Target Text:

Wu Zhizhen: He decided to fake his own death, using the victim's corpse as his stand-in.

Zhang Zili: DNA testing wasn't widespread.

In this case, Wu Zhizhen told Zhang Zili about Liang Zhijun's murder and absconding. The translator translated “不是哪里都能做的” into “*not widespread*”, which conformed to the pattern of spoken English and well expressed the fact that DNA testing was not popular at the time. At the same time, in order to avoid cumbersome, the translator translated “当时他怕得要死, 不知怎么就想出个替身的办法, 让他们永远都找不到他” into “*he decided to fake his own death, using the victim's corpse as his stand-in*”. It is more concise, clear and expressive, so that the audience can understand the film more smoothly.

In addition to the above-mentioned skopos rule, the act of translation should also conform to the coherence rule. It mainly refers to intralingual coherence, that is, the message produced by the translator must be interpretable in a way that is coherent with the target recipient's situation (Shuttle & Cowie, 2004: 19). In the following example, the translator achieves the goal of intralingual coherence by

adopting translation strategies such as retranslation to make the translation conform to the language habits of the audience.

(4) Source Text:

张自力: 那算上梁志军, 三个人的死都和她有关系了?

小王: 没错。谁跟她好, 谁倒霉。

Target Text:

Zhang Zili: She's connected to three murders.

Wang: Every man she's with ends up dead.

(5) Source Text: 老板: 警官这就是他刚才吃的这碗面。

Target Text: Restaurant owner: Here's what is left of the noodles, officer.

In example 4, the translator used the rewriting strategy to translate “三个人的死” into “*three murders*” and “倒霉” into “*end up dead*”. While linking the content of the film, such authentic English expression could also make the translation more understandable. Example 5 translates “警官这就是他刚才吃的这碗面” into “*Here's what is left of the noodles.*”. In this scene, the restaurant owner gives the leftover noodles to the police for inspection, so the emphasis in the sentence is “*what is left*”. This translation is more in line with the top-heavy way of expression in English, so as to achieve intralingual coherence.

(6) Source Text:

吴志贞: 我把它们撒到河里了。

刘队长: 撒到河里?没留下一点?

吴志贞: 没有。看见那种东西, 心里会难受的。

刘队长: 我想了解一下当时的情况, 咱们车里说好吗。

Target Text:

Wu Zhizhen: I delivered them in the river.

Captain Liu: You didn't keep any?

Wu Zhizhen: No. I couldn't stand to look at them.

Captain Liu: I have some questions. Can we talk in the car?

In this example, the translator used the omitting translation method, omitting “撒到河里”, and at the same time, used the modified translation method to translate “心里会难受” into “*couldn't stand*” instead of “*my heart will be broken*”. The translation here has achieved top-heavy expression in English. At the same time, the translator translated “我想了解一下当时的情况” into “*I have some questions*”, which is more in line with the spoken English expression than “*I want to know what happened*”, and also in line with the scene of the film where police are asking Wu Zhizhen. This kind of intralingual coherence gives the audience the feeling of watching movies in their mother tongue.

The third rule is the fidelity rule, i.e., interlingual coherence, which refers to the relationship between the source language and the target language. It requires coherence between the original ST message intended by the text producer, the way the translator interprets this message, and the way in which the translator encodes the

message for the TT recipient (Shuttle & Cowie, 2004: 20). In the following examples, the translator has faithfully conveyed the meaning of the original text and realized the fidelity rule by adopting the translation strategy of modified translation.

(7) Source Text:

张自力: 你这样就不对了。以后我还要去你店里洗衣服呢。

Target Text:

Zhang Zili: if you keep this up, I'll have to find a new laundry.

The background of this sentence is that Wu Zhizhen was taken to the police car for questioning, but was silent. Zhang Zili came to persuade Wu Zhizhen to confess. The translator did not translate “你这样就不对了” into “*you are wrong*” because Zhang Zili hoped that Wu Zhizhen would not remain silent, but tell the truth of the matter. Although the sentence seems to have been changed greatly due to the adoption of the modified translation method, in fact, based on the understanding of the source text, the translator expressed the original meaning of “*don't keep silent*” and faithfully conveyed the meaning of the original work.

(8) Source Text:

三姐: 报案?他金屋藏娇躲起来, 这种案报了有什么用?女人都有自尊心嘛。一年以后我真报案了, 他们说失踪, 谁信啊!

Target Text:

Third Sister: To the cops? If a man decides to run off with his mistress, the cops cannot do shit. Cops said he had vanished. Not likely.

In this example, the Chinese idiom “金屋藏娇” is used, which mainly refers to the meaning of husband cheating on his wife to have an affair. If it is translated as “*keep a mistress in a golden house*”, the audience may understand that providing a golden house for beautiful ladies to live in is a cherishment for the partner, so it incorrectly conveys the original meaning; and the translation “*run off with his mistress*” could directly express the meaning of the source text and realize the fidelity rule.

5.1.3 The Application and Guiding Significance of Skopos Theory in Subtitle Translation

Nord has further expanded the functionalist Skopos theory and proposed the *function plus loyalty* theory, emphasizing the relationship between ST and TT. But the quality and quantity of this relationship are determined by the expected function (purpose) of the translation (Bian Jianhua, 2008: 6). This means that the degree of relevance between the source text and the translated text mainly depends on the purpose of the translation. Expressing emotions is the main purpose of film and TV series translation, and the goal of it is to enable the audience to understand the film while enjoying the artistic aesthetics (Ma Zhengqi, 2013: 3). Therefore, the purpose of film subtitle translation can be understood as helping the audience to overcome language barriers,

to build a bridge between different languages and cultures, so that the audience can fully enjoy watching movies. This poses a challenge to film subtitle translators: what translation strategies should be adopted to achieve this goal? As the subject of translation, the translator's personal value orientation, subjective consciousness and cultural constraints will affect the results of subtitle translation. Therefore, translators should actively exert their subjective initiative (Ma Zhengqi, 2005: 71).

5.2 Subtitle Translation of *Black Coal, Thin Ice*

5.2.1 Introduction to *Black Coal, Thin Ice*

Released in March 2014, *Black Coal, Thin Ice* is a Chinese suspense romance. The film won the *Golden Bear Award for Best Picture* and the *Silver Bear Award for Best Actor* at the 64th Berlin International Film Festival in 2014. It is also the fifth Chinese film to win the *Golden Bear Award*. The leading actor Liao Fan became the first Chinese actor to win the Best Actor award in Berlin International Film Festival. The film tells the story of the down-and-out policeman Zhang Zili (played by Liao Fan) who fell in love with the ill-fated widow Wu Zhizhen (played by Gui Lunmei) because of the investigation.

Wu Zhizhen used to work at a laundry shop. Once she ruined an expensive jacket and was not able to pay its owner. Being forced into an ongoing sexual relationship by the owner Wu became resentful and killed the man by accident. Wu's husband Liang Zhijun (played by Wang Xuebin) is a weighman of a coal company. He loves his wife and smashed the body and scattered it to different parts of the country through the coal train. The first crime scene disappeared without a trace. In the end, in order to help his wife escape the punishment, he faked his death and lived a life of the living dead. In the final scene of the film, Wu was escorted back to the original residence to identify the crime scene in a cold winter day. When she was leaving the place, she saw fireworks from a nearby building which was set by Zhang Zili.

5.2.2 Analysis of the Subtitle Translation Strategy for *Black Coal, Thin Ice*

5.2.2.1 Domestication

The domestication translation method is oriented to the target language and expresses the meaning of the source language with the standardized target language and cultural characteristics. The domestication translation method focuses on the fluency and comprehensibility of the translation, and aims to shorten the cultural difference between the target language audience and the source language text (Zhang Yanli,

2014: 76). The large-scale application of domestication in movie subtitle translation expresses the language habits and cultural characteristics of the source language through equivalent language functions in the target language, thereby enhancing the acceptability of the film. Examples are as follows:

(1) Source Text:

男子: 你说这叫啥事儿呀!都吃一半了,还以为是牛的呢。他得赔我。

老板: 你不用给我整那个没有用的。我也是受害者呀。

Target Text:

Man: How could this happen? I ate half before I realized. I thought it was beef! I need compensation.

Restaurant owner: Don't give me that! I am a victim here, too!

(2) Source Text:

女人: 干啥干啥!我才不跟酒腻子呢!

工人乙: 老爷们儿不喝酒, 上炕不长久.....

女人: 满嘴跑火车呢。

Target Text:

Woman: Who'd marry this drunk.

Worker B: If a man is not a boozer, in bed he's a loser!

Woman: Your typical bullshit.

In these two examples, the Chinese dialogue uses many northern dialects such as “啥事儿”, “整个没用的”, “上炕” and “满嘴跑火车”. Literal translation, like translating “炕” into “stove” and “满嘴跑火车” into “*many trains in mouth*”, may mislead the audience. When dealing with these dialects, the translator adopts the domestication translation method, using the equivalent expressions commonly used in English. For example, “你说这叫啥事?” can be paraphrased as “*How could this happen?*”. The connotation of “整个没用的” is “*There is no need to say those words*”, and there is an authentic expression of “*Don't give me that*” in English. In the original text, “上炕不长久” means that men do not perform well in marital life. Translated as “*in bed he is a loser*”, it fully expresses the original meaning. “满嘴跑火车” is even more a Northeast dialect, which is a metaphor for a person to talk nonsense and bragging; The translation “*Your typical bullshit*” is the English expression of nonsense. These domestication translation methods make the audience feel like they are in their mother tongue and fully enjoy the fun of watching movies.

(3) Source Text:

老板: 孩子吓得跑里屋去了。等会儿行不?

小王: 这事儿你可别声张。

Target Text:

Restaurant owner: Poor kid's so scared, he's hiding in the back.

Wang: Don't breathe a word of this.

(4) Source Text:

张自力: 生意做了五六年了, 可以开一家分店了

荣荣: 哪有钱开分店啊

张自力: 不开分店, 开个夫妻店。

Target Text:

Zhang Zili: You been open five, six years? Ought to start a franchise.

Rong Rong: Who can afford to?

Zhang Zili: If not a franchise, another mom-and-pop shop.

In Example 3, the translator uses English slang, “*not breathe a word*”, to express “别声张”, and expresses the lines clearly through the equivalent target language, thus conforming to the language habits of English audiences. Similarly, in example 4, the translator translates “夫妻店” as “*mom-and-pop shop*” instead of “*a couple-shop*”. This kind of equivalent expression of authentic English slang makes the audience feel like watching a movie in their mother tongue and hereby enhancing the acceptability and viewing of the film.

5.2.2.2 Foreignization

The foreignization translation method is oriented to the source language, requiring the translator to retain both the content and the characteristics of the original text, especially the cultural, ethnic, and local characteristics contained in the source language, so as to spread the source language culture to the audience (Venuti & Lawrence, 1995). As an audio-visual medium, film, while displaying subtitles, can express the cultural traditions, language habits and other exotic customs of the source language through the pictures and the tone and actions of the actors. Therefore, foreignization translation method in the movie subtitles can best convey the exotic sentiment to the audience, so as to play the effect of spreading foreign cultures and cross-cultural communication. Examples are as follows:

(5) Source Text:

工人甲: 听说其他厂的煤堆里也发现了。

工人乙: 那可不。清远、镇平、白水、枝城的几个厂都有。

Target Text:

Worker A: I hear they found body parts in other coal piles, too.

Worker B: All factories in Clearview, Whitewater, Branchtown, all over the place.

This conversation took place when the body was found in a coal pile. For several place names mentioned in the dialogue, the translator did not use the traditional pinyin translation method but directly translated them literally. The author believes that this sentence can be translated as: “*all factories in such towns as Clearview, Whitewater, Branchtown*”. This way the audience will immediately understand that these are the names of the three towns.

(6) Source Text:

科长: 我说老张, 自打你来咱们厂保卫科, 天天喝酒犯迷瞪。是不是你是因伤调来的警察, 需要照顾。

科长: 你瞧你头发, 跟他妈狗舔的似的。赶紧讨个老婆吧!

Target Text:

Section Chief: Since you transferred to our security team. You think being shot in the line of duty merits special treatment.

Section Chief: Just look at that mop. Like a dog licked it. You need a wife to look after you.

In this conversation, the section chief was very dissatisfied with Zhang Zili's scruffy appearance. He criticized his hair as "like a dog licked". In fact, he said his hair was untidy and messy. The translator adopted the literal translation method and translated it as "like a dog licked it". The author thinks that it is not appropriate to use this expression. The foreignization method can be used here, and it would be more appropriate to translate it as "such messy mop", because dogs are regarded as good friends of humans abroad and are often used as commendatory expressions; however, the cultural connotations of dogs in China are completely different and are often used in derogatory expressions. Saying that the hairstyle was licked by a dog, Western audiences have different understandings. They may think that he is praising Zhang Zili's cute hairstyle, so the foreignization method here can more directly express the meaning of the film.

5.2.2.3 Omission

Omission mainly means that the translator deletes some words or sentences according to the language habits, ways of thinking and expression of the target language, so that the language structure of the translation is concise and clear, and the lengthy repetition of the translation is avoided. Taking into account the audio-visual effects of the movie and the coherence of the plot and according to the language habits of the target language audience, certain words or sentences can be omitted during the film subtitle translation process, so that the audience can better appreciate the film. Examples are as follows:

(7) Source Text:

苏丽娟: 给你。

苏丽娟: 别这样!放手,放手,说好了今天是最后一次嘛!放手,走开,你有病啊!

Target Text:

Su Lijuan: Here.

Su Lijuan: Don't be like this. Let go. It's over, we agreed. Let go, get away from me. You are insane.

This conversation happened at the beginning of the film. Su Lijuan is Zhang Zili's wife. The last time they had a private meeting after their divorce, they separated at the train station. In the dialogue, the translator did not translate "给你" into "Here you are", but "Here", thus omitting the word "你". In the film, Su Lijuan is passing the divorce certificate to Zhang Zili, and in this scene, "Here" can clearly express "Here you are". At the same time, compared with "Here you are", the more concise "here" can fully express Su Lijuan's impatient with Zhang Zili's entanglement, as

well as her tone and mood as she does not want to say a word to him. Omission here fully takes into account the emotions expressed by the characters in the play, and effectively conveys the content of the film.

(8) Source Text:

学义: 运煤司机一般都是固定往一两个厂拉煤, 可一个叫柳发银的司机案发那段时间向十个不同的厂运过煤, 很不正常, 而且全是咱们发现尸块的厂。

Target Text:

Xueyi: Most drivers deliver coal to the same one or two factories. But this one guy, Liu Fayin, made delivers to a dozen plants around the time of the murder. Seems fishy. Plus, they're the same factories where the body parts turned up.

In this example, the translator omits “咱们” and uses “*they*” as the subject for content coherence. Using “*they*” as the subject can easily connect with the “*plants*” in the previous sentence, thus making the content more coherent and enabling audience to better understand the plot.

(9) Source Text:

学义: 我查了, 柳发银不是一个人开车, 他还有个兄弟, 叫柳发行, 俩人经常一起出车。而且兄弟俩前两天突然不干了。

Target Text:

Xueyi: I checked. He's got a younger brother. Used to take him on rounds. Until he quit two days ago.

In this example, the translator omitted “刘发银不是一个人开车的”. This is due to the limitations of film subtitles. If this line of dialogue is added, inconsistencies between the character dialogue and the screen conversion may occur. At the same time, the omission of this sentence does not affect the expression of meaning, so the omission here is more in line with the principle of consistent sound and picture translation for film and television drama translation.

5.2.2.4 Addition

Addition refers to adding some words or sentences in the process of translation according to the thinking mode and expression habits of two different languages, so as to express the meaning of the source language more smoothly and clearly. Translators should pay attention to words that are implied but not explicitly stated in the dialogue to ensure that the translation has a complete grammatical structure and can accurately express the meaning of the source language dialogue (Dong Xiaobo, 2012: 97). The application of addition in film and television drama translation is mainly to make necessary supplementary explanations to the original text to help the audience understand the lines smoothly and enjoy the fun of watching the movie. Examples are as follows:

(10) Source Text:

张自力: 忙啥呢, 王队。听说你干经侦 (经济警察) 了。

小王: 经侦那还叫警察吗?“蹲点儿”多有意思。

Target Text:

Zhang Zili: I hear they promoted you to white-collar crime.

Wang: You heard wrong. I am here on a stakeout.

(11) Source Text:

小王: 怎么了?医院里呆傻了吧。

张自力: 在医院里住了这么久, 学义和强军的追悼会也没参加, 什么时候去看望一下家属。

Target Text:

Wang: What's with you? Those quacks mess with your head?

Zhang Zili: I was just thinking of Qiangjun and Xueyi. I missed their funerals. Maybe I should visit their families.

In the above two examples, Chinese dialogue often does not require a subject, but when it comes to English, if there is no subject, the expression and the meaning will be unclear; therefore, the translator has appropriately added the subject here so that the audience can understand the meaning of the translation smoothly.

(12) Source Text:

张自力: 不开分店, 开个夫妻店。

荣荣: 开什么玩笑, 我看得上人家, 人家看不上我。你~~别误会啊~~, 我真是可怜她。不信你打听打啊,

Target Text:

Zhang Zili: If not a franchise, another mom-and-pop shop.

Rong Rong: not likely, she is my type. But I am not hers. You don't get the wrong idea. I just feel sorry for her. She has had it hard, ask anyone.

In this example, the translator used addition, adding “*She has had it hard*” (她的日子不好过), which serves as a complement to the previous sentence “*I just feel sorry for her*”. “The supplement clearly expresses that Rongrong is sympathetic to Wu Zhizhen. If the translator just translates it into “*I just feel sorry for her*”, the audience will wonder whether it is out of sympathy or out of apology.

5.2.2.5 Adaptation

Adaptation refers that translators mainly change the content of the target language according to the language habits and cultural traditions of the target language audience, so that the translation is more in line with the thinking mode and the aesthetic view of the target language audience. The application of adaptation in film subtitle translation is mainly to conform to the audience's language psychology and thus to attract the audience. Examples are as follows:

(13) Source Text: 白日焰火

Target Text: Black Coal, Thin Ice

The Chinese name of the film is “白日焰火”, Which literally means fireworks in the daytime, and can be translated into *Daylight Pyrotechnic*. If we use literal translation, the audience will be misunderstood: Fireworks are beautiful at night. How can anyone put on fireworks during the day? Therefore, this is where the translation is done. The translator translates the title into *Black Coal, Thin Ice*, mainly based on the plot and background. The plot begins at a coal mine and the story also takes place in the ice and snow environment. At the same time, *Thin Ice* means walking on thin ice, which also implies the life and love of the hero and heroin in the movie. Besides, the film deals with the redemption about love through a series of criminal cases. Crime and love are two extremes, one dark as coal and the other pure as ice. They perfectly reflect the main line of the film and bring strong visual impact to the audience. Therefore, the adaptation of the title of the film is taken from the aesthetic and artistic perspective of the target audience, so as to express the main line of the film and attract the audience.

(14) Source Text:

保卫干部甲: 就算他一个人开车, 三天不睡觉, 也不可能跑那么多地方……路途太远了!

保卫干部乙: 除非一群人分头干。

Target Text:

Security guard A: Even if he drove for 3 days straight, there is no way he could hit all those place.

Security guard B: Unless he had help.

In this example, the translator translates “除非一群人分头干” into “*unless he had help*”. The translation here conforms to the coherence in English language expression. The subject “*he*” and the subject “*he*” in the previous sentence can be smoothly connected, thus expressing a smooth logical relationship.

(15) Source Text:

张自力: 就上了。怎么着?谁让咱们俩是哥们呢。

小王: 你别搅局。这可不是戒酒的方法。

张自力: 谁说我要戒酒?我给自己找一点动力, 否则人生也太失败了。

小王: 难道有赢的方法?你还想赢得人生啊。

Target Text:

Zhang Zili: And here I thought we were friends

Wang: This is no way to get sober. Steer clear of her.

Zhang Zili: So my life isn't a total loss.

Wang: You think anyone ever wins at life?

The translator here translates “你别搅局” into “*steer clear of her*”. If literally translated “*Don't get into that*”, it doesn't match the development of the plot. In this scene, Wang persuaded Zhang Zili not to deal with the case and not to approach Wu Zhizhen. Therefore, the translation “*steer clear of her*” could make audience easily understand the meaning of the film.

(16) Source Text:

三姐: 哼。当时她就站在酒吧门口, 我认不出她来, 也能闻出来。

张自力: 那会儿酒吧也在这儿?

三姐: 当然。而且也叫白日焰火。如今沧海桑田, 鸟枪换炮了, 可是多美多烂的记忆都不会改变。

Target Text:

Third Sister: I would never forget that face. I would recognize her anywhere.

Zhang Zili : The same bar here.

Third Sister: Even had the same name, Daylight Pyrotechnic. Of course, we are bigger and better now. But memories, good or bad, never fade.

In this case, the translator translates “我认不出她来, 也能闻出来” into “*I would never forget that face. I would recognize her anywhere*”. Especially, the use of “*never*”, is to express that this matter is unforgettable to third sister. If “我认不出她来” is translated literally as “*I would not recognize that face*”, it is contrary to the meaning of the original text. Meanwhile, the translator translated “如今沧海桑田, 鸟枪换炮了, 可是多美多烂的记忆都不会改变” into “*we are bigger and better now. But memories, good or bad, never fade*”, which properly expresses the meaning of the original text through adaptation: “*our business is bigger and life is better, but all the memories of the past will not change*”. The translation here successfully helps the audience understand the meaning and emotion of dialogue.

5.2.2.6 Conversion

Conversion is mainly used to transform the part of speech, sentence pattern and voice in the source language text in order to make the translation conform to the language thinking and expression of the target language audience. The purpose of conversion is to go beyond the frame of the original text, so that the translation can faithfully convey the content of the original text and conform to the expression habits of the target language (Mei Aixiang, 2014: 11). In film subtitle translation, the translator adopts the substitute translation method for certain words or sentences according to the thoughts and meanings expressed in the source language works to emphasize the linguistic points of the dialogue. Examples are as follows:

(17) Source Text:

保卫科长: 没见过这么抛尸的, 天女散花, 扔得全省哪儿都是。好些厂听说煤堆下面有死人, 不开工了。如果你们还破不了案——

Target Text:

Security Section Chief: This is the worst I've seen. Body parts being dumped, scattered across the whole province. Rumors of corpses in coal piles, everyone scared to come to work. If you can't crack this case...

“抛尸” in Chinese subtitles can be seen as a noun, which can be literally translated as “*I haven't seen such body parts dumping*”. The translator used the noun-verb shift,

so as to have a coherent sentence pattern with the following “扔的全省哪儿都是”, thus conforming to the expression characteristic in English.

(18) Source Text:

张自力: 知道为啥抓你俩不?!知道不?!

(画面) 矮个完全懵了, 看着张自力, 不停地舔嘴唇, 高个却冷冷地将目光瞥向一侧。

张自力: 挺老实的。谁是司机?!说!谁是司机?!

Target Text:

Zhang Zili: Know why we're here?

Zhang Zili: Do not play innocent. Who drove the truck?

(19) Source Text:

学义: 你叫柳发行吧!发型不错!问你会不会开车?!说话!会不会开车?!知道你犯啥事?行啊, 跑的够快的啊, 等下大刑伺候呢。

Target Text:

Xueyi: Tell me what you did! Thought you'd pull a runner, huh? You'll pay for this later.

In the two examples, the translator translates “谁是司机” into “*who drove the truck*”. The literal meaning is “*who is the driver*”. The none-verb shift here could emphasize the action “*drive*”. In contrast to the second example, it should have been translated as “*you run so fast*”, but at first glance it has a commendatory meaning. The translator changes it into “*pull a runner*”, which can connect with “*you will pay for this later*.” and at the same time express the original meaning: “*there is no way to run away*”. The translation here faithfully conveys the inner connotation of the film.

With the development of society and the improvement of audience's educational level, the audience's requirements for film and television drama translation have gradually increased. They not only hope to enjoy foreign film and television dramas that conform to their own language habits, but also to experience exotic customs from them. This poses a challenge to the translator—what kind of translation strategy can be used to meet the audience's expectations and achieve the purpose of cross-cultural communication. The use of movie subtitle translation strategies is based on the different language habits, ways of thinking and expression of the two languages in order to help the audience overcome language barriers, and build a bridge between different languages and cultures, so that the audience can fully enjoy watching the movie.

(This chapter is based on the author's 2015 MA thesis *Film Subtitling Translation from the Perspective of Skopos Theory—Taking Black Coal, Thin Ice Subtitle Translation as an Example*).

Chapter 6

On Feng's Humor from the Perspective of Equivalent Effect Translation: Taking Feng Xiaogang's New Year Comedies as an Example



Lanhua Han

6.1 Introduction to Feng Xiaogang's New Year Comedies

Feng Xiaogang's New Year Comedies are widely recognized and loved by Chinese audiences at home, and have formed a unique style of "Feng's humor", but their distribution in overseas markets is not satisfactory. According to "Made in China" Chinese commercial films overseas box office rankings, *The Funeral of the Famous Star* was shown in only two theaters in the United States, and the total box office income was only 820 yuan (Tang 2007: 28). The reason is that the comic effect of Feng's New Year Comedies is deeply rooted in China's extensive and profound language, cultural soil and cultural context, the acquisition of comic effect often depends on the audiences' understanding and familiarity with the deep culture. For example, there are idioms, sayings and allusions filled with Chinese culture everywhere in the film, which are often associated with the sense of humor. But for those foreign audiences unfamiliar with Chinese culture and language, it is a challenge to achieve the same or almost the same sense of humor as the Chinese audiences. To a certain extent, language and cultural barriers hinder foreign audiences' interest in understanding and appreciating Feng Xiaogang's films, thus reducing the service value of his New Year Comedies. Therefore, subtitle translation is the key to enable foreign audiences to overcome the language and cultural barriers to experience Feng's humor.

The research object of this chapter is the translation strategies of humorous subtitles for Feng's New Year Comedies. The research corporuses are derived from the following eight films, and the specific source addresses are as follows:

The Dream Factory (1997) <http://www.tudou.com/albumplay/ijWdXShdhNc.html>.

Be There or Be Square (1998) http://v.youku.com/v_show/id_XMzA4MjcyNTc2.html.

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Sorry Baby (1999) http://v.youku.com/v_show/id_XMzA4MjcOMjYO.html.

Funeral of the Famous Star (2001) <http://www.shooter.cn/xml/sub/128/128904.xml>.

Hand phone (2003) <http://www.shooter.cn/xml/sub/128/128854.xml>.

A World Without Thieves (2004) <http://www.podnapisi.net/zh/tian-xia-wu-zei-2004-subtitles-p93093>.

If You Are the One (2008) <http://www.podnapisi.net/zh/fei-cheng-wurao-2008subtitles-p425195>.

If You Are the One 2 (2010) <http://www.shooter.cn/xml/sub/194/194648.xml>.

Subtitle examples used in Sects. 6.4 and 6.5 of this chapter are from the above websites, which are acknowledged here.

6.2 Literature Review

Feng Xiaogang, a famous contemporary Chinese film director, first exploited the New Year film market in China. Since 1997, he has directed and shot 12 New Year films, namely, *The Dream Factory* (1997), *Be There or Be Square* (1998), *Sorry Baby* (1999), *A Sigh* (2000), *Funeral of the Famous Star* (2001), *Hand phone* (2003), *A World Without Thieves* (2004), *The Banquet* (2006), *Assembly* (2007), *If You Are the One* (2008), *If You Are the One II* (2010), and *Untitled Remembering 1942 Project* (2012). Almost every film has won a good box office and word of mouth, which made him earn the reputation of “The father of New Year celebration film” in the film industry.

In China, the term “New Year celebration film” originally comes from the immortal drama in Hong Kong and Taiwan. When movies were not popular in Hong Kong and Taiwan, in order to celebrate the Spring Festival, there were deities from Chinese folklore invited to perform stories in various operas in Hong Kong and Taiwan. Later, New Year celebration films were made specifically for the Spring Festival (Han and Chen 2003: 337).

The basic style of Feng Xiaogang’s New Year celebration films is comedic (Jin 200: 103). With Feng’s humor as the main feature, fashion as the content and game entertainment as the purpose, Feng Xiaogang’s New Year celebration films create a seemingly relaxed and pleasant world, but in fact it hides deep criticism. The biggest feature of Feng Xiaogang’s New Year comedy films is humor. What is humor? There are different expressions about this concept involving many disciplines in academia, literature and art circles.

According to *Ci Hai* (*a dictionary encyclopedia of Chinese characters*), humor is to reveal unreasonable points while making people laugh through rhetorical means such as allegory and pun (Gao 2006: 7).

Modern Chinese Dictionary believes that humor is interesting or funny, but meaningful (*Modern Chinese Dictionary* 2002: 1250).

The New Age Encyclopedia in the United States says that humor is anything that is funny and hilarious (Gao 2006: 6).

Canadian humorist Leacock believes that humor is a reflection on incongruent things in life and also a kind of artistic expression (Leacock 1984: 8).

The great humorist Chaplin believes that people could find the abnormalities from seemingly normal phenomena and see the unimportant aspects from seemingly important things by using humor (Chaplin 1980: 250).

To sum up, although there is still no exact definition of humor, we can find from these expressions that humor contains the following elements: farcicality, incongruity, ridicule, and irony. These humorous elements can be traced in Feng Xiaogang's New Year comedies. Feng Xiaogang uses humorous, jocular and witty dialogue to make the audiences laugh, satirize and ridicule reality, and find emotional vent for the audiences to make them shed "tears with laughter". The funny language in Feng Xiaogang's New Year comedies is not just a simple joke, but a variety of meaning and wisdom hidden behind them. Through the Feng's humor, Feng Xiaogang's New Year comedies can make some serious and heavy topics playful and gamify them in a comedic way, and finally turn all kinds of helplessness and anger that people encounter in reality into a smile (Lu 2004: 114). Most of the awkwardness that people encounter in their life can be eliminated by humor (Wang 2008: 49). For Feng Xiaogang, humor is a kind of labor attitude (Feng 2003: 1).

Since Feng Xiaogang's New Year comedies have achieved a great success in the Chinese market, and even become a "Feng's type" that is difficult to be imitated by others, Chinese academic circles have never ceased the study of Feng Xiaogang's New Year comedies. Among them, the research mostly focused on the aesthetic artistic style, New Year celebration films market strategy, commercial text strategic analysis and so on. The research object is mostly one or two of Feng Xiaogang's New Year comedies. For example, Zhang Xiaoling analyzes the artistic features of *Assembly* from the perspectives of narration, characters and audio-visual language, and draws the conclusion that commercial films can also have profound connotations (Zhang 2008: 35–48). Some scholars focus on "Feng's humor" and analyze the comedy strategies of Feng Xiaogang's New Year comedies from the perspectives of rhetorical devices and dialogue language art. But few of them start from the perspective of subtitle translation. For example, Xia Zhongnan disassembled "Feng's humor" from the rhetorical point of view of Feng Xiaogang's New Year comedy films, and believed that it had the characteristics of metaphor, irony, parody and so on (Xia 2005: 20–21). Another example is Wei Hua's research on Feng's films from the perspectives of language style and narrative techniques and believes that telling jokes is his most basic comedy strategy (Wei 2003: 90–93). Of course, Some scholars also study the subtitle translation of Feng Xiaogang's New Year comedies from the perspective of subtitle translation. However, according to the search results of CNKI (China national knowledge infrastructure), most of the research objects only focus on the certain subtitles of Feng Xiaogang's New Year comedies, and most of them are *If You Are the One*, *If You Are the One II*, *A World Without Thieves* and *Assembly*. For example, Wang Mingge discusses subtitle translation strategies of *Assembly* in order to study the feasibility of functional translation theory guiding subtitle translation (Wang 2009: 183–186). Yang Huijuan finds the translation strategies of "jokes" in *If You Are the One* from the perspective of Reiss's Text Typology (Yang 2010: 106:

206–208). However, there is no research on the equivalence of humorous subtitle translation using Nida's equivalent effect theory, which takes eight Feng Xiaogang's New Year comedies as the research object.

6.3 Equivalent Effect Theory

6.3.1 *The Proposition of the Concept of Equivalence*

J. C. Catford (1978: 20), a famous British translation theorist, defined translation as “the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL)” (Xie 2008: 5). Eugene Nida, a famous American translator, defined translation as “consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style” (Nida and Taber 2004: 13). The same key word appears in the definition of translation by the two translators above, namely “equivalence”.

Many translation theorists at home and abroad agree with the “equivalence” of translation and have their own opinions and expressions. Cicero, a famous Roman translator, believed that translators should give readers the content of the original text rather than the number of words in the original text (Tan 2006: 9). In other words, the translator is required to consider readers and the text reception effect when translating, so that the translation can impress the readers. Quintilian, an important translation thinker at the same time as Cicero, believed that although translation could not achieve the same effect as the original work, translators could use various means to get close to the original work. Here “close” means that the effect of the translation to the reader should be close to the effect of the original.

Hsuan-tsang, a famous Chinese scriptures translator, advocated that “A good translation should be both faithful to the original and intelligible to the public” (Ma 1934: 58). “Faithfulness” means pursuing the equivalence of translation style and original text. “Intelligibility” means that the translation should be smooth and easy to understand, so that the target language readers can understand and accept it. “Faithfulness” and “Intelligibility” emphasize the effect of translation.

In 1894, Ma Jianzhong, a linguist of the late Qing Dynasty, wrote “Proposal on Establishing a Translation Academy”, which was regarded as a masterpiece by later generations in the history of modern translation in China. In this article, he emphasizes the difficulty of translation and puts forward the concept of Shanyi. He believes that if a translation can make the readers of the target language feel similar or even the same as the readers of the source language, it is Shanyi (Xie 2009: 81). It can be seen that Ma Jianzhong's theory of Shanyi tries to make readers who read the translation feel the same as those who read the original text.

When Mr. Fulei talked about translation in 1951, he believed that translation should be like painting, seeking likeness in spirit rather than likeness in form (Jin 1997: 57). That is to say, in the process of translation, the translator should pay more

attention to be in resemblance in spirit and “Chuan Shen” and “Da Yi” when the likeness in form and likeness in spirit cannot be achieved simultaneously. Among them, “Shen” and “Yi” include spirit and style, while “Chuan” and “Da” inevitably involve a third party, that is, the object. From this point of view, Mr. Fulei's theory of likeness in spirit is basically a comprehensive equivalent translation (Jin 1997: 57).

Mao Dun pointed out in his report in 1954 that literary translation should convey the artistic conception of the original text and help readers of the target language have similar or even the same inspiration, moving and beautiful experience as those of the source language (Liu 1985: 522).

To sum up, although scholars at home and abroad have not explicitly put forward the word “equivalence”, they all have similar views on the goal of translation, that is, translation should focus on the audiences of the target language and strive to produce basically the same effect on the audiences of the target language as the original text does on the audiences of the source language.

6.3.2 *An Overview of Equivalent Effect Theory*

Eugene Nida, a famous American translator, was the first to put forward the concept of equivalence. In 1964, he proposed that translation equivalence has two basic orientations: formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence. The former is centered on the original text and focuses on the form and content of the information, requiring the translator to be “concerned that the message in the receptor language should match as closely as possible the different elements in the source language” (Nida 2004: 159). The latter, based on the principle of equivalence, requires that “the relationship between receptor and message should be substantially the same as that which existed between the original receptors and the message” (ibid). Later, some people mistakenly thought that “dynamic” merely meant something that was infectious, and thus regarded a highly infectious translation as an example of dynamic equivalence. In order to avoid this misunderstanding and to highlight the concept of “function”, Nida adopted “functional equivalence” instead of “dynamic equivalence” (Nida 2004: 91). Functional equivalence theory is essentially equivalent effect theory focusing on recipient response. In 1988, Peter Newmark, a famous British translation theorist, called functional equivalence as equivalent effect in his book *A Textbook of Translation* (Newmark 2001: 48). In 1989, Jin Di, a famous Chinese translator, published *Exploration of equivalent translation*, a dialectical analysis and study of Nida's functional equivalence theory. Therefore, functional equivalence theory is also known as equivalent effect theory in academic circles.

In the process of translation, Nida's main focus is whether the meaning and intention of the original text information are equally transmitted to the recipient of the target language information. Only when the recipient of the target language receives the basically same amount of information as the reader of the source language, can

the relationship between the target language recipient and the target language information be basically same as that between the source language recipient and the source language information.

6.3.2.1 The Basic Concept

The key to deeply understanding equivalent effect theory is to know the three basic concepts of it, namely, the recipient concept, the effect concept and the equivalence concept (Jindi 1997: 16).

The Recipient Concept

The translation recipient can also be referred to as a reader, listener, or object (ibid). In this book, the translation recipient refers to the target language audiences. Equivalent effect theory holds that the translation recipient is the termination of information transmission, and translation can be completed until it is successfully accepted by the recipient. If the translation only focuses on the absolute loyalty to the original text and neglects whether the translation readers can accept it, and separates the loyalty to the author of the original text from the loyalty to the readers of the target language text, such a translation will be invalid.

Therefore, equivalent effect theory requires the translator to fully understand the recipients of the source language text and the target language text. First of all, the translator must be very familiar with the language and culture of the source language and resonate with the author(s), listeners and readers of the source language on the basis of in-depth study of the source language text. Then the translator must know the readers of the target language text and eliminate the interference of the source language in the face of the source language text, so as to use the target language thinking way to create the translation that can produce basically the same effect to the translation recipient (ibid).

The Effect Concept

When talking about the relationship between information and recipient, Nida sometimes uses the impact of translation on the recipient and sometimes talks about the recipient's response to the translation. From the perspective of response, he emphasizes in the book *The Theory and Practice of Translation* that the translation should not only make the recipient understand, but also make them react with actions (Nida and Taber 2004: 24). Nida believes this is the effect concept. However, Jindi believes that the response and action of the recipient are affected by personal subjective and objective factors and cannot be scientifically defined. Therefore, he proposes that translation effect should refer to the impact of the translation information on the recipient or the feelings aroused by it. Moreover, the effect should include all the

understanding and feelings that the recipient obtains from it, namely the main spirit, artistic conception and specific fact (Jindi 1997: 17). In other words, the genre, style and content of the target language text should be basically the same as that of the source language text, so that the target language readers can get the same or basically the same information as the source language readers (Jindi 1997: 40).

The Equivalence Concept

What is “equivalence”? The equivalence Nida considers “cannot be understood in its mathematical meaning of identity, but only in terms of proximity, i.e. on the basis of degrees of closeness to functional identity” (Nida 2001: 87). Therefore, equivalence is not the total equivalence of effects but the approximate equivalence of effects. Later, Nida further clarified the content of “equivalence” and proposed the minimum functional equivalence and the maximum functional equivalence. The former means that “the target language readers should be able to comprehend it to the point that they can conceive of how the source language readers must have understood and appreciated it” (ibid). The latter means that “the target language readers should be able to understand and appreciate it in essentially the same manner as the source language readers did” (ibid). Although the maximum equivalence is difficult to achieve in translation practice, it is the most basic requirement for the translation to achieve the minimum equivalence, otherwise the translation effect is unacceptable. Therefore, the translator's task is to try to reduce the difference between the source language information and the target language information, and to achieve the closest effect to the source language text with the most natural target language.

6.3.2.2 The Basic Principles

How can we achieve the equivalence of translation, which means the close equivalence of effects? Nida gives the following principles:

1. *If a close, formal translation is likely to result in a misunderstanding of the designative meaning, (a) certain changes must be introduced into the target language text or (b) the literal translation may be retained and a footnote explaining the likely misunderstanding must be added.*
2. *If a close, formal translation makes no sense, i.e. is totally obscure in designative meaning, certain changes may be introduced into the text unless the source language text is purposely obscure, in which case the obscurity may be retained, and a footnote explaining the nature of the obscurity may be very useful and in most instances fully justified.*
3. *If a close, formal translation is so semantically and syntactically difficult that the average person for whom the translation is being made is very likely to give up trying to understand it, certain changes are warranted, although it may be useful to indicate the nature of such changes in an introduction or in footnotes.*

4. *If a close, formal translation is likely to result in serious misunderstanding of the associative meanings of the source language text or in a significant loss in a proper appreciation for the stylistic values of the source language text, it is important to make such adjustments as are necessary to reflect the associative values of the source text.*
5. *The manner in which a translation is to be used has a significant influence upon the extent to which adjustments are to be made.*
6. *The fact that a source language text must be translated in such a way as to occur with accompanying codes usually requires a number of adjustments on all levels: phonology, lexicon, syntax, and discourse (Nida 2001: 92–95).*

Furthermore, Nida points out that the above six principles are of very practical significance to the generation of the target language text of functional equivalence, as follows:

1. *The greater the differences in the source and target cultures, the greater the need for adjustments.*
2. *The greater the differences between the source and target languages, the greater the need for adjustments. In general, however, the differences in culture give rise to more important adjustments than the differences in language.*
3. *The more distinctive (whether idiosyncratic or elevated) the style of the source text, the greater the number of adjustments.*
4. *The greater the differences in social and educational levels of the source and target audiences, the greater the number of adjustments.*
5. *The more a target language text is dependent on an accompanying code, the greater the number and variety of adjustments (Nida 2001: 95).*

In short, the basic principle of equivalent effect theory is to express the same information in different languages. Although there are different recipients, it is necessary to achieve basically the same effect (Jindi 1997: 26).

6.3.2.3 Evaluation Criteria

In Yan Fu's theory of faithfulness (Xin), smoothness (Da) and elegance (Ya), "Da" limits the object, that is the literati class who is congenial to his tastes, while Ya requires the use of characters and syntax before the Han dynasty (Jin 1997: 25). On this basis, Jindi puts forward his own theory of faithfulness, smoothness and spiritual pursuit in combination with Nida's functional equivalence theory. Equivalent translation is to reproduce the source language information with the closest and most natural equivalent target language from semantics to genre (Nida and Taber 2004: 13). It includes the evaluation criteria of translation, which requires translation to be semantically faithful to the original text, namely "faithfulness". The words "most natural" and "closest" actually require the translation to be fluent, accessible and consistent with habits, namely "smoothness". The genre and style of the target text should be equivalent to that of the original text, namely "spiritual pursuit".

Therefore, the evaluation criterion of equivalent translation is whether the translation has achieved the harmony and unity of faithfulness, smoothness and spiritual pursuit (Jin 1997: 87).

1. Xin and Da: principles of faithfulness and smoothness

From Nida's definition of translation, it is not difficult to see that the first principle of translation is to obtain semantic equivalence between the target language text and the source language text by using the closest and most natural equivalent language. Without "faithfulness" to the original text, it's not translation. Therefore, the target language text should be faithful to the source language text information, which is a principle that subtitle translation must abide by. However, subtitle translation is different from ordinary literary translation in that it has its own particularities. In addition to being limited by time and space, subtitle translation should be consistent with screen, actors' mouth shapes and body movements. Therefore, the "principle of faithfulness" in subtitle translation does not mean translating every word of the source language text, but being more faithful to readers while being faithful to the author(s). In the process of translation, the above factors should be taken into account, the translator should use the closest and most natural equivalent language that conforms to the expression habits of the target language to accurately convey the subtitle information of the source language, helping the audiences to understand.

2. Spiritual pursuit: the equivalence of genre and style

In addition to conveying the semantic information of the subtitle of the source language faithfully and accurately, Nida believes that the target language text should be equivalent to the source language text in genre and style. The equivalence of genre and style can also be understood as the equivalence of "spiritual pursuit" referred to by Mr. Jindi, namely the artistic style of words (Jin 1997: 162). Audio-visual translation is also a kind of literary translation, which is not only the conversion of language, but also the transmission and exchange of artistic beauty. Professor Qian Shaochang pointed out that audio-visual language has five characteristics, namely "listening, comprehensiveness, instantaneity, popularity, no note", which is actually the artistic style of audio-visual language. In audio-visual translation, the translator should pay special attention to the popularity and no note of the target language text.

To sum up, in audio-visual subtitle translation, especially in humorous subtitle translation, the translator should take the target language audiences as the center, make the subtitle information be faithful to the source language information by using the closest and most natural equivalent target language while being equivalent to the source language style, and strive to achieve the humorous effect equivalent to the source language subtitle. Nida's definition of translation also includes the evaluation criteria of equivalent translation, that is, semantics, genre and style of the target language text should be closely equivalent to those of the source language text.

6.4 Analysis of Linguistic Humor in Feng's New Year Comedies

6.4.1 Characteristics of Humorous Language in Feng Xiaogang's New Year Comedy Films

The greatest charm of a work of art lies in its unique personality (Xie 2009: 50). The dialogue between characters in films and TV plays is the most important factor in sound (Chion 1999: 67). The greatest charm of Feng Xiaogang's New Year comedies lies in its unique "Feng's humor" dialogue language. Therefore, the following section will analyze the main language mechanism generated by humor in Feng Xiaogang's New Year comedies, so as to reveal the main characteristics of humorous language in Feng Xiaogang's New Year comedy films.

6.4.1.1 The Plebification of the Narrative Perspective

The protagonists in Feng Xiaogang's New Year comedies are all insignificant ordinary citizens, showing a plebeian style in the content, genre and theme of the film. The so-called plebification refers to the plebeian consciousness in the process of creation (Hu 2002: 127). Feng Xiaogang once said, "I am a plebeian director" (Tan 2000: 62). He wanted to shoot something that the audiences would find creative and unexpected (Yu and Feng 1999: 45). The most descriptions in Feng Xiaogang's New Year comedies were the exaggerated and funny struggles, mismatches and occasional warmth that ordinary people encountered in reality (Jin 2005: 103). Feng's films often use a plebeian perspective to put the embarrassment, confusion, expectation and other emotions in the daily life of ordinary people into the seemingly reasonable but absurd plots constructed by Feng Xiaogang, so as to mock and eliminate them in a gamified way. Just because of this, Feng's New Year comedies are easy to infect the general public and win their love and favor.

6.4.1.2 The Language of "Intimacy to People"

Due to the plebeian narrative perspective, the humorous language in Feng's New Year comedies reflects the most real thoughts of ordinary people, thus enabling his humorous language to have obvious characteristics of "intimacy to people", so as to make the audiences feel a sense of identity psychologically. This is mainly manifested in the form and content of humorous language.

The humorous language form in Feng's New Year comedies has folk characteristics, which are reflected in the films' use of a large number of dialects with rich local characteristics, such as Feimo's lines "to be a kind people" full of Sichuan accent in *Hand phone*. The film *A World Without Thieves* also brings together many

local dialects of Henan province, Chinese northeastern areas, Shaanxi province and other regions in China. These films are an audio-visual feast in dialect, making the characters in films more realistic and the plots more vivid, which strikes a chord with the audiences.

The humorous words in Feng's New Year comedies are from daily life. The seemingly simple dialogues are skillfully combined with hot topics in real life, and the seemingly casual jokes are made to find an outlet for the audiences to vent their emotions. For example, in *The Funeral of the Famous Star*, the meeting held by Wang Xiaozhu and Lucy to organize Taylor's funeral is a parody of friendly meetings between state leaders. There are also online auditions for actresses and a crackdown on piracy and so on. In *The Dream Factory*, such topics as flying over the Yellow River and road maintenance fees being spread in gasoline fees all come from plebeian life.

The humorous dialogues in Feng Xiaogang's New Year comedies are all from the daily life of ordinary people. These films rely on Beijing dialects and use a large number of idioms, sayings and two-part allegorical sayings with rich Chinese cultural colors and so on, which are especially colloquial and popular, thus making them have obvious "intimacy to people" characteristics. The Beijing dialect, idioms, sayings, slangs and two-part allegorical sayings with strong Chinese cultural colors become the focus of the following discussion on the translation of humorous dialogues.

6.4.1.3 Irony and Ridicule

Chinese humor has two major functions: one is to be used as sarcasm and admonishment, the other is simply to be used to make people laugh and relax (Jiang 2001: 73). In addition to making people laugh, the humor in Feng Xiaogang's New Year comedies can help the audiences "release psychological tension, relieve mental pressure" (ibid), which can also be used as irony and ridicule. Irony is a significant feature of humorous language in Feng Xiaogang's New Year comedies, which is humorous in form rather than serious. Such arrangement is not just to create a playful atmosphere to make the audiences laugh, but to further use the unique ironic power of humorous language to "implement sideswipe tactics' against social taboos" (ibid), which implicitly touches some long-numb nerves in the society and criticizes the lack of traditional morality and some bad social climates. For example, in *If You Are the One II*, Mangguo and Xiangshan got divorced. This should have been an indecent and sad event, but they held a grand divorce ceremony instead, and Qin Fen's remarks even brought the audiences a sense of humor when he presided over the ceremony. Mangguo and Xiangshan were full of expectations towards sacred love when they got married, and made their promise to it. Swearing to money in divorce creates a huge psychological gap when the audiences experiences the worldly pleasure brought by humorous language. This psychological gap is not full of pain, but tinged with a sense of acerbity caused by ridicule and irony. Feng Xiaogang uses this abnormal scene setting to dispel the sanctity of marriage, revealing many young people's indifference to family and marriage, lack of a sense of responsibility and their distorted

values of marriage. In this way, when the audiences realizes the real intention from the irony, ridicule and cynical humor language, their feelings will suddenly change. They will have a helpless “tearful smile” and make reflection and self-correction in laughter. Then they will have the feeling of admiring this kind of humorous language. The following discussion will also focus on the subtitle translation of those ironic, sarcastic and cynical humorous languages.

6.4.2 The Application of Linguistic Means in the Humor of Feng Xiaogang’s New Year Comedies

After studying humor from the perspective of anthropology, A. Ziff found that the humor skills used by human beings are the same, and the main factors of humor are incongruity, surprise and local logic (Ziff 1992: 4). Chinese humor makes use of linguistic means such as polysemy of Chinese characters, multiple sounds of one character and dialects to make people laugh while clarifying profound meaning (Jiang 2001: 74). The biggest feature in Feng Xiaogang’s New Year comedies is its unique “Feng humor” language, which achieves humorous effect with the help of a variety of linguistic means. Therefore, this section will analyze how the humorous language in Feng Xiaogang’s New Year comedies achieves humorous effects from linguistic means such as pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and figure of speech.

6.4.2.1 With the Help of Pronunciation

With the help of phonetic means, the expression effect of language can be strengthened to a certain extent. People usually use the same or similar pronunciation to express the opposing or deviating meanings, thus creating the humorous effect. Feng Xiaogang creates a refreshing language by using this means and finally gets witty, humorous comedy effect, which is mainly manifested as homonym and intentional mispronouncing in the humorous language of Feng’s New Year comedies.

1. The homonym

Homonym is an important means to form humorous effect. The homonym mentioned in this chapter mainly refers to the clever use of the same or similar phonetic characteristics of different words to achieve humorous effect. Feng Xiaogang uses homonym to link two unrelated words together, which makes the audiences feel confused at first, then laugh with understanding, and finally appreciate the humorous effect.

For example, in *The Dream Factory*, Yao Yuan thinks that the girl standing at the edge of water is going to commit suicide and then shouts “Girl...Girl...”. The other girl, who was standing at the edge of water making out with her boyfriend, thought he was calling her and replied, “You were calling me?”. Yao yuan replied, “No, lady. Go on. I was speaking to the unhappy girl.” Here “辜” is homophonic with “姑”. In *Sorry Baby*, Ruan Dawei is in charge of an elderly tour group, and the

secretary says, "Welcome Peebles' arrival". So he calls several big cars to pick up the people, but he only receives one person at the station, whose name is "Peebles". It is a similar homonym with "people's", which produces a misunderstanding and makes the audiences laugh when they understand. In *A world without thieves*, general manager Liu said "go" after he gave nanny Lanlan the money, Lanlan thought Liu was asking if the money was enough, so she answered "够" (which means enough in Chinese and sounds similar to "go"). After hearing this, Liu replied: "No, no. It's English. Come is come. Go is Go". Here the English word "go" is a homonym with the Chinese character "够", whose pronunciation "gou" is similar to the English word "go". Feng's New Year comedies often use such homophonic means to link two completely unrelated words together, creating an unexpected coincidence to the audiences. They will experience the wisdom of language and laugh after they have sudden enlightenment.

1. Deliberate mispronunciation

Deliberate mispronunciation means deliberately mispronouncing a character or the correct pronunciation of a phrase for humorous effect. In his films, Feng Xiaogang makes use of this phonetic method to create a relaxing and humorous atmosphere to win the audience's recognition, thus adding a lot of humor to the film. For example, in *The Funeral of the Famous Star*, Yoyo, who is laid off and cannot speak English, mispronouns the English word "money" as "marnee" and is laughed at by Lucy. Instead, Yoyo asks Lucy "What is Marnee?" When Lucy replies with "money", Yoyo jokes: "You can understand me if I cannot pronounce it correctly?" Such phonetic mispronouncing vividly reflects the cunning wit of Youyou, thus creating a humorous effect.

6.4.2.2 With the Help of Wording

Standard wording is the general requirement of speaking or writing. But sometimes in order to express the effect, we can split a certain conventional language unit or change the word order (Gao 2006: 93). The humorous effect can be generated by violating the customary language habits to produce new semantics. The creation of humorous effect with the help of wording in Feng's New Year comedies is mainly reflected in the clipping, parody, inclusion, reinterpretation of words and other aspects.

1. The clipping of words

Clipping refers to taking only a few words from a phrase to express the author's intention, leaving the rest of words alone (Gao 2006: 117). Feng's New Year comedies often deliberately clip some words, break through conventions and create ambiguity, so as to create a humorous comic atmosphere and provoke the audiences to laugh. For example, in *The Dream Factory*, there is such a sentence in the agreement drafted by Yao Yuan: ...Party B, a day's walking in good dream, abbreviated to dreamwalking. "A day's walking in good dream" is the name of the Dream Company. While dreamwalking refers to a person's unconscious walking while he is asleep.

Yao Yuan just clips the words “dream” and “walking” from “A day’s walking in good dream”, which makes the meaning different from previous meaning, thus creating a joke with ambiguity for the audiences (Sun 2011: 16).

2. The parody of words

Sometimes, in order to express some new concepts and new things, people intentionally imitate the existing words, sentences and chapters to create new expressions (Gao 2006: 81), which makes the original words, sentences and chapters achieve unexpected effects. Feng’s New Year comedies parody well-known advertising names, idioms and proper nouns. Words parody is most widely used in *Funeral of the Famous Star*, such as mourning bird beer, Feisi shampoo, Master Lun contact lenses, donkey sports shoes, Chinese film golden bird award and so on. In *The Dream Factory*, the actress’ name Tang lijun is a parody of a famous singer’s name Deng lijun. In *If You Are the One*, “love at second sight” is a parody of “love at first sight”. In *If You Are the One II*, “taking advantage of her perilous state” is a parody of “taking advantage of another’s perilous state”. In *A World Without Thieves*, “No thieves in the sun” is a parody of “No people in the eyes”. Words parody creates new lexical semantics and forms a deviation and contrast with old words. It combines familiar words with unfamiliar words, and flashes the light of humor in the unity of opposites.

2. The inclusion of words

The inclusion of words is to add some foreign words or classical Chinese words into the vernacular, which can enhance the expressive force of language (Gao 2006: 184). Inclusion can be divided into two types: classical Chinese-vernacular inclusion and sino-foreign inclusion. Sino-foreign inclusion is more widely used in Feng’s New Year comedies. Aristotle thought that although ordinary words combinations were clear in meaning and easy to understand, they were dull and banal (Gao 2006: 186). Therefore, Feng Xiaogang uses the unconventional language combination of mixing foreign words with Mandarin to achieve a vivid and humorous narrative, and makes his language quite exotic at the same time. For example, in *Funeral of the Famous Star*, Youyou said a sentence “No money, no woman is tragic.” In *If You Are the One*, Boss Fan says, “Then speak your mother tongue! Nice to meet you!” In *Be There or Be Square*, Liu yuan said, “This is very nice!” The inclusion of sino-foreign words makes people regard language as a tool for entertainment, which frees them from the strict bondage of language norms and brings people psychological freshness and pleasure.

3. The reinterpretation of words

When the information presented by the speaker/author is different from the information possessed by the listener/reader, the communication between the two is usually interrupted. This is particularly evident in humor, because humor is directly determined by the conflict between the information possessed by the reader and the current facts (Corral and Irene 1988: 25–27). Words reinterpretation refers to temporarily adding a new meaning to a word for expression (Gao 2006: 72), changing the meaning of common words, and activating the reader’s or listener’s curiosity to decode again,

which makes people laugh from the enlightenment of homonym. Feng Xiaogang used this technique in several New Year comedy films by taking advantage of people's pursuit of new excitement and satisfaction of their curiosity. For example, in *If You Are the One*, Qin Fen reinterpreted the term "venture capital", believing that "venture capital, as its name implies, means investing more with more risks and never investing without risks". In *If You Are the One II*, the reinterpretation of "couple" is: "they don't have to stay together in happiness, but they must stay together in bad luck. According to her theory, this is called couple." There is another reinterpretation of "imperial service": the imperial service that I understand is to treat the feet as a face and enjoy it supremely, but sometimes people really treat their feet as a face. Through the reinterpretation of words, Feng leads the audiences to think outside the box and creates a pleasant sense of wonder in imagination, which makes people laugh.

6.4.2.3 Grammar Innovation

In interpersonal communication, speakers usually communicate in accordance with certain grammatical rules. If this rule is broken by either party, the communication will not go smoothly. But sometimes we can achieve specific expression effect from grammatical innovation. In Feng Xiaogang's New Year comedies, humorous effects are often achieved through grammatical means such as the flexible use of word categories, the unusual collocation of words and intra-sentence transposition.

1. The flexible use of word categories

The flexible use of word categories is to change the part of speech of words so that they have different meanings (Huang and Liao 2002: 312). In Feng's New Year comedies, such grammatical means can be used to make plain and straightforward dialogue look novel and unique. For example, in *The Funeral of the Famous Star*, Youyou says "...It is not only the Taylor's hometown music, but also sounds more China." "China" is originally a noun, but here it is modified with the degree adverb "more" to transform the part of speech into an adjective, thus leading to language deviation from the conventional routine and causing infinite association of the audiences.

2. The unusual collocation of words

The unusual collocation of words is that words are not used in a conventional way, but they can better explain the speaker's intention. The dialogue language in Feng's New Year comedy films often breaks the conventional collocation habit and deviates from normal grammar habit, so as to achieve a unique, novel and humorous effect. For example, in *Sorry Baby*, Xiao Yun says to Han Dong, "I'm not kidding you. I'm seriously threatening you!" The word "threat" already contains seriousness, but Xiao Yun deliberately adds "seriousness" in front of "threat", dispelling the seriousness of "threat" and bringing the audiences pleasure of breaking through the convention.

3. The intra-sentence transposition

The intra-sentence transposition is a form of transposition. The so-called transposition is to intentionally exchange the location of two language units to make a novel feeling (Gao 2006: 113). In Feng's New Year comedy films, the grammatical means of intra-sentence transposition is used to create a humorous atmosphere, so as to meet the audience's entertainment and appreciation needs. For example, in *Sorry Baby*, Liu Yuan puts "leniency for those who confess, severity for those who resist" into "severity for those who confess, leniency for those who resist". This huge contrast that does not conform to the specific fact gives people a sense of humor, making the audiences laugh after watching.

6.4.2.4 With the Help of Figure of Speech

Without figure of speech, discourse cannot produce humorous effect (Hu 1987: 67), and there are as many as sixty figures of speech that can express humorous atmosphere (Gao 2006: 50). In Feng's New Year comedies, a variety of figures of speech are flexibly used in dialogue language to highlight humorous effect, and the commonly used figures of speech are metaphor, analepsis and prolepsis, periphrasis, repetition, hyperbole and citation and so on.

1. Metaphor

The most commonly used figure of speech is metaphor in Feng's New Year comedy films. Metaphor is to use one thing to express another by using similarities between different things (Luo 2000: 121). The metaphor is that the words that usually describe one thing are used to describe another, which produces deviation, resulting in a humorous effect. There are four basic elements of metaphor: ontology, vehicles, vehicles words and similarity. According to whether the four elements of metaphor appear or not, metaphor can be divided into simile, metaphor and metonymy. For example, in *Sorry Baby*, Han Dong says, "Stand next to a fountain..., with some pigeons on your head..., and you could be a Greek statue." In *If You Are the One II*, Qin Fen says, "I'm not cold, I'm as hot as a pot of fire." In *If You Are the One*, the female shareholder says, "Actually, I think marriage-seeking is the same as speculation in the stock market." In *A World Without Thieves*, Shagen is compared to a "sheep", and Wangbo is compared to a "wolf", "sheepdog" and so on.

2. Inversion

Inversion is the use of words in disorder, which results in the mismatch of the relationship between things and causes people to laugh (Gao 2006: 237). There are three types of inversion: the violation of logic, the violation of context and inappropriate translation. Among them, the violation of context refers to that the language used is not suitable for the object and the occasion, that is, what is said is contrary to the context, which makes the language sound funny. The violation of context often appears in Feng's New Year comedies, the most typical manifestation is the use of mismatch of politicized words. Politicized words refer to the words with strong political meaning, especially the solemn, serious and lofty words that were widely used in

the revolutionary war era. The mismatch of politicized words is often used in Feng's New Year comedies. For example, in *A World Without Thieves*, the leader of the theft gang, Uncle Li lectured that "An organization without discipline!", "people scattered, so the team is not easy to lead!" "In our work together, hope you will all strive to keep reaching new heights." In *Be There or Be Square*, American policemen shout "serve the people" and "good morning, leader" in Liuyuan's class. Feng Xiaogang uses political discourse to talk about things that have nothing to do with politics (Yuan 1999: 201), which gives the audiences a sense of political ridicule. The inversion of context gives people a strong contrast, thus resulting in a humorous effect.

3. Periphrasis

Periphrasis means expressing the intention tortuously, not directly (Gao 2006: 195), giving people a novel and unique feeling of twists and turns (Gao 2006: 200). The use of periphrasis in Feng's New Year comedies is exactly the expression of Feng Xiaogang's gamified attitude. He wants to let the audiences understand the speaker's intention in enlightenment, so as to produce a kind of joy of successful deciphering. For example, in *If You Are the One*, Qin Fen met a woman on a blind date, but he didn't know she was pregnant. At this time, Qin Fen did not directly express that he could not accept this fact, but euphemistically borrowed "put a Mercedes ornament on the hood of a BMW" to compare the possible misplacement of the relationship in the future.

4. Repetition

Repetition is deliberately arranged in a specific context (Gao 2006: 76). This kind of expression deliberately pursues repetition and redundancy, which can temporarily prevent listeners and readers from rational thinking and make them ponder over the interest of the text, resulting in a funny feeling (Gao 2006: 81). In Feng's New Year comedy films, the use of repetition makes the originally mechanical and monotonous repetition full of humorous comedy color. For example, in *Sorry Baby*, when Han Dong asks Ruan Dawei for money of his car, there is a repetition of the word "meaning" between them. In *A World Without Thieves*, there is a repetition of the word "brain" between Wang Bo and the robber, achieving the purpose of amusing the audiences.

4. Hyperbole

Hyperbole is for the expression. The speaker deliberately deviates from the objective truth so as to stimulate the reader's interest and strike a chord (Gao 2006: 222). Hyperbole is a rhetorical device commonly used in Feng's New Year comedy films. Through excessively hyperbolic character language, the characteristics of things are highlighted and the attitude of the speaker is shown, so as to infect the audiences and leave them space for association. For example, in *The Dream Factory*, Yao Yuan's uncle said that Boss You was "Boss You almost become a weasel", "His eyes would sent out green shine when the nights falls", and "He even ate the rats. He seems ready to eat man". Although the language is hyperbolic, its use is reasonable, which not only vividly shows boss You's hunger for "meat", but also shows the attitude of

Yao Yuan's uncle to boss You "scourging" the whole village. The character image of Boss You is successfully created, making the audiences feel funny.

To sum up, the reason why the character lines in Feng Xiaogang's New Year comedies can become a unique Feng's humor is the use of various linguistic means in the film, including phonetics, words, grammar and rhetorical means. The interactive use of language means successfully lets the audiences feel a sense of comedy brought by "Feng's humor", which is the reason that the humorous dialogues in Feng Xiaogang's New Year comedies are widely imitated and read by the public. The following discussion will focus on the English translation of dialogue languages using the above-mentioned means to achieve humor.

6.4.3 The Classification of Humor in Feng Xiaogang's New Year Comedies

There seems to be no final conclusion on the classification of humor in the academic circle. At present, the common classification of humor includes situational humor and language humor. The former refers to making jokes mainly by relying on the development of the plot in a specific situation (Sun et al. 2001: 108). The latter can also be called non-situational humor, which is not dependent on or little dependent on the situation and mainly creates humorous language by using the variation or technical use of language factors (Mao 1992: 49). J. R. Schmitz divides humor into universal humor, culture-based humor, and linguistic humor in more detail (Schmitz 2002: 89–113). The humor in this chapter is presented in the form of subtitles. As far as J. R. Schmitz's classification of humor is concerned, universal humor has the highest translatability because of its great national commonness, which can be understood by people with their own logical thinking, reasoning ability and general knowledge and experience. Due to its special historical and cultural background, cultural humor requires the recipient of the target language to have certain cultural background knowledge of the source language, so the translatability is lower than that of universal humor. The translatability of language humor is similar to that of cultural humor due to the limitations of language characteristics and structures of different languages.

In order to facilitate the discussion on subtitle translation of humorous dialogue and synthesize the analysis of Feng's humor characteristics and language means in the first two sections of this chapter, the study in this chapter classifies the humor in Feng's New Year comedies into three types according to the classification of humor by J. R. Schmitz (2002): universal humor, culture-based humor, and linguistic humor.

6.4.3.1 Universal Humor

Universal humor refers to humorous situations and humorous events, in which language only plays a recording role (quoted by Zhou 2006: 105). This type of humor mainly involves the subtitle translation of ironic, sarcastic and cynical humorous language.

(1) Source Text:

小芸:有一只公鸡,有一只母鸡,母鸡下了个蛋,公鸡就追着母鸡咬,你说那是为什么?

大伟:追着咬?这公鸡为什么追着母鸡咬啊

韩冬:它下的是鸭蛋!

——《没完没了》

Target Text:

Xiao Yun: There was a rooster and a hen. The hen lays an egg. And the rooster starts chasing and pecking her. Guess why.

Da Wei: He tried to peck her? Why?

Han Dong: Because the hen laid a duck egg.

—— *Sorry Baby*

(2) Source Text:

韩冬:要想不疼,就得快进快出,快进快出,快进快出

.....

对不起,还得打一次,太紧张了忘了推药了

——《没完没了》

Target Text:

Han Dong: For it to be painless, it's in fast, out fast. In...out.

In quick, out quick.

...

Sorry, I have to do it again. I was so nervous I forgot to inject the drugs.

—— *Sorry Baby*

The first example is a joke Xiao Yun told to Ruan Dawei. The second example is a paragraph Han Dong said to make himself calm down before giving Xiao Yun an injection. But he forgot to push the medicine when giving an injection.

6.4.3.2 Linguistic Humor

Linguistic humor refers to the humor formed by the variation of language elements such as pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar and the creative use of various rhetorical devices (quoted by Li 1996: 12). The interactive use of four language means such as pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and figures of speech in Feng's New Year comedies makes the audiences laugh, achieving humorous effects, which will be discussed in detail in the following article. It needs to be pointed out that this

type of humor sometimes needs to be analyzed in combination with the context and the identity of the characters in the movie scenes. Let's take an example:

Source Text:

刘元:你们谁能在黑板上把老师的名字写出来?(学生甲站黑板前写)

刘元:这是留作业的留,不是姓刘的刘。

学生乙:老师,我会。(讲完也去黑板上写)

刘元:这就更不对了,这是流氓的流。

众学生:老师,流氓是什么?

刘元:流氓就是坏人,你们看老师像坏人吗?

众学生:像!

——《不见不散》

Target Text:

Liu Yuan: Who can write my name on blackboard?

(Student A is writing on the blackboard)

Liu Yuan: That's the wrong Liu.

Student B: Teacher, I know. (Then go to write on the blackboard)

Liu Yuan: That's even more wrong. That's the "liu" in the word hooligan.

Students: What's a hooligan?

Liu Yuan: A bad man. Do I look like a bad man?

Student B: Yes.

—— *Be There or Be Square*

In the dialogue above, the three Chinese characters “刘、留和流” have the same pronunciation. Liu Yuan teaches the students “rascal” and asks them if he looks like a rascal. Unexpectedly, the students all say “yes”, thus making the dialogue humorous.

6.4.3.3 Cultural-Based Humor

Cultural-based humor refers to the cultural expressions with ethnic culture as background and distinct ethnic characteristics, such as idioms, proverbs, allusions, proper nouns and so on.

(1) Source Text:

征婚女:过去五年我都不知道他每天晚上在哪过夜

现在终于知道他住哪了

秦奋:你给他找的地儿吧

征婚女:颜春岭公墓,什么时候找什么时候在。

秦奋:那是,他要是跑了就成聊斋了

——《非诚勿扰》

Target Text:

Woman: These past five years didn't even know where he slept at night. I finally know where he is.

Qin Fen: You found him a spot?

Womam: Yanchun Ridge Cemetery. Whenever I need him, he's there.

Qin Fen: If he runs away now, you should get your money back.

—— If You Are the One

(2) Source Text:

秦奋:你要离我就接孟姜女的班,把剩下那段长城也哭塌了。

——《非诚勿扰二》

Target Text:

Qinfen: If you divorce me, I will cry until the Great Wall collapses.

—— If You Are the One 2

The words “Liaozhai” in Example 1 and “Meng Jiangnv” in Example 2 are cultural words with Chinese characteristics. If the audience does not understand the cultural connotations of these two words, they will not be able to fully appreciate the humor of these dialogues.

6.5 Analysis of Equivalent Effect in English Subtitle Translation of Humor in Feng's New Year Comedies

6.5.1 Humorous Subtitle Translation Under the Equivalent Effect Theory

6.5.1.1 Characteristics of Humorous Subtitle Translation

Humorous subtitle translation belongs to subtitle translation, so it has general characteristics of subtitle translation.

There are two reasons why subtitle translation is special: one is limited by time and space; the other is the particularity of film language.

The duration of subtitle translation displayed on the screen is affected by two channels, namely the film language channel and visual channel. In short, the translation should be synchronized with the dialogues, actions and pictures of characters in the film. At the same time, the position, length and word count of subtitles on the screen should meet the audiences' need for convenient reading. When the audiences' eyes turn to the movie screen and the subtitles at the bottom of the screen, their attention will be distracted a little, resulting in information loss (Zhao 2005: 14). Therefore, the subtitle translation must be economical. English subtitle should be no more than two lines at a time. Chinese subtitle should be no more than one line with less than 13 characters (Asher and Simpson 1994: 1067).

Film and TV drama is a comprehensive art combining sound and image. The dialogue of the characters in film and TV drama is spoken language, so the audiences can not only see it on the screen, but also hear it. The dialogue is so fleeting that

audiences have to give up if they can't understand the meaning of one of the lines, otherwise they will miss the rest of the lines. This is different from reading novels, essays and other written works in the form of pure words. Due to the large number of audiences, the audiences' educational level of film and TV drama is not as high as that of literary works. Therefore, the dialogue in film and TV drama must be popular so that people can understand it at the first sight, which requires the subtitle translation to be elegant, popular and colloquial language, and avoid too flowery and obscure dialogue. Due to the limit of time and space on screen, subtitles in film and TV drama are generally difficult to be annotated to explain.

To sum up, these characteristics of subtitle language are mutually restrictive. In translation, translators should not only consider time and space limits, but also pay attention to using concise, smooth and popular language to accurately convey the basic information, genre and style of the original text, so as to help audiences better understand films and TV dramas.

6.5.1.2 The Connection Between Humorous Subtitle Translation and Equivalent Effect Theory

Humorous translation can cause despair, just like poetry translation (Roland 1989: 20). In *Better than the Original: Humorous Translations that Succeed*, Nilsen D. L. studied humorous translation from three aspects of language form, semantics and pragmatics, and believed that humor could not only be translatable, but also that the target language text could be even better than the source language text (Nilsen 1989: 130). Zabalbeascoa believes that humor is translatable and the humorous effect of language can be restored from the aspects of language and literature, culture and pragmatics (Zabal 2005: 13). To sum up, humor is translatable, and the main purpose of translation is to convey the humor in the source language to the target language and make the target language listeners and readers laugh because of humor, which is the goal of Nida's equivalent effect theory. This goal is applicable to different types of translation, because the different requirements of different types of translation on form and content are ultimately concentrated in the effect of the target language text on the recipient. No matter literary or non-literary translation, it is necessary for translators to strive for the closest effect to the source language text within the possible range. The successfully equivalent humorous translation should not only accurately convey the meaning of the original text, but also convey the same or basically the same humorous effect of the original text. So, how to achieve equivalent English subtitle translation of Feng's humor?

Among the above-mentioned six basic principles of equivalent effect theory, due to the characteristics of subtitle language, such as listening, instantaneity and no note, the first, second and third principles all require the translation to be annotated, which is not applicable to subtitle translation; while the fourth, fifth and sixth principles can be well applied to humorous subtitle translation.

The humor in Feng Xiaogang's New Year comedies is conveyed by subtitle language. At the same time, due to the five characteristics of subtitle language and the

limitation of time and space in subtitle translation, translators should properly adjust the translation according to the distinctive characteristics in the process of equivalent translation of humorous subtitle. Different types of humor need different translation strategies. If literal translation leads to the inability of the target language readers to correctly understand the associative meaning or style of the original text, it is necessary to adjust the target language text. But the premise is to ensure that the signified meaning, associative meaning and style of the target language text are consistent with that of the source language text, and corresponding adjustments should be made to the pronunciation, word, syntax and discourse of the target language text. The phonetic means such as homonym was used to create humorous effects in Feng Xiaogang's New Year comedies. Therefore, translators should choose effective translation strategies to achieve equivalent humorous effects according to specific situation, such as transposition compensation method and so on (Nida 2001: 92-94).

Audio-visual translation is also a kind of literary translation, which is not only the conversion of language, but also the transmission and exchange of artistic beauty. The five characteristics of film language are also the artistic style of film language. In audio-visual translation, the translator should pay special attention to the popularization and non-annotation of the target language text and maintain the equivalence of the genre and style between the target language text and the source language text. In short, in the process of humorous subtitle translation, the translator should flexibly adopt the closest, the most natural equivalent language conforming to the target language expression habits. On the basis of accurately conveying the subtitle semantics of the source language, the translator should try to achieve the equivalence of the genre and style between the target language text and the source language text, so that the target language audiences can have the same or basically the same sense of humor while obtaining the same or basically the same information as the source language audiences, achieving the close equivalence of effects between the target language text and the source language text.

6.5.2 An Analysis of Equivalent English Translation Examples of Humor in Feng Xiaogang's New Year Comedies

When translating the humorous subtitle in Feng Xiaogang's New Year comedy films, the translator's ultimate goal is to make the subtitle translation achieve the same or basically the same humorous effect as the source language text and make the target language audiences laugh. If translators can achieve this goal, such translation is equivalent according to equivalent effect theory.

6.5.2.1 Literal Translation

Universal humor refers to humorous situations or events. With the development of the movie plot, the audiences can experience humor by virtue of common logical thinking and understanding of human beings. “The key to the human brain mechanism by which human can communicate with each other lies in their ability to reason logically” (Sperber and Wilson 1986: 24). Therefore, when translating this kind of humor, the translator can achieve the unity of “faithfulness, expressiveness and spiritual pursuit” of the target language text by adopting literal translation, producing similar or even the same humorous effect as the source language text.

(1) Source Text:

香山:我能问你一个问题么?

馨予:嗯。

香山:北极熊为什么不吃企鹅宝宝呢?

馨予:是好像没有听说有吃过啊,为什么呢?

香山:是啊,为什么呢?

馨予:你知道吗?北极熊为什么不吃企鹅宝宝呢?

秦奋:因为企鹅宝宝生活在南极,它跟北极熊见不着面。

——《非诚勿扰2》

Target Text:

Xiang Shan: Can I ask you a question?

Xin Yu: Okay.

Xiang Shan: Why don't penguins ever get eaten by polar bears?

Xin Yu: That's true. Why?

Xiang Shan: Right. Why?

Xin Yu: Do you know why? Why don't they get eaten by polar bears?

Qin Fen: That's because penguins live at the South Pole. They will never run into any polar bears.

——*If You Are the One 2*

(2) Source Text:

For the Chinese subtitles, please see example 1 in the previous section

——《没完没了》

Target Text:

Xiao Yun: There was a rooster and a hen. The hen lays an egg. And the rooster starts chasing and pecking her. Guess why.

Da Wei: He tried to peck her? Why?

Han Dong: Because the hen laid a duck egg.

——*Sorry Baby*

(3) Source Text:

For the Chinese subtitles, please see example 2 in the previous section

——《没完没了》

Target Text:

Han Dong: For it to be painless, it's in fast, out fast. In...out.

In quick, out quick.

...

Sorry, I have to do it again. I was so nervous I forgot to inject the drugs.

—*Sorry Baby*

The above three examples all belong to universal humor and do not contain any untranslatable culture gap words or figures of speech, nor do they contain untranslatable humorous elements. With the development of the plot, audiences can easily understand the humor in characters' dialogue. Therefore, the translator adopts literal translation strategy to accurately convey the literal meaning of humorous words to the target language audiences, so that the target language audiences can have the same joyful humorous feelings as the source language audiences. Due to the foregoing and the limitation of time and space in subtitle translation, the translator concisely translated Xinyu's words "That's true. Why?" in example 1 and Dawei's words "He tried to peck her? Why?" in example 2 as "Why?". The language is concise and accurate, which not only takes up less screen space, but also saves the audience's time to read subtitles, and will not cause understanding obstacles to audiences.

The language humor effects in Feng Xiaogang's New Year comedies are achieved by language means such as pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and figures of speech. When translating this kind of humor, in order to achieve functional equivalence of the translation, the translator should not only truly reproduce the information of the source language text in language conforming to the expression habits of the target language, but also pay attention to the retention of the language characteristics of the source language text, so that the target language audiences can have similar or basically the same aesthetic feelings with the source language audiences psychologically. Therefore, when translating this kind of humor, literal translation is a good choice. Literal translation "is ideally the segmentation of the SL text into individual words and TL rendering of those word-segments one at a time" (Douglas 1998: 91). According to the characteristics of dialogue language, the translator should flexibly use translation strategies and methods to reproduce the humorous effect of Feng's humorous language and avoid the information loss of the target language text and the loss of language effect under the limitations of time and space.

(4) Source Text:

韩冬:你要站一喷水池边上不动

肩膀上脸上再落点鸽子粪

就特像一希腊雕像

——《没完没了》

Target Text:

Han Dong: Stand next to a fountain...

with some pigeons on your head...

and you could be a Greek statue.

——*Sorry Baby*

(5) Source Text:

子舅:尤老板都快变成黄鼠狼了
一到夜里,他两眼睛就发绿光
姚远:他现在想吃肉了吧?
二舅:他连耗子都吃了,就差要吃人哟。
姚远:那咱院子里的鸡是不是都让他吃了?
二舅:全村的鸡啊,他都没饶咯!
——《甲方乙方》

Target Text:

Uncle: Boss You almost become a weasel
His eyes would sent out green shine when the nights falls.
Yao Yuan: Does he want to eat meat now?
Uncle: He even ate the rats.He seems ready to eat man
Yao Yuan: So he ate up all chicken in our yard?
Uncle: He's not soft to any chicken in our village
——*The Dream Factory*

(6) Source Text:

秦奋:宝马车头上插一奔驰的标,这恐怕不太合适吧?
怀孕女孩:能开不就行了吗?
秦奋:可要是出了故障,奔驰的零件配不上,宝马又不管修,要不我还是算了吧!

Target Text:

Qin Fen: You can't just put a Mercedes ornament on the hood of a BMW.
Girl: It will still be a good car.
Qin Fen: But if it breaks down, Mercedes parts won't fit and BMW won't repair it...We should forget it!
——*If You Are the One*

(7) Source Text:

王薄:我有IQ,你没有!
.....
王薄:IQ是智商
劫犯甲:智商是什么东西?拿来!
王薄:智商是脑子。
劫犯乙:哎呀,真笨!他说你没脑子!
劫犯甲:你才没脑子呢
劫犯乙:不是我说你没脑子,是他说你没脑子!
劫犯甲:你咒我没脑子你!
王薄:我没有说你没脑子,我说你缺心眼
——《天下无贼》

Target Text:

Wang: I have an IQ. But you don't.
Wang: IQ is "intelligence quotient".
Robber A: What's that? Hand it over.

Wang: It means brains.

Robber B: You're thick! He's saying you have no brains.

Robber A: You're the one without brains.

Robber B: I didn't say you had no brains. He did

Robber A: You said I have no brains!

Wang: I didn't say you had no brains, I said you lacked a mind.

—*A World Without Thieves*

The above four examples use figures of speech to achieve humorous effect. Metaphor was used in example 4. For example, Han Dong compares Xiaoyun's dress to a Greek sculpture after she wears the curtain. Hyperbole was used in example 5, which vividly showed Boss You's hunger for meat. Periphrasis was used in example 6. The repetition of the word "brain" was used in example 7. According to Nida's equivalence principle, humorous language does not contain any untranslatable elements. The translator can achieve functional equivalence of the signified meaning and associative meaning between the English translation by adopting literal translation strategy, which will not only not bring understanding obstacles to English audiences, but also very effectively convey humorous effects of dialogues. Therefore, there is no need for translators to make adjustments in form when translating this kind of language humor. The literal translation strategy can be adopted.

Culture and language are inseparable. Because translation is the conversion of two languages, it must involve the conversion of two cultures. Because of this, the translation of humor is a cross-cultural activity. Translators are not only "bilingual intermediaries" (Kozloff 2000: 89), but also "cultural intermediaries" (ibid). If a translator does not understand the social background and cultural knowledge contained in a language, he will not be able to fully master the language (Wang 1989: 18). In other words, translation is not just done word-for-word. It also needs to convey the implied meaning, intention and effect of the source language text from a macroscopic cultural perspective. The translation of humor is no exception.

Although different nations have different cultures, the humor conveyed by some cultural images is universal. In other words, in some cases, listeners and readers with different cultural backgrounds can have the same or similar associations and psychological feelings when facing the same image. In this regard, the translator can convey the image of the source language to the target language audiences using literal translation method, so as to achieve the unity of "faithfulness, expressiveness and spiritual pursuit", which can help the target language audiences get the same or basically the same aesthetic feeling as the source language audiences.

(8) Source Text:

秦奋:剪喜字。

——《非诚勿扰2》

Target Text:

Qin Fen: Cut the character of "happiness".

——*If You Are the One 2*

In *If You Are the One II*, Xiangshan and Mangguo held a grand divorce ceremony, during which Qinfen asked them to cut the Chinese character “double happiness” in public, which represents festivity and reunion. Due to the limitation of time and space and the non-annotation of subtitle translation, it is impossible for translators to annotate the Chinese character “喜” with Chinese characteristics. However, even foreign audiences who do not know the word “喜” can understand it because of the auxiliary explanation of the movie scenes. Therefore, the translator can translate it word for word by adopting literal translation method, which can not only retain the “sentiment” and “charm” of the source language culture as is mentioned by Lu Xun, but also fully disseminate the source language culture and more effectively promote the communication between different cultures.

(9) Source Text:

大伟:你再给我两千块钱,咱们俩就谁也不该谁的了。
韩冬:阮大伟你别往绝路上逼我,兔子急了还咬人呢。
——《没完没了》

Target Text:

Da Wei: Give me 2000 and I'll forget the whole thing.
Han: Don't push me. Even a rabbit will bite.
——*Sorry Baby*

(10) Source Text:

王薄:但是如果人死到另外一个世界的话.....那里的鬼也喜欢钱。那句话怎么说的来着?
王丽:有钱能使鬼推磨。

Target Text:

Wang Bo: But if we go to another world... ghosts there will like money too. How does that saying go?
Wang Li: Even ghosts will work for money.
——*A World Without Thieves*

In the above examples, due to the intercommunity of culture, some cultural images are universal in different ethnic cultures, which can make people have the same or similar associations. Therefore, the effect of functional equivalence can be achieved in translation of humor in this kind of culture by adopting literal translation method.

6.5.2.2 Domestication

Translation is a purposeful activity. The translator should combine the translation purpose with the cultural background of the target language recipient and selectively translate from the multiple information provided by the source language (Nord 2001: 5). “Language itself is the carrier and container of cultural information” (Liu 1999: 28–29). It reflects the characteristics of a nation and is compatible with its history and culture. Film is not only a comprehensive art, but also a cultural product, reflecting the values and ideology of a society or group. As a part of film, it is inevitable

that there will be words with the color of ethnic culture in subtitle dialogue. The humorous language in Feng's New Year comedies is no exception, which contains a lot of cultural humor. If audiences do not have corresponding history, customs and other social and cultural background knowledge, they cannot successfully understand the "laughing effect" of cultural humor. Therefore, according to the requirements of the fourth principle in Nida's equivalence theory, the translator should not only faithfully convey the semantics, genre and style of the original text, but also pay attention to whether the cultural image is conveyed equivalently and whether the target language audience gets the aesthetic experience similar to that of the source language audiences. So, when facing this kind of humor, the translator should flexibly use translation strategies to make certain adjustments to the translation according to specific situation. The translator should ensure that cultural images can produce the same or close effect in different languages, and achieve similar or even the same humorous effect as the source language text while ensuring the faithfulness and smoothness of the translation.

Newmark pointed out that domestication is usually adopted in comedy translation because of some cultural elements that are difficult to translate in it (Newmark 2001: 68). Therefore, when translating cultural humor in Feng's New Year comedies, the translator must reasonably recreate and adopt domestication method to reproduce the semantics, figures of speech and even culture of the source language text in order to make the target language text readers accept the information conveyed by the author(s) of the source language text to the maximum extent and have similar or basically the same feelings with the source language text readers.

"The translator leaves the reader in peace, as much as possible, and moves the author towards him" (Venuti 1995: 20). This translation method is domestication, that is, "the image of the stranger in the source language is replaced by the image familiar to the target language readers to reduce the 'exoticism' of the target text" (Lian 2006: 317). In other words, the domestication method can also be called "substitution method", which requires the translator to replace the culture gap words in the source language with equivalent or corresponding words in the target language, so that the translation can be accessible and natural and is easy to be understood and accepted by the audiences. These equivalent or corresponding words in the target language can be "similar in form and identical in meaning" or "different in form and identical in meaning" (ibid).

(1) Source Text:

北雁:哎呀,我这忙得脚巴丫子都朝天了。

——《甲方乙方》

Target Text:

Bei Yan: I'm busy here as a spider weaving a web.

——*The Dream Factory*

(2) Source Text:

傻根:你们怎么跟我老乡似的把人想得都那么坏!

王丽:人心隔肚皮。害人之心不可有,防人之心不可无。

——《天下无贼》

Target Text:

Sha Gen: You're just like the villagers. You think people are all bad!

Wang: You can't judge a book by its cover. Harbor no malice but don't be a fool.

—*A World Without Thieves*

(3) Source Text:

韩冬:租一船够贵了吧?

大伟:舍不得孩子套不着狼。

——《没完没了》

Target Text:

Han Dong: Was it expensive to rent?

Da Wei: No pain, no gain.

——*Sorry Baby*

In example 1, the sentence “忙得脚巴丫子都朝天了” means a person is very busy, which can be properly translated as “be busy as a spider weaving a web” by adopting domestication method in English translation. The author suggests that it should be translated as “as busy as a bee”, which not only has less words, but also is an idiomatic expression that means busyness. In example 2, the sentence “人心隔肚皮” has corresponding expression in English, that is “can't judge a book by its cover”, and the corresponding English expression of “害人之心不可有, 防人之心不可无” is “harbor no malice but don't be a fool”. In example 3, the saying “no pain, no gain” can be used to express the Chinese proverb “舍不得孩子套不住狼 (which means if you want to achieve a goal, you must put some efforts)”. Such expressions properly convey its meaning to the English audiences, so that they can have similar or basically the same aesthetic experience with the Chinese audiences.

(4) Source Text:

笑笑:你征婚都征到杭州来啦,网撒得可真够大的。

秦奋:我也是有枣没枣打一杆子。

——《非诚勿扰》

Target Text:

Smiley: You came all the way to Hangzhou?

Really casting a wide net

Qin Fen: Can't leave any stone unturned.

——*If You Are the One*

(5) Source Text:

笑笑:你这叫有诚意啊?

秦奋:我这叫以其人之道还治其人之身。

——《非诚勿扰》

Target Text:

Smiley: You call that faithful?

Qin Fen: It's called paying her back in her own coin.

——*If You Are the One*

(6) Source Text:

李清:我觉得你这样特别不好,吃着碗里的看着锅里的。

——《不见不散》

Target Text:

Li Qing: I think that's terrible. Eating what's on your plate but eyeing the kitchen.

——*Be There or Be Square*

The Chinese idioms and sayings in the above examples can be found in English with corresponding functional equivalent expressions. Therefore, translators adopt the domestication method to translate all of them, which not only changes the unique cultural images in the source language into similar images in the target language, but also uses the language expression habits familiar to the target language audiences. Such translation conforms to the principles of faithfulness, style equivalence and effect equivalence and can make them have the same response as the source language audiences, and successfully receive the cultural and aesthetic information conveyed by the source language, thus achieving the functional equivalence of subtitle translation.

6.5.2.3 Explicit Meaning Approach

The explicit meaning approach can also be called implicit approach, that is, the translator does not translate the literal meaning, but the correct implied meaning hidden behind the literal meaning, which can help the target language audiences understand. Some cultural humor dialogues in Feng Xiaogang's New Year comedies can be understood by audiences with corresponding cultural context. Because the target language audiences have different cultural contexts, cognitive contexts with the source language audiences, they don't understand the implicit meaning of some words in the source language. Sometimes the corresponding expressions cannot be found in the target language. If the translator adopts literal translation strategy, the target language audiences will not understand the humor of dialogues and don't have a good understanding of the film. So, it will be difficult to achieve communicative function of humor. In this case, the translator can translate the implied meaning using explicit meaning approach, which will help create the maximum contextual effect for the target language audiences and make them produce similar or basically the same psychological experience with the source language audiences.

(1) Source Text:

王小柱:我到时准备,让雪村站在这车头上唱。

尤优:你老跟我要小心眼子,我告诉你,

想方设法把你演出公司的关系户往我这推.....

——《大腕》

Target Text:

Wang: Xue Cun can sing from the roof of the truck.

You You: Always working an angle.

You're using the funeral to kiss friends' asses.

—*Funeral of the Famous Star*

(2) Source Text:

二师兄:我入道的时候,你也就是个三好学生。

小叶:你少跟我这摆谱!

——《天下无贼》

Target Text:

Brother: When I joined the brotherhood, you were just a schoolgirl.

Xiao Ye: Stop pulling seniority on me!

——*A World Without Thieves*

(3) Source Text:

刘元:你瞅这帮孩子中国话还没说利落呢,

我教他们《荷塘月色》他们也听得懂啊!.....

李清:反正你总是有理!

——《不见不散》

Target Text:

Liu Yuan: Look, these kids can't even speak Chinese freely.

How could they understand sophisticated Chinese essay

if I teach them that? ...

Li Qing: I guess that makes sense.

——*Be There or Be Square*

In the above three examples, the words “关系户”, “三好学生”, “摆谱” and “荷塘月色” all have strong Chinese cultural connotations, and the corresponding expressions cannot be found in English. Foreign audiences who do not have a certain understanding and accumulation of Chinese culture cannot truly appreciate the cultural information conveyed by these words. If the translator adopts literal translation method, they will not have similar or basically the same aesthetic experience with the Chinese audiences. If adopting omission method, there will be missing meaning. Moreover, because dialogues in films and TV drama are characterized by instantaneity and non-annotation, and there are limitations of time and space in subtitle translation, it is impossible for translators to annotate and explain these words. Therefore, the translator flexibly adopts explicit meaning approach, translating their implied meaning as “kiss friends' asses”, “a school girl”, “pulling seniority on sb.”, “sophisticated Chinese essay”. Such translation will not only not cause barriers for English audiences to understand the plot, but also help them produce similar or basically the same response with the Chinese audiences, thus achieving the equivalent conveying of humorous effect in dialogue translation.

(4) Source Text:

梁子:回老爷太太,张佃户家的租子还是没收齐啊!

姚远:那不成啊,得按合同办哪!地主家也没有余粮啊!

梁子:是啊,猪,他们家昨儿自个给吃了,大丫头,前儿也走了西口了。

——《甲方乙方》

Target Text:

Liang Zi: Lord and lady, we've collected all the rent owed by the tenant named Zhang.

Yao Yuan: That's not allowed. That contract should be fully honored. A landlord family may also lack grain.

Liang Zi: Yes, Lord. His family already ate the pig, and his eldest daughter left here two days ago.

—*The Dream Factory*

(5) Source Text:

失意青年:真是天上掉下个林妹妹啊!你怎么就看上我了,
咱们见都没见过。

北雁:算命的先生说,咱俩有姻缘,我很信命的。

——《甲方乙方》

Target Text:

Man: You're surely a beauty dropping out of the blue. Why has fallen in love with me? We even didn't meet each other before this.

Bei Yan: A fortuneteller told me that you and I are destined to marry. I believe in fate.

——*The Dream Factory*

In example 4, “走西口” refers to a kind of migration activity during the Qing Dynasty. In example 5, “林妹妹” refers to Lin Daiyu who has a pretty face in *A Dream of Red Mansions*. Nowadays, it is generally used to describe women with good looks. Both of these words are cultural words with Chinese characteristics. When audiences' attention turn to the movie screen and subtitles at the bottom of the screen respectively, their attention will be distracted more or less, resulting in information loss (Gottlieb 1998: 154). Therefore, in order to minimize information loss and not affect the audiences' viewing of the film, the translator adopts explicit meaning approach to translate the implied meaning of the two words, which can not only make the target language audiences have similar or basically the same aesthetic experience with the source language audiences, but also help the audiences better understand the plot of the film.

After the detailed analysis above, it is not difficult to find that if the translators want to achieve the equivalent translation of different types of humor, they should flexibly adopt corresponding strategies to equivalently convey the humorous effect according to specific situation. The universal humor, language humor and culture humor in Feng's New Year comedies are deeply rooted in profound Chinese culture background. If the translator wants to achieve functional equivalence between English subtitle translation and the source language text and helps English audiences have similar or basically the same psychological feelings and aesthetic experience with Chinese audiences psychologically, they should flexibly adopt translation strategies according to specific situation while ensuring complete information and accurate conveying of cultural images. If the translator adopts literal translation method, the signified meaning and associative meaning of the target language text will be consistent with the source language text. Then there is no need to adjust the form of the target language text. Or, the translator should consider adopting domestication method and explicit meaning approach to achieve the goal of effect equivalence in

the target language text. In a word, the translator should try to reduce the differences, strive for the unity of faithfulness, expressiveness and spiritual pursuit in the target language text, and try to use the most natural language to achieve the effect closest to the original text.

6.5.3 *An Analysis on the Non-equivalent English Translation Examples of Humor in Feng's New Year Comedies*

The language and culture in each nation are unique and have their own characteristics. Different languages have different font structures and phonetic systems. Because of different cultures, humorous language also has a distinctive national character. Therefore, not all language humor and culture humor can achieve equivalency. The following will analyze the situation about the subtitles of language humor and culture humor cannot achieve functional equivalence in Feng's New Year comedies, and summarize the deep reasons why the translation fails to achieve equivalence.

6.5.3.1 Differences in Language and Pronunciation

As we all know, different languages have different font structures and phonetic systems. Their counterparts can be found in translation between homologous or cognate language. However, because it is difficult and even impossible to find their counterparts, the translatability is limited or it is even untranslatable when converting languages in different language families, such as English and Chinese. This can be proven in the English translation of language humor subtitles in Feng's New Year comedy films.

(1) Source Text:

姚远:姑娘, 姑娘...
 姑娘甲:哎, 是喊我吗?
 姚远:您继续, 我喊那不姓辜的呢!
 ——《甲方乙方》

Target Text:

Yao Yuan: Girl...Girl...
 Girl A: You were calling me?
 Yao Yuan: No, lady. Go on. I was speaking to the unhappy girl.
 ——*The Dream Factory*

(2) Source Text:

刘元:你们谁能在黑板上把老师的名字写出来?
 (学生甲站黑板前写)
 刘元:这是留作业的留, 不是姓刘的刘。
 学生乙:老师, 我会。(讲完也去黑板上写)

刘元:这就更不对了,这是流氓的流。

众学生:老师,流氓是什么?

刘元:流氓就是坏人,你们看老师像坏人吗?

众学生:像!

——《不见不散》

Target Text:

Liu Yuan: Who can write my name on blackboard?

(Student A is writing on the blackboard)

Liu Yuan: That's the wrong Liu.

Student B: Teacher, I know. (Then go to write on the blackboard)

Liu Yuan: That's even more wrong. That's the "liu" in the word hooligan.

Students: What's a hooligan?

Liu Yuan: A bad man. Do I look like a bad man?

Student B: Yes.

——*Be There or Be Square*

The above two examples use homonym, a phonetic means, to achieve the humorous effect of dialogue language. Among them, “辜” and “姑” in “姑娘” have the same pronunciation and “留” and “流” have the same pronunciation with “刘” in “刘元”. Look at their own translation, the sentence “不姓辜的” in example 1, which contains the homonym “辜”, was not translated correctly, but translated into “I was speaking to the unhappy girl” by using free translation method. The words “流氓的流” in example 2 was translated into “‘Liu’ in hooligan”. Although such translation achieves meaning equivalence with the source language text, the humorous effect conveyed by homonym in dialogues of the source language text cannot be manifested in English translation, which doesn't make English audiences have the same humorous and pleasurable experience with Chinese audiences psychologically. Therefore, such translation is not equivalent. There are another two similar examples.

(3) Source Text:

黎叔:认识一下。姓胡名黎,胡黎。

承蒙道上兄弟错爱,都叫我一声黎叔。敢问兄弟是哪路神仙?

王薄:神仙不敢当,我就是个六亲不认的过路鬼。

——《天下无贼》

Target Text:

Uncle Li: Allow me to introduce myself.

“Surname Hu, given name Lee. Hu Lee.”

As a small courtesy, the brotherhood calls me Uncle Lee.

From whence does this immortal hall?

Wang Bo: I am not immortal.

Just a friendless ghost passing through.

——*A World Without Thieves*

(4) Source Text:

老总:别跟你阿姨说是我给你的钱。Go。
 兰兰:够了。
 老总:什么够了?这是英语,来是come,去是go。
 ——《天下无贼》

Target Text:

Boss: Don't tell Auntie I gave it to you. Go.
 Lan Lan: Enough.
 Boss: No, no. It's English. Come is come. Go is Go.
 ——*A World Without Thieves*

In example 3, “胡黎” is homophonic with “狐狸”, indicating implicitly that Uncle Li is a person as cunning as the fox. In example 4, because the English word “go” is homophonic with the Chinese character “够”, there is a misunderstanding between the boss and Lan Lan, which makes the dialogue humorous and amuses the audiences. Look at their own translation, in example 3, “胡黎” was directly transliterated as “Hu Lee”. Unless the English audiences have some knowledge of the pronunciation of the Chinese word “狐狸” and its cultural connotation, it is almost impossible for them to appreciate the humor in it. In other words, the equivalence of the target language text will be affected by bilingual ability of the target language audiences. In example 4, the homophonic word of “go” whose meaning is “enough” cannot be found in English, so the word “go” was translated into “enough” to ensure that the audiences could understand the plot of the movie. However, the humor brought by the homonym cannot be conveyed.

6.5.3.2 Differences in Cultural Backgrounds

In addition to phonetic means, a lot of figures of speech were used to achieve humorous effect in Feng's humor. In the use of parody and inversion, because the dialogue language in Feng's humor has rich Chinese cultural color, if the translator wants the target language audiences to understand the humor in it as the source language audiences, the target language audiences must have some knowledge of Chinese culture. Otherwise, the humorous equivalence will not be achieved in English humorous subtitle translation, which cannot be called equivalent translation. In other words, the functional equivalence of such cultural humor will be affected by bilingual cultural knowledge ability of the target language audiences. Here's an example:

(1) Source Text:

旁白:秦奋已经不年轻了,北京话:苍孙。
 苍孙无限好,只是近黄昏。
 ——《非诚勿扰2》

Target Text:

Qin Fen is no longer a young man.
 He is already “over the hill”.

A man who'll be kicking the bucket soon
 ——*If You Are the One 2*

The sentence “苍孙无限好, 只是近黄昏” is the parody of a verse “夕阳无限好, 只是近黄昏”, which is a famous poem *On the Plain of Imperial Tombs* written by a poet Li Shangyin in Tang Dynasty. Although the subtitle translation of this dialogue accurately and concisely conveyed the dialogue meaning to the English audiences by using paraphrase strategy, the psychological association of the Chinese audiences when seeing this verse cannot be imagined by general English audiences who are not familiar with Chinese poetry. In other words, the English translation of this dialogue cannot make English audiences have similar or basically the same aesthetic experience with Chinese audiences. Therefore, the translation is not equivalent according to Nida's equivalent effect theory.

(2) Source Text:

李清:你怎么了?你看不见了吗?看不见李清了吗?
 刘元:不,我看得见。
 黑夜给了我黑色的眼睛, 我看见你望着我,
 你像玻璃杯里的冰块一样透明。
 ——《不见不散》

Target Text:

Li Qing: What's wrong? Can't you see me?
 Liu Yuan: Yes, I can see you.

At night in the darkness I see you looking at with the sun shining behind you. You look as transparent as pure cubes of ice in a crystal glass.

——*Be There or Be Square*

The sentence “黑夜给了我黑色的眼睛, 我却用它寻找光明。” comes from a poetry *One Generation* written by Gu Cheng, while Feng Xiaogang changes this classic line into “黑夜给了我黑色的眼睛, 我看见你望着我……”, just as example 1. The general English audiences who are not familiar with Chinese literature cannot have similar or basically the same humorous experience with Chinese audiences. Therefore, this English translation is not equivalent.

Now let's look at the use of inversion. The politicized words are often inverted in Feng's New Year comedies, which gives the audiences a sense of political ridicule. This inversion in the context gives people a strong contrast, thus resulting in humorous effect. That is to say, if general English audiences want to have similar or basically the same funny feeling with Chinese audiences, they must have some understanding of Chinese political culture. Or they will find the subtitles as boring as plain description.

(3) Source Text:

黎叔:说了多少次了, 要团结!

Target Text:

Uncle Lee: I've said it a hundred times: we need teamwork.

(4) Source Text:

黎叔:希望你们在今后的工作中,百尺笑头,更上一步。

Target Text: Uncle Lee: In our work together, hope you will all strive to keep reaching new heights.

(5) Source Text:

黎叔:有组织,无纪律!

——《天下无贼》

Target Text:

Uncle Lee: An organization without discipline!

——*A World Without Thieves*

Uncle Li in *A World Without Thieves* is the leader of a gang of thieves. When he lectured his subordinates, he used solemn and lofty politicized words such as “team-work”, “keep reaching new heights”, “organization” and “discipline”, which should have been the words superior leaders said to subordinates in government organs. This kind of context inversion makes people feel funny. Then look at the English translation of these dialogues, the translator adopted the literal translation strategy, and translated the culture gap words “keep reaching new heights” by using the paraphrase method. Therefore, the translator accurately conveyed the literal meaning of these dialogues to the target language audiences by adopting the language expression habits consistent with the target language, thus achieving “faithfulness and expressiveness”. As for the humor conveyed by using inversion in the above dialogue, that means whether the target language audiences can experience the same or basically the same sense of humor as the source language audiences depends on the target language audience’s understanding of Chinese political culture. This is one of the limitations of equivalent effect theory, which overestimates the bilingual ability and cultural knowledge reserve of the target language audiences. Here’s another example:

(6) Source Text:

刘元:今天的课就上到这儿,下课!同学们辛苦了。

美国警察:为人民服务。

——《不见不散》

Target Text:

Liu Yuan: That’s it for today class! Dismissed!

American police: Serve the people.

——*Be There or Be Square*

“Thank you for XX hard work!” and “Serve the people” are the political words with typical Chinese characteristics. When an American police officer said it, it makes people feel a little funny more or less, creating a humorous effect. For those foreign audiences who are not familiar with Chinese political culture and cannot understand the words “Serve the people” with strong political color, it is difficult for them to experience the funny feeling brought by language inversion of violating context. Therefore, such a translation cannot be called an equivalent translation in this respect.

After discussing the situation that the equivalent translation of language humor cannot be achieved, we know that culture is a big barrier to the equivalent translation of humor. Every nation's culture is unique, and language is the carrier of culture. Therefore, it is very difficult for translators to achieve functional equivalence of translation of cultural humorous language, unless the corresponding expression of culture images is found in the target language. Or the same cultural image in the target text can make the target language audiences have similar or basically the same feelings with the source language audiences because of human common thinking ability and affective experience. The translator can obtain the equivalent translation by adopting translation strategies such as domestication, literal translation, transposition compensation, and explicit meaning. In other words, there is still a lot of cultural humor that cannot achieve equivalent translation. Moreover, due to the characteristics of film language and the limitations of time and space in subtitle translation, it is more impossible for translators to explain these culture humor by using annotation strategy, such as the English translation of humorous subtitles in Feng Xiaogang's New Year comedies.

(7) Source Text:

王小柱:接下来就是由中国著名笑星——冯巩、牛群合说的相声悼词,叫戏说泰勒。
——《大腕》

Target Text:

Wang Xiaozhu: Next we'll have a stand-up comedy routine: "The Joke is on Tyler."
——*The Funeral of the Famous Star*

(8) Source Text:

秦奋:结了我可是不离的。你要离我就接孟姜女的班,把剩下那段长城也哭塌了。
——《非诚勿扰二》

Target Text:

Qin Fen: I'll never get divorced. If you divorce me,
I will cry until the Great Wall collapses.
——*If You Are the One 2*

The deletion translation strategy was used in example 7 and example 8, which deleted the translation of some words with Chinese cultural color, such as Feng Gong, Niu Qun and Meng Jiangnv. Although such translation does not hinder the English audience's understanding of the development of the film plot, it causes the absence of cultural images, and cannot make the English audiences have the same or basically the same cultural aesthetic experience with the Chinese audiences. Therefore, such translation is not equivalent according to equivalent effect theory.

(9) Source Text:

秦奋:那咱俩要是结婚了,非得倒插门我去你们那吗?不去不行吗?
——《非诚勿扰》

Target Text:

Qinfen: So if we get married, do I have to come to you through the door? Why don't you just go?

—*If You Are the One*

(10) Source Text:

征婚女:过去五年我都不知道他每天晚上在哪过夜,现在终于知道他住哪了。

秦奋:你给他找的地儿吧?

征婚女:颜春岭公墓,什么时候找什么时候在。

秦奋:那是,他要是跑了就成聊斋了。

——《非诚勿扰》

Target Text:

Woman: These past five years didn't even know where he slept at night. I finally know where he is.

Qin Fen: You found him a spot?

Woman: Yanchun Ridge Cemetery. Whenever I need him, he's there.

Qin Fen: If he runs away now, you should get your money back.

——*If You Are the One*

In example 9 and example 10, the deletion translation method and explicit meaning approach are adopted by translators to deal with such words with Chinese unique phenomena and literary culture as “倒插门” and “聊斋”. Similar to the effect of the English translation in the previous two examples, although they provide the most relevant context for the English audiences to understand these dialogues and plots in the limited time and space of subtitles, it is still inevitable to cause the absence of cultural images. This is same as the following two examples.

(11) Source Text:

刘元:咱俩的关系该往前迈一步了,工作生活要齐头并举。

连美国警察都知道鲁迅、关汉卿是谁了,咱俩可还没那什么呢。

李清:一说正事你就往这事上拐,不分场合,不分地点。

Target Text:

Liu Yuan: Enough work.

We need to take our relationship a step further.

Li Qing: Do you always have to bring that up?

(12) Source Text:

刘元:说我没有大志向,我真是比窦娥还冤。

我是没有你那当中产阶级小财主的志向。

李清:是说冤了你了啊,你怎么不把那么好的主意献给国家呀?

——《不见不散》

Target Text:

Liu Yuan: And you said I wasn't ambitious. It's just my ambition is different from your pretty bourgeois desires.

Li Qing: So why don't you suggest this to our government.

——*Be There or Be Square*

From what has been discussed above, we can know there are two reasons why humor subtitle translation cannot obtain equivalent humor. First, different languages have a unique structure and phonetic system, etc. When translators can't substitute one word for another and transpose these words to achieve equivalent translation, it is required that the target language audiences have enough bilingual ability to experience a sense of humor brought by transliteration. Second, because different nationalities have different culture, only in the same cultural context can people know cultural information contained in some culture gap words and some culture images. When translators cannot use domestication, explicit meaning approach and other translation strategies to ensure that the target language text has the same or basically the same signified meaning, associative meaning and style with the source language text, it is required that the target language audiences have a certain level of bilingual cultural ability to experience the humorous feelings brought by literal translation. As a result, some English translations of language humor and cultural humor in the humorous subtitles of Feng's New Year comedies cannot achieve the same or basically the same humorous effect with Chinese and make English audiences laugh. As Jeroen Vandaele puts it, "The relative or absolute untranslatability is generally related to cultural and linguistic aspects" (Jeroen 1988: 150).

From what has been discussed above, we can draw the following two conclusions.

First, the main purpose of humor translation is to enable the target language audiences to get the same or similar sense of humor with the source language audiences, and to laugh because of humor. People have the same physiological function and all kinds of emotions. The emotional experience caused by the external influence is similar or even the same, such as the emotional experience of humor. The equivalent effect theory advocates centering around the target language audiences and using the closest and most natural equivalent language to achieve the functional equivalence between the target language text and the source language text in terms of semantics and genre. In the process of humorous subtitle translation, translators should also take into account the time and space limits of subtitle translation and the five characteristics of film language, and flexibly adopt different translation strategies for different translation objects in subtitles. Although different languages have different phonetic systems, structures and other characteristics, they are all generated in roughly the same material conditions, and with the communication between different nationalities, the expressions of the same thing in different languages often have something in common. Therefore, under the guidance of equivalent effect theory, most humorous equivalent subtitle translations can be created.

Secondly, the humorous subtitle translation has some limitations. First of all, the differences in the national culture, education level, values, logical thinking and other aspects of the listeners and readers affect their understanding and response to the language, so it is hard to ensure that the target language listeners and readers can always have the same or basically the same response with the source language listeners and readers. Secondly, the purpose of equivalent effect theory is that the target language text can make the target language listeners and readers have the same or basically the same feeling with the source language listeners and readers, which requires the target language audiences to have considerable bilingual ability

and bilingual cultural ability and also requires that the translator's foreign language level should be as high or even higher as his native language level, so as to create an equivalent translation that can make the target language audiences have the same or basically the same response with the source language audiences. However, these two requirements often cannot be achieved at the same time, which leads to the nonequivalent translation. As discussed above, if the target language audiences want to have same or basically the same reaction to the translation of humor produced by using parody and inversion devices and the translation of cultural humor with Chinese cultural connotation with the source language audiences, the target language audiences must have considerable understanding of Chinese culture.

Chapter 7

On the English Translation of Culture-Loaded Words in *Finding Mr. Right* from the Perspective of Manipulation Theory



Rong Weng

7.1 An Introduction to *Finding Mr. Right*

Finding Mr. Right is a Chinese light romance comedy directed by Xue Xiaolu and starring Tang Wei and Wu Xiubo. It has made box office success upon its release. The film mirrors the current mindset of young Chinese through the characters' dialogues which contain a large number of culture-loaded words. The film is released with bilingual subtitles, and the subtitle translation strategies embodied in the English subtitles are worth studying, especially the translation of culture-loaded words, which is the object of this chapter.

Based on Lefevere's manipulation theory, this chapter takes the subtitle translation of *Finding Mr. Right* as the object, studies the English translation of culture-loaded words, analyses manipulation factors, discusses the translation strategies adopted for culture-loaded words from the perspective of manipulation theory, and demonstrates how to translate culture-loaded words in the film to meet the film publicity requirements and the requirements that film subtitle needs to be concise and accurate and to match the beautiful film scenes.

Like other Chinese films, the official subtitle translation of *Finding Mr. Right* is approved by China's National Radio and Television Administration and the Chinese government. At the same time, film subtitle, as a form of oral literature, is also by mainstream poetics within the framework of literature. Ideology of the patronages manipulates the translation of culture-loaded words and the translator to choose between spreading Chinese ideology and catering to the ideology of English-speaking countries, and to adopt domestication or foreignization depending on the situation. In the manipulation factor of poetics, subtitle translation has its unique poetic characteristics, therefore translators should combine the characteristics of subtitle translation to adopt retranslation or transcreation according to the manipulation of poetic factors.

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7.2 Theoretical Basis

7.2.1 *Manipulation Theory*

7.2.1.1 The Manipulation School and Manipulation

In 1985, Theo Hermans, a famous British translation theorist, compiled the articles of Tully, Lambert and Basnett into a collection, *The Manipulation of Literature: Studies of Literary Translation*, in which he proposed that “*from the point of view of the target literature, all translation implies a degree of manipulation of the source text for a certain purpose*” (Hermans 1985: 11) Thus a new school of thought was born—the *Manipulation school*.

The manipulation school believes that translation is not limited to the study of the text, but should also take into account manipulation factors beyond the text. And like Hermans, Alvarez and Vidal believe that “*in order for the translation to exist, there must have been not only a perfect assimilation of the linguistic content, but also of the experience of the other culture*” (Alvarez and Vidal 1996: 3). The manipulation school believes that “the constructed nature of cultural translations shows how translation is always producing rather than merely reflecting or imitating an *original*” (Niranjana 1992: 81). They have moved away from blind pursuit of linguistic equivalence to acknowledging its manipulation nature (Hornby 1988: 22). There are even scholars of the manipulation school who believe that the translation is apart from the source text after it is produced and no longer has any textual or verbal meaning to the source text (Toury 1985: 19). The views of the manipulation school created a great stir in the translation theory circles at that time and the manipulation school became one of the mainstream schools of translation in Europe.

7.2.1.2 Lefevere’s Manipulation Theory

Translating Being Rewriting

Lefevere’s manipulation theory is the theoretical basis of this thesis. Lefevere is a leading contemporary theorist in the field of literary translation and one of the most influential scholars in translation studies.

Lefevere introduces political, social and cultural factors outside the literary system into translation study. He points out that translation does not take place in a vacuum, and that translation strategies at the linguistic level cannot explain all translation phenomena. In addition to language, translation is also manipulated and influenced by the dominant ideology and poetics in the cultural, historical and social context (Chen 2009: 13). Lefevere sees translation as rewriting and manipulation of the source language. All rewriting reflects a certain ideology and poetics, and the manipulation of ideology and poetics functions in a particular way in a particular society. Rewriting

is “to see through the manipulations of all sorts of texts in all sorts of media, and to express their own views” (Scholes 1985: 15).

Since Lefevere’s masterpiece, *Translation, Rewriting and Cultural Manipulation*, was published in 1992, manipulation theory has received more and more attention from scholars, and its study has become increasingly popular. Many scholars have realized that translation is not just a word-by-word translation from one text to another, and we need to change our previous narrow-minded ideas and emphasize every factor that influence translation, such as society, time, author, translation, and reader (Xu and Wang 1997: 39). These factors can ultimately be summed up as three elements of manipulation, namely poetics, patronages, and the dominant ideology of the translated language literature during translation.

Three Elements of Manipulation

The first one is *Poetics*.

Poetics is an important element of manipulation, “consisting of two components: one is an inventory of literary devices, genres, motifs, prototypical characters and situations, and symbols; the other a concept of what the role of literature is, or should be, in the social system as a whole” (Lefevere 1992: 26). While the first factor is not directly influenced by the social system, “the latter concept is influential in the selection of themes that must be relevant to the social system if the work of literature is to be noticed at all. In its formative phase a poetics reflects both the devices and the ‘functional view’ of the literary production dominant in a literary system when its poetics was first codified. Once a poetics is codified, it exerts a tremendous system—conforming influence on the further development of a literary system” (Lefevere 1985: 26).

The second one is *Ideology*.

Lefevere believes that translation is constrained by ideology, which, like an invisible hand, manipulates translation at both the macro and micro levels (Mu 2006: 14). At the micro level, ideology manipulates the purpose of the translation, the selection of the source text, the translator’s understanding of the source text and the choice of translation strategies. The adoption of translations, and the change and rewriting of the text means the deletion, omission and rewriting of the source text. At the macro level, ideology manipulates the shaping of cultural identity and the process of cross-cultural communication. Ideology changes the narrow-minded ideas of the past and explains many translation phenomena in a scientific and rational way. On the other hand, we should also avoid the extremism in the manipulation school and realize that ideology does not absolutely control translation activities, and that its influence on translation is relative (Jiang 2003: 30).

The third one is *Patronage*.

In order to better analyze the influence of ideology on translation, Lefevere adds the concept of patronage to the factors influencing manipulation. Among the manipulation mechanisms of patronage, he considers translation as a rewriting of the source text (Bassnett and Lefevere 1993: ix). “*Patrons, he argued, can be individuals, such as the Medicis or Louis XIV; groups, such as a religious body or a political party; or institutions, such as publishing firms or school systems*” (Gentzler 2004: 137). In addition, Lefevere believes that patronage does not directly interfere with literary creation or translation, but regulate literary writing and publication through academic, censorship or educational institutions. In the past, compared with ideology and poetics, the patronage factor has not received much attention from translation scholars, because the relationship between translators and patronages is usually not open to the public, and it is also assumed by translation scholars based on experience, which is relatively abstract. However, patronage’s influence on translator and patronage’s manipulation of translation do exist, but the degrees of them are different (Bao 2011: 16).

7.2.2 *Culture-Loaded Words*

7.2.2.1 **Definition of Culture-Loaded Words**

Translation is a dynamic process of cross-cultural communication between languages. Language is a reflection of the current social situation (Bassnett 2004: 21), a product of culture, influenced by culture, and a carrier of culture, so language contains many culture-loaded words that reflect the culture of a country or a nation, and these culture-loaded words contain different cultural characteristics. Culture is shaped by geography, social system, religious belief, lifestyle, and thought pattern. Culture-loaded words have rich cultural connotations, possess cultural specificity, arise in a certain cultural background, and reappear cultural connotations through words. Culture-loaded words may convey a concept that does not exist in the culture of the targeted language. Be abstract or concrete, it may be related to lifestyle and religious belief, and is a concept with cultural specificity (Baker 2000: 21). “*There will be a translation problem unless there is cultural overlap between the source and the target language (and its readership)*” (Newmark 2001: 94). Therefore, a better understanding of culture-loaded words can help translators effectively convey the information of the source language during translation, and the study of culture-loaded words is an important part of cross-cultural communication.

7.2.2.2 Culture-Loaded Words in *Finding Mr. Right*

“Taking young people as the subject and performance object, youth films, with young people as the main audience, have distinctive youth culture” (Song 2010: 130). “In China, because of the education system, youth refers to the period from high school graduation to marriage, and it should be said that ‘love’ is the brightest flower on the tree of ‘youth’” (Wei 2011: 43). The film is based on the love story between an unmarried pregnant woman Wen Jiajia and a middle-aged man Frank. It is a reflection of the modern young people. Culture-loaded words are “symbolic units with deep cultural connotations” (Hu 2012: 100–101). The definition shows that words with cultural connotations such as function words and modal particles can also be classified as culture-loaded words. The lines in the movie are characterized by the strong language features of young people, who are generally well-educated and like to use old Chinese sayings and idioms. The dialogues in the film also rely heavily on the use of function words. “Function word is a main means of expressing grammatical relations in Chinese and an important feature of Chinese” (Li 2003: preface). The artful use of function words makes the language convey sarcasm or humor from time to time. The old sayings, idioms and function words that the characters blurt out in the film are loaded with deep meanings which have carried rich cultural connotations in the development of Chinese. How to present the connotation of culture-loaded words to the Western audience is an important issue that translators must consider during the process of subtitle translation.

7.3 The Manipulation Theory and *Finding Mr. Right*

7.3.1 Patronage of *Finding Mr. Right*

Wen Jiajia is the mistress of a rich Chinese businessman, Mr. Zhong. Under Zhong’s arrangement, the pregnant woman, Wen Jiajia goes to Seattle, a place she has been longing for a long time, alone. She is waiting to give birth at a Chinese-owned birth care center in Seattle, expecting to give birth a child with American nationality. Jiajia is a straightforward but money-oriented woman, enjoying a luxurious life, however, and the disappearance of Zhong makes her experience another life and changes her from heart.

Frank once was a famous doctor in a major Hospital in Shanghai. He is loyal, gentle and considerate. He quit his job due to family reasons and came to Seattle to take care of his daughter. Frank, who started anew in the United States, is the driver of Wen Jiajia’s confinement center. He works diligently and takes good care of Wen Jiajia when she is in distress.

Being brought together, Frank and Wen Jiajia have developed a love affair, but Zhong’s subordinates appear and take Jiajia and her son back to China. But at the end of the film, love wins and Wen Jiajia takes her son to Seattle for love again.

7.3.2 *Manipulation Factors in Subtitle Translation of Finding Mr. Right*

7.3.2.1 *The Patronage of Finding Mr. Right*

Like other Chinese youth romantic films in recent years, the economic factor of *Finding Mr. Right*'s patronage is mainly influenced by the investor and producer. The investors and producers mainly consider the commercial value of the film, and hope the film can attract the audience's attention, therefore the audience's preference influences the investors' and producers' ideas to some extent, and the audience is also the patronage of the film subtitle translation. Although all of the factors may affect the translation of film subtitles, in China, "all film production studios, TV series production studios, etc. within the territory of China shall apply for a license to National Radio and Television Administration governed by the State Council" (Song 2010: 36). Before the film is released, the film has to be examined by relevant departments. Therefore its initial script creation and subsequent shooting, especially the editing and translation work, will take National Radio and Television Administration's criteria into account. There is no doubt that the Chinese government occupies the highest social status in the patronage system, because only with the government's permission and support can a film be released. Therefore, National Radio and Television Administration, a government department, is the most important influence factor among the patronages, and its criteria guides the trend of Chinese films. It means that the most influential patronage, the government departments, attaches great importance to whether the film can guide the correct social values, spread excellent ideology of China, and promote a positive image of China.

"Patronage is the most concrete embodiment of power, which can facilitate or interfere with the production and dissemination of translation and strengthen the ideas of the patronage's ideology" (Liu 2009: 423). Like many Chinese films, *Finding Mr. Right* is a microcosm of the country's current situation, presenting the image of China. In a government-based patronage system, investors and producers of the film patronage's economy must comply with government regulations in order for the film to pass the examination. On the other hand, the preferences of Chinese audience are also influenced by the national ideology. Therefore, the author believes that when discussing the patronage of the film's subtitle translation, we can mainly explore the influence of the patronage's ideology. As this part overlaps with ideology factor in manipulation theory, the author will discuss this part in the ideology factor.

7.3.2.2 *Youth Film: A Propaganda Tool for Ideology*

Film is a medium of cultural communication to the outside world. Culture embodies the spirit on which a nation depends for survival, and while it is necessary to study its surface, it needs to get to the core of the culture, which means that it is necessary to study its essence on which it lives-political culture, that is, the attitudes,

beliefs, and emotions to a country from the political perspective (Xu 2011: 4). As a romantic Chinese film, the subtitle translation of *Finding Mr. Right* involves the world's understanding of China and is a topic related to the image of China. The ideology embodied in the subtitle translation of youth films includes not only the patronage's ideology discussed above, but also the ideology of subtitle translators. As Chinese, translators also hope that their translation can contribute as much as they can to the establishment of a good image of their motherland in the world, and it can be said that translators' ideology is also mainly influenced by the ideology of the Chinese government.

Due to the difference in history and ideology between China and the Western countries, there must be a conflict of ideas. Under the world guided by the U.S.-led Western countries, how China can deliver its voice and how it can be accepted by the mainstream world are questions that all social circles led by the Chinese government must think about. Film is the window of ideological communication, and the subtitle translation that bridges for it affects the outside world's perception of China and is an important issue in Chinese diplomatic politics. Therefore, subtitle translations involving ideology are mostly related to politics, and when dealing with such issues, the Chinese government mainly chooses between reflecting the ideology of China faithfully and catering to the ideology of English-speaking countries.

7.3.2.3 The Mainstream Poetics in Subtitle Translation of *Finding Mr. Right*

As a special form of translation, film subtitle translation is not only influenced by the patronage's ideology, but also controlled by poetic factors. "*Patronage control ideology and professionals control poetics*" (Zheng and Yu 2007: 80). When the content of subtitle translation concerns the ideological conflict between China and the West, the translator has to submit to the ideological consideration of the Chinese government. However, the translator as a "professional" has the power in occasions without such an ideological conflict.

According to Lefevere, poetics consists of two parts, one of which is "*a series of literary elements such as literary devices, literary styles, themes, archetypes of characters, plots and symbols*" (Liu 2012: 89). As a new form of translation, subtitle translation, influenced by its own characteristics, has gradually developed a unique poetics. Due to the restrictions of limited screen space, the consistence between subtitle and speech, and mouth type, translators have to follow the rules of subtitle translation; they are also restricted by film subtitles under the guidance of poetics. It can be said that there is an implied branch of subtitle translation poetics under the influence of the big background of poetics. Translators should combine the characteristics of subtitle translation in their translation and translates under the guidance of subtitle translation poetics.

Another important component of poetics is concept, "*that is, what role does literature play or should play in a social system*" (Liu 2012: 89). The movie subtitles are actually the lines spoken by the actors. The lines of the youth movie are in

colloquial styles, which is also a kind of colloquial literature. The way the characters speak shows their personal characteristics. The personality of the protagonist of the movie is often the epitome of the personality of contemporary Chinese youngsters. The English translation of the movie subtitles builds a bridge for audiences in English-speaking countries to understand China. The behavior, words and deeds of the characters in the movie show them the spiritual outlook of the Chinese people.

Like other Chinese romantic movies in recent years, *Finding Mr. Right* embodies young people's love life. Modern young people love to speak in a sarcasm way and use Chinese proverbs, idioms and other culture-loaded words, often cursing without profanity, and every word they said has great connotation and humor, which are the characteristics of modern Chinese spoken literature. These features reflect the self-confidence and self-improvement of Chinese young people, who are no longer the weak, submissive and passive people in the eyes of Westerners. Modern Chinese young people are not only well-educated and connotative, but also brave enough to express their own opinions, and the sarcasm and humor in their words show their cleverness and wit.

7.4 Translation Strategies for Culture-Loaded Words in *Finding Mr. Right* Under the Manipulation Theory

7.4.1 The Influence of Ideology and Patronage

7.4.1.1 Domestication for Evading Weaknesses

“More than any other artistic medium, a country's film directly reflects the mentality of that nation” (Liu 1998: 42). *“Film is the carrier of a country's mainstream culture”* (Xu 2011: 2). Chinese youth film conveys the current state of Chinese ideology to the Western world. Although culturally there is a growing interest in Chinese traditions and Chinese social idea in the world, this does not mean that English-speaking countries are politically receptive to all Chinese ideology.

China has a history of 5,000 years, and its social and humanistic progress has brewed *a human touch* that is not found in Western society. People's views on human rights and law cannot be accepted and changed instantly in the course of learning advanced Western politics in the past century. When dealing with the translation of these issues, translators need to analyze case by case. *“To some extent, ideology determines the choice of domestication and foreignization in translation, and the patronage's choice of ideology and the translator's understanding of the article who are influenced by the patronage play a very important role in the translation”* (Liao 2013: 151). English-speaking countries, with their leading international dominance, are bound to be superior in ideology and will take issues related to human rights, law, and other political aspects particularly seriously. Some translations can truly reflect Chinese ideology in order to achieve promotion effects; however, some translations,

such as those related to human rights and laws and regulations, may prefer to cater to Western ideology in order to prevent English-speaking audience from taking a part for the whole or creating prejudices or being unable to fully understand the Chinese society. If misunderstanding arises, the film will not be able to achieve an effective promotion effect, so in this case, the translator should choose to conform to Western ideology and adopt domestication in translation.

(1) Source Text: 你看别人 都在那杵着 拿着一个牌子举着等人
早早地就来了 你倒好 恨不得

Target Text: Other people wait there with a sign
And look at you!

The word “杵” as a noun means a round wooden stick with a thick end at one side and a thin end at the other which is used to pound grain in a mortar or to pound clothes when washing; the word “杵” as a verb means to pound with a stick, to poke or stab with a long, thin object. The corresponding English word for similar objects and similar movements is “pestle”. In its long and rich development, “pestle” has become a popular word to indicate a slow brain. In the sentence, the word “pestle” refers to the fact that other people arrive at the airport early and are well-behaved while waiting for their passengers. It is obviously wrong to directly use the corresponding word “pestle” here. The translation of the sentence is related to the awareness and thought of equality among China and the West, thus the translation strategy adopted should be specifically explored and decided.

English-speaking countries are very concerned about equality. They also promote one-to-one equality even between boss and subordinate, and between employer and employee. Wen Jiajia is a customer of a Seattle postnatal care center, and Frank is the driver of the center, which means that he is an employee who needs to serve Wen Jiajia. This dialogue occurs when Frank picks up Wen Jiajia from the airport, but Frank is late for something. Wen Jiajia is very dissatisfied with him and thinks that people hired by her should be available around the clock instead of letting employers waste time waiting. In English-speaking countries, Frank should be blamed for being late, but Frank is not obliged to be on call 24 h a day as Wen Jiajia requested. He just needs to do his part and arrive the airport on time. In China, there are still potential rules of hierarchy between boss and subordinate, employer and employee. Pleasing the boss is still deeply rooted in many Chinese people’s minds, so if it is in the same situation, the Chinese employee would “come early” as Wen Jiajia mentioned and sacrifice his time to wait for the boss at the airport so as not to make the boss wait.

The two different ideologies determine that the translator needs to make a choice between them when translating. Although China is now actively spreading Chinese ideology through various channels to expand its national influence, the purpose of spreading is to establish a positive image of China. On the other hand, the status of English-speaking countries’ ideology still prevails, and China advocates that we should learn equality from the West in the ideological exchanges. Therefore, it is not appropriate to translate the words “杵着” and “早早地就来了” which mean that the subordinate please his boss, but to adopt the translation strategy of domestication

to express the main information “等待” of the sentence. The translator addresses the sentence properly, and doesn't dwell on the translation of culture-loaded word “等待”. The translation “*other people wait there with a sign*” not only conveys the information of the source text, but also avoids the drawbacks of Chinese ideology embodied in the sentence.

(2) Source Text: 她要去的月子中心被抄了

Target Text: She's looking for a maternity center.

The word “抄” originally means “to transcribe, to *write down others' work as one's own*” (*Modern Chinese Dictionary* 2012: 125), and later, as the meaning of “抄” has developed, people also use “抄” to mean “search and confiscate” (*Modern Chinese Dictionary* 2012: 125). A common crime in ancient times is “抄家” which means searching one's house and confiscation of his property. There is no equivalence of the word “抄” in English-speaking countries, especially in their government departments. If they want to search a place, it is necessary for them to follow strict legal procedures, and the search and confiscation are not as thorough or destructive as what “抄” means in Chinese. In China, the word “抄” is mostly used by ordinary people when they talk about Chinese ancient government's behaviors and feel pity for those who have been confiscated.

In the dialogue, the confiscation of the postnatal care center is related to the fact that the Chinese people like to exploit the legal loopholes. The U.S. has a law that any child born in the U.S. is an American citizen, and thus many Chinese pregnant women will secretly go to the U.S. to give birth in order to make their children have an American citizenship. Some Chinese in the U.S. regard this as a business opportunity and set up postnatal care centers to provide these Chinese pregnant women with services for predelivery and postpartum confinement. It's obvious that such centers are illegal in the United States. If it is found, the center will be banned and pregnant women will be repatriated. In the scene, the postnatal care center where Wen Jiajia is supposed to go is found by the police, so Frank has to take her to another postnatal care center where he is familiar with. And the conversation happens in this situation. The word “抄” shows that they feel pity for the exposure of the illegal practice and are a little worried about themselves, and that they do not feel guilty for engaging in the same illegal enterprise. It can be perceived from the sentence that they are used to this kind of confiscation, which indicates that there are many such illegal centers in the United States and that the Chinese are persistently trying to take advantage of the legal loopholes for an American citizenship.

Although it now advocates a legal society in China, such phenomenon as mentioned above is still very common. The idea of not being bound by the law but being flexible is still deeply rooted in Chinese peoples' minds, which conflicts with the English-speaking countries' ideology of strict compliance with laws and regulations, therefore the translator has to make a choice between the two ideologies, whether to be faithful to the source text or to cater to the English-speaking countries' ideas. In this plot, it is clear that it's inappropriate to publicize Chinese people's flexible evasion against the law, because it can not promote a good image of China.

The translator cleverly avoids the conflict by changing the perspective and finding the indication of the sentence. In the source text, the meaning of “她要去的月子中心被抄了” is that she has no place to go and has to find another postnatal care center, and this is also one of the reasons why Frank brings her to the postnatal care center owned by Mrs. Huang. The translation “She’s looking for a postnatal care center” is both ingenious and appropriate.

7.4.1.2 Foreignization for the Promotion of Strength

“*To build socialism in an economically and culturally backward country, it is necessary to learn and absorb the civilization achievements of capitalism*” (Sun and Dai 2004: 43). China should learn from the beneficial achievements of Western political civilization in its own political civilization construction. In the process of improving, the ideologies of Chinese and Western politics are bound to integrate. If the translations can reflect the good results of China’s social development, especially those reflecting political progress, translators can faithfully convey the current situation of Chinese political ideology.

(3) Source Text:

虽然没拜过天地 但是组织上已经批准
人家是正式夫妻

Target Text:

They didn’t officially marry but have been approved by the Party
That’s as good as married

The word “组织” means “*a group established in accordance with some purpose and systems*” (*Modern Chinese Dictionary* 2012: 1679). In China, the word “组织” has a deeper meaning that refers to the Communist Party of China.

“*The image of China constructed by the US media for a long time has been ‘a communist country that lacks of legitimate rule, commits human rights and quashes dissent’*” (He and Liu 2008: 171). This is quite different from the light-hearted and liberal political environment promoted in the West. “*Establishing and guaranteeing people’s fundamental rights is the basic value purpose of modern legal systems and Western political civilization*” (Sun and Dai 2004: 56). In the West, people enjoy freedom of speech and can freely express their views on their government, and the Western media can even make fun of the president.

In the pace of the construction of political civilization, China has learned much from the useful results of western politics. Nowadays, Chinese people enjoy freedom of speech. *The Communist Party of China* and *Chinese government* are not forbidden issues, and people can talk about them with ease.

When translating such sentences, translators are advised to adopt foreignization to present the current situation of Chinese ideology. This line is what Wen Jiajia, the heroine, says when discussing the mistress in a TV series. What she wants to express is that without going through legal procedures, the mistress is also a legitimate wife

under the aegis of “组织—the Communist Party of China”. Wen Jiajia uses “组织—the Communist Party of China” to make fun of the fact that the mistress runs rampant now. The translator translates “组织” as “Party” in the sentence, which immediately reminds the English audience of the Communist Party of China. It both reflects Chinese characteristics and shows the West that the Communist Party of China respects people’s freedom of speech and allows people to use “Party—the Communist Party of China” to make jokes, which demonstrates the magnanimous and open political attitude of the Chinese government, embodying China’s political civilization.

7.4.2 Poetic Guidance of Subtitle Translation for Culture-Loaded Words in Youth Films

7.4.2.1 Neatness on the Screen—Retranslation

“In film subtitle translation, translators should pay attention to its characteristics of brevity, unity, comprehensibility and flexibility” (Wang 2013: 155). Subtitle translation, a special form of literary translation, forms its unique poetics on the basis. English subtitle should be short to avoid not being showed on the screen. Film subtitle flashes by and the reaction time and speed for the audience are limited, so the words used in English subtitle shouldn’t be uncommon or obscure. As English subtitle is presented simultaneously with the characters’ line, the words used in it should match the characters’ cultural background and language habits; films tend to have bilingual subtitles, therefore the subtitle’s length of the two languages should be consistent as possible to keep the screen neat.

However, due to the different characteristics of Chinese and English, such as Chinese emphasizes parataxis while English emphasizes hypotaxis, the phenomenon that Chinese sentence is short but concise and English sentence is long often presents in film subtitle translation. When dealing with such differences, translators should take the poetics of film subtitle as guidance to understand the meaning of culture-loaded words in-depth. Combining the movie plot, translators can transform the perspective, flexibly choose between affirmative and negative sentences, or use short sentences that are equivalent to the information conveyed by culture-loaded words to retranslate the source text.

(4) Source Text: 我人生地不熟我怎么知道啊

Target Text: I just got here. How would I know?

The sentence “人生地不熟” is used in the same way as “人生面不熟”. The phrase “人生面不熟” comes from Yuan Opera *Sheng Jin Ge* written by Wu Hanchen, “I am unfamiliar with the place I have just arrived, and I don’t know who I can turn to” (Zhang 2000: 342). The phrase is used to describe a person who is unfamiliar with everything from a new place, where the person doesn’t know anyone or any road.

In the film, the heroine Wen Jijia is pregnant with a married man's baby. In China, such a child is not allowed to be registered. Therefore in order to give the baby a citizenship, Wen Jijia contacts a birth care center in the United States. This care center is an illegal institution serving pregnant Chinese women who want to get an American citizenship for their children. In this scene, Frank, the driver of the center, drives Wen Jijia to the center. But as soon as they are getting there, they find that the center has been discovered by the police. The police also suspect them for giving birth to a baby illegally, so they must leave this place immediately. This is why Frank asks Wen Jijia where they should go. However Wen Jijia has never been to America before, and she doesn't know English well, so she replied, “我人生地不熟, 我怎么知道啊”. This conversation takes place in an emergency situation and the speaker is nervous and confused, so although the sentence is short, its meaning is clear so as to ensure quick and effective communication. The Chinese “人生地不熟” is rich in connotation but concise in words, reflecting Wen Jijia's writing skills as a magazine editor in common language, and it also fits the emergency situation that it is not appropriate to speak at length at the moment. However, in the process of translation, if the sentence is translated as “*I'm a stranger and totally unfamiliar with the place*” in order to reflect the literariness of the source text and the rich connotation of the common sayings, it will be redundant. First of all, it seems too long as subtitle translation because the screen space is limited, and secondly it is only a few words in Chinese, but the English uses 9 words, so the length does not match that of the Chinese.

The translator isn't subject to the literal form, but highly summarizes the meaning of the source text, using “*I just got here*” to indicate Wen Jijia's current situation, which also meets the characteristics of short language in emergency. It also reflects the implied meaning, because “*I just got here*”, “*I'm unfamiliar with the place*”. The translation also matches with Wen Jijia's personality. Also, “*I just got here*” occupies the same screen space as the Chinese “我人生地不熟”, which shows a neat correspondence and the screen's aesthetics, presenting the poetics of subtitle translation.

(5) Source Text: 这要是一家黑店我可饶不了你

Target Text: This better be honest business.

The word “店” in “黑店” refers to an inn, i.e. a small-scale hotel with poor equipment in the old days, and “黑” is not used to describe the color of the hotel. “黑店” refers to an inn that its owner kills the guests and robs their goods (mostly used in early vernacular) (*Modern Chinese Dictionary* 2012: 456). However nowadays the phenomenon rarely exists, and the owners of such inns mostly run their business by improper management to make huge profits and cheat their consumers out of money. English expressions having similar meanings include gangster inn, tourist trap, and so on. In order to explain the use of Chinese colloquialism, the translation can be made by the method of literal translation with notes, such as black inn-gangster inn and black inn-tourist trap.

The phrase “饶不了你” is also a common saying used by Chinese people, which means that if someone dares to cheat, he will suffer for it.

If the two phrases are both translated with a detailed explanation of the common saying, it can work in the written form, however, subtitle translation has its own poetics. Each scene stays for a limited time, but this scene shows two Chinese sentences, if they are translated according to the above translation method, not only the lines cannot fit in the screen, but also the English audience will not have enough time to understand the sentences.

The translator's handling of the sentence is worth learning from. The translator understands the meaning of culture-loaded word in depth, and matches the source text with a short sentence that shows the same message conveyed by culture-loaded word by combining the plot. In this sentence, the translator skillfully summarizes the meaning of the sentence and transforms the perspective, converting two short clauses with negative meaning into "*this better be an honest business*", an affirmative sentence with threatening meaning, which ensures the subtitle to be clean. Although the common saying in the source text does not be expressed in the translation, the meaning of discontent and threat it contains is maintained.

7.4.2.2 Transcreation for the Beauty of the Scene

When readers read written works, what they see in front of them is only the words written by the authors, whereas the poetic factors such as literary devices and styles are hidden in the text. The film is like a magical transcoding tool that converts the world constructed by words into a real scene with pictures and language, offering an audio-visual feast to the viewer. When translating the subtitle, the translator should recreate the lines in the context of the plot and film scenes.

(6) Source Text: 忽然间下起雨来了

西雅图就是这样

.....

真漂亮

Target Text: It just starts raining like that?

That's Seattle for you

.....

It's beautiful

The word “就是” is a function word in modern Chinese with a strong colloquial meaning (*Modern Chinese Dictionary* 2012: 558), and the tenth entry of the word “就” is explained as “*expressing that's exactly the fact*”. People often use the word “就是” to express firm will, strong belief or confirmation of things (He 2005: 190), and the English words expressing the same meaning include exactly, definitely, absolutely, etc., which are also appropriate to be used in the translation of the sentence.

But this line corresponds to the scene that Wen Jiajia sees Seattle's scenery for the first time. In the scene, green trees surround the road, there are singing birds and fragrant flowers, drizzle falls outside the car, the soft rain baptizes the city more and

more clearly, and the rain on the car window jumps playfully. Integrating the greenery, it shows a vibrant scene of Seattle and a beautiful picture of the harmony between human and nature. Such a beautiful picture should be accompanied by elegant lines, in order to be a perfect work.

The translator goes beyond the confines of the source text and recreates the original lines, adding an ingenious stroke to the beauty of the scene. Although the sentence “that’s Seattle for you” is simple, it is very poetic. By saying the words to Wen Jiajia, a newcomer to Seattle, it immediately makes her fall in love with this beautiful city and give a heartfelt comment, “*It’s beautiful.*”

7.4.2.3 Transformation of Sentence Patterns for the Display of Personality

Film subtitles are actually the lines spoken by the actors which have a strong sense of colloquialism, so they are also a kind of colloquial literature. When translating the lines with distinct personalities, especially those with culture-loaded words, the translator should consider translation strategies from the perspective of the poetics of colloquial literature, so as to faithfully show the charming personalities of contemporary Chinese young people.

In the use of spoken language, many words continue to derive meanings with Chinese characteristics and culture, including “*typical function words that have been widely used in modern Putonghua*” (Li and Wang 2011: 3). These words are just common words, but when they are put into a sentence, the meaning behind the words will present. When translating texts containing these loaded words, the translator will face the conflict between the lexical level and the sentence level. In the process of translation, the translator should not only pay attention to the semantic equivalence at the lexical level, but also achieve the semantic equivalence at the sentence level. If the equivalence at both the lexical level and the sentence level cannot be achieved at the same time, the translator should make a choice. It may be able to find words with similar meanings of some culture-loaded words in English, but sentences composed of these words can not reflect the correct meaning of the original Chinese sentences, so the translator does not have to stick to the correspondence of words. The translator shouldn’t lose the flavor and even the correct meaning of the whole sentence in order to present culture-loaded word. Translator can skillfully transform the satirical function of culture-loaded words into the satirical effect of the whole sentence, so that it can not only accurately convey the meaning of Chinese, but also retain the role of the culture-loaded words in the sentence, which is not only consistent with the scene in which the sentence is used, but also consistent with the speaker’s language characteristics, as well as the mood and intention when saying the sentence.

(7) Source Text: 赶紧走磨蹭什么呢

Target Text: Come on. What are you waiting for?

“磨蹭” originally means a slight friction (*Modern Chinese dictionary* 2012: 798). It is a figurative action, however, with the development of language, it is extended

to describe a person who walks both “磨” and “蹭”, meaning a person walks at a slow speed. Therefore “磨蹭” also refers to “*moving forward slowly, which means doing things slowly*” (*Modern Chinese dictionary* 2012: 798), so it has the meaning of procrastination. In terms of its explanation, the author will associate it with the words such as delay, tardy, etc., but if these words are put into the translation, it may be “why do you delay?” or “why are you tardy?”. In this way, the meaning of the sentence changes and becomes asking the reason for a person’s delay. But the sentence’s original intention is not to really ask the person what he is slow and procrastinating for, but it is a metaphorical way to ask the person to act quickly and stop procrastinating. Obviously, if the translator just mechanically translates the culture-loaded words, it may lose the colloquial flavor of the sentence and distort the correct meaning of the whole sentence.

In the sentence, the translator pays attention to the relationship between the translation of culture-loaded words and the translation of the whole sentence, skillfully converting the ironic effect of culture-loaded words into the ironic effect of the whole sentence. The translation “*What are you waiting for?*” expressing the same satirical tone not only reflects Wen Jiajia’s anxiety and her strong speaking style, but also accurately conveys the meaning of the source text.

(8) Source Text: 干脆这样吧

你给我地址我拿着牌子去接你得了

Target Text: Why don’t you give me your address

And I go to pick you up instead?

Modern Chinese Dictionary explains “干脆” as (1) come straight to the point; (2) straightforward (*Modern Chinese Dictionary* 2012: 353). “干脆” literally means that an object has no moisture and will break totally as soon as it is broken and no part of the item still stays joined. “*Before the Qing Dynasty, Beijing dialect had a variety of adverbs expressing ‘straightforward, such as ‘索性’, ‘率性’, ‘索性’, ‘爽得’, ‘爽性’. The word ‘干脆’ appeared at the end of the Qing Dynasty, which was initially an adjective, and it was not until modern times that it completed the grammaticalization process from a adjective to a modal adverb*” (Wei and Song 2011: 80). “干脆” is a word that has evolved from the colloquial language. The word has strong characteristics of spoken language, especially the Beijing dialect, and is used to describe a person’s straightforward personality through language. In this dialogue, heroin, Wen Jiajia, arrives in the United States for the first time. But Frank who needs to pick her up is late for a long time. By the time he arrives, it is already dark, which makes his employer Wen Jiajia very angry. The word “干脆” in the sentence expresses a strong sense of reproach and anger.

The translator handles properly here, changing the sentence pattern of the whole sentence and using the rhetorical question “*Why don’t*” to strengthen the tone of censure, reflecting the function of the word “干脆” in the source text.

The word “得了” has “*finished the grammaticalization process. Its status as a function word is also recognized by most scholars*” (Li and Wang 2011: 6). In the word “得了”, “得” originally means “to obtain” (Zhu 1960: 49), and “得了” reminds

people of “得到了”. However, in the process of cultural evolution, “得了” does not mean what it literally means. *Modern Chinese Dictionary* defines the word “得了” as (1) to forbid or agree; to forget; be enough; (2) an auxiliary used in declarative sentences to express approval (*Modern Chinese Dictionary* 2012: 225). In the sentence, the word “得了” is used as a modal particle, which should not be translated literally, but be translated in the context. In the translation of the sentence, the translator combines it with the word “干脆”, integrating these two words with Chinese colloquial characteristics into a rhetorical question “Why don’t you”, which not only does not rigidly stick to literal translation or mistranslation, but also reflects the flavor of the unique vocabulary and accurately expresses the tone of the speaker.

(9) Source Text: 无菌什么呀

你把老鼠和孕妇关一块你像话么

Target Text: How come!

You let a pregnant woman sit besides mouse?

“像话”, as explained in *Modern Chinese Dictionary*, means reasonable (mostly used in rhetorical questions) (*Modern Chinese Dictionary* 2012: 1262), and is a word used to express a tone of reproach in colloquial language. Its original meaning can be understood as “*can you speak like a human being?*”, indicating that the other person’s words is unreasonable, which offends the speaker and also reflects the speaker’s courage to express anger. In the sentence, Frank, the driver of the postnatal care center, hurriedly drives to pick up Wen Jiajia, a pregnant woman who has just arrived in the United States for the first time. He doesn’t have time to put away the mouse of the laboratory in the back seat. When Wen Jiajia is about to sit in the back seat, Frank explains that the mouse are all sterilized in the lab, so they are hygienic and clean, and there is no need to worry about germs. However, Wen Jiajia is still afraid that the germs carried by thee mouse will be harmful to the fetus. In addition, Frank is late for a long time before, so Wen Jiajia is dissatisfied with him. Frank’s mistakes make Wen Jiajia very angry and scold him for letting a pregnant woman sit with the mouse. The sentence has a strong sense of reproach, so the translator uses a declarative sentence with a question mark to convey a strong tone, expressing an incredible tone and faithfully reflecting Wen Jiajia’s inner feelings.

(10) Source Text: 你这车我坐不了

Target Text: I’m not getting in this car.

From the lexical level, “坐不了” should be understood to mean that the speaker is unable to get into the car because of his limited ability, and its explanation at the lexical level reminds people of the English words can and cannot. This sentence may be translated literally as “*I cannot sit in the car*”, which is obviously different from the meaning expressed in the source text. The sentence said by Wen Jiajia is a follow-up to her previous line “You let a pregnant woman sit besides mouse?”. The phrase “坐不了” in the context of the sentence has a strong tendency of will rather than of ability. Although it also indicates being restricted by certain conditions, it tends to show the speaker’s will, a subjective judgment of Wen Jiajia, who is unwilling to get in the

car, rather than being passively unable to get in the car. The translator's translation appropriately restores the real situation, expresses Wen Jiajia's strong dissatisfaction through "I'm not getting in this car", and shows Wen Jiajia's charisma.

(11) Source Text: 你怎么把安全带解了

Target Text: Why did you take off your seat belt?

The word “怎么” literally means the way to ask, which is most associated with the English word “how”. If it is translated according to its lexical meaning, it is likely to be mistranslated as “How did you take off your seat belt?”, then the meaning of the translation is obviously different from that of the source text.

Although there is polysemy in English, polysemy is more common in Chinese, especially in function words. And in oral expressions, a word contains richer connotations. “怎么”, after its lexical evolution, has formed its special pragmatic function, which indicates that a person's practice is inappropriate and leads to correct the person's practice (Li and Wang 2011: 294). This sentence is Frank's question to Wen Jiajia, who unfastens her seat belt in the moving vehicle. When translating the sentence, the translator fully understands the pragmatic function of “怎么” in the sentence, and does not rigidly use the sentence beginning with “how”, but transforms it into an interrogative sentence beginning with “why” to convey the exact message of the source text.

(12) Source Text: 你什么情况啊

Target Text: What took you so long?

Literally, “什么” is a word that expresses doubt, in fact, it has been loaded with many different meanings in its use. In *Modern Chinese Dictionary*, the most appropriate explanation of “什么” in the sentence is “to express surprise or dissatisfaction” (*Modern Chinese Dictionary* 2012: 1021). The word “情况” is explained as “situation” in *Modern Chinese Dictionary* (*Modern Chinese Dictionary* 2012: 935). If the connotation of its cultural evolution is not studied, it will be misunderstood as “what kind of situation it is”, indicating an inquiry to the situation, which is obviously inconsistent with the sentence's real intention. The sentence shows that Wen Jiajia is very dissatisfied with Frank's lateness. When she sees him, she expresses her anger through the line, asking how he can be late and why he is late. The subtitle translator concretely translates the sentence having a cultural tone. Meanwhile, combining with the plot, the translator adds the word “久”, which means “long”, to translate the whole sentence as “What took you so long?”. The meaning of the sentence is clear, and the word “long” shows that Wen Jiajia is very unhappy about Frank's lateness.

(13) a. Source Text: 无菌什么呀你把老鼠和孕妇关一块你像话么你

Target Text: How come! You let a pregnant woman sit besides mouse?

b. Source Text: 你养什么老鼠呀

Target Text: Is that a mouse?

When Wen Jiajia is about to sit in the back seat of Frank's car, she finds a cage of mouse. Frank explains that the mouse is all sterile and clean, but Wen Jiajia still

feels dissatisfied with Frank's practice of letting her sit with the mouse. Sentence a and sentence b are both Wen Jiajia's lines when she scolds Frank.

“什么”, as its use has developed, is not only a pronoun to express doubt, but is now often used to express dissatisfaction or surprise.

In sentence a, if “什么” is literally translated, its translation will be “*What is sterile?*”. The meaning of the translation is obviously inconsistent with that of the source text. The translator makes an ingenious transformation of sentence pattern in the translation, using an exclamatory sentence of “how” to reflect the dissatisfaction that the text wants to express, showing the heroine Wen Jiajia's frankness.

In sentence b, “什么” doesn't mean that Wen Jiajia is really asking what kind of mouse Frank keeps, but it is used to express surprise. The word “什么” also aptly shows Wen Jiajia's straightforward character of truthfully expressing her thoughts: how can there be a mouse in the back seat and how can ordinary people keep a mouse? When translating sentence b, the translator doesn't stick to “什么” at the lexical level, but uses a rhetorical question “*Is that a mouse?*” instead. It emphasizes Wen Jiajia's surprise and anger, showing a good translation effect.

7.5 Chapter Summary

Finding Mr. Right is a light romance comedy. The lines of the characters, especially those of the heroine Wen Jiajia, have strong language features of young people. They are playful and funny, cleverly using words such as function words to convey a funny and derisive flavor from time to time. Function words and modal particles in the film, like common sayings and idioms, are loaded with profound cultural implications, which are also culture-loaded words.

Like other Chinese youth romantic films, *Finding Mr. Right* is endowed with the invisible responsibility of guiding correct social values, spreading China's excellent ideology and promoting a positive image of China. Before the film is released, it needs to be censored by relevant state departments. And the leading government department, National Radio and Television Administration, is the most important influence factor among the patronages. Meanwhile, since ideology is the main consideration of patronages, when discussing the patronages' manipulation of film subtitle translation, we can start from the perspective of ideology, and analyze from the ideology of National Radio and Television Administration and even the ideology of the Chinese government. As youth films are one of the propaganda tools for ideology, the subtitle translator of *Finding Mr. Right* also undertakes the important task of promoting China's positive image to the outside world, establishing a good image for the country internationally through the presentation of the film and its subtitle, in which case the translator's ideology is mainly influenced by the ideology of the Chinese government. Film is a window for the spread of ideology, and its subtitle translation that bridges them affect the outside world's understanding of China and is an important issue in Chinese diplomacy and politics. Therefore, the subtitle translation involving ideology is mostly related to political topics, and when

it comes to issues related to ideology, translation strategies adopted by translators are mainly based on the choice between spreading Chinese ideology and catering to the ideology of English-speaking countries.

The Chinese youth film *Finding Mr. Right* shows the current situation of Chinese people's minds to the western world. Some translations can be chosen to truly reflect Chinese ideology. However, Western society is more serious when discussing political topics such as human rights and law. When it comes to the translation of these aspects, we should choose translation strategies that cater to Western ideology, so as to avoid English-speaking audiences from viewing only one spot and misunderstanding of the Chinese society, which may not lead to a good publicity effect. Therefore, translators can decide to follow the ideology of western countries in order to avoid the shortcomings and adopt domestication in translation. When the content of subtitles can reflect the beneficial achievements of China's development, especially the progress of Chinese politics and society, the translator should promote it and adopt foreignization to truly convey the current situation of the ideology of Chinese politics.

Although the translation activities of subtitle translation involving ideology are mainly influenced by the patronages' ideology and need to be consistent with the ideology of the Chinese government, the translation activities are more manipulated by poetics in subtitle translation where there is no conflict between Chinese and Western ideologies. The subtitle translation of *Finding Mr. Right* is a new form of translation, which has its unique characteristics and unique poetic forms. Among the manipulation factors of poetics, subtitle translation has its own unique poetic characteristics. The poetics of film subtitles contains the cleanliness and aestheticism of the scene. The translator should adopt retranslation or transcreation under the control of poetics according to the characteristics of subtitle translation.

In addition, subtitles of the film lines reflect the characters' way of speaking and their individual personalities. The characters in *Finding Mr. Right* are the epitome of contemporary Chinese young people. The language and behavior of the characters in the film show the Chinese young people' love and life style to the western society. Speech characteristics shown in conversation represent that the contemporary Chinese young people are outspoken, independent and confident, have their own position, and dare to challenge, changing the impression that the Chinese are weak and submissive in the eyes of the West. However, the translation of such culture-loaded words is often faced with conflicts at the lexical level and the sentence level. When faced these conflicts, translators should not only pay attention to the semantic equivalence at the lexical level, but also achieve the semantic equivalence at the sentence level. If the two cannot be equivalent at the same time, it needs to transform sentence patterns, changing the personality characteristics of culture-loaded words into the personality shown in the whole sentence. In this way, it not only translates the meaning that the characters want to express, but also shows the characters' personalities.

(This chapter is based on the author's 2014 MA thesis *English Translation of Culture-loaded Words in Finding Mr. Right from the Perspective of Manipulation Theory*.)

Chapter 8

Translation of Culture-Loaded Words in Audiovisual Translation—Taking *Empresses in the Palace* as an Example



Lanting Zhu

8.1 Introduction to *Empresses in the Palace*

Based on Susan Bassnett's cultural translation theory, this chapter explores the translation strategies of culture-loaded words in audiovisual translation, taking the popular TV drama *Empresses in the Palace* as the corpus. There are the following reasons for choosing *Empresses in the Palace*:

- (1) It has a wide influence: the drama has got very high ratings in China and has been introduced to overseas audiences.
- (2) The language distinctively stylish and classical with poems and songs, and imitates the language style of *A Dream in Red Mansions* (《红楼梦》) to have created a unique “Zhen Huan style”.
- (3) The TV drama enjoys a long history with profound cultural heritage. As the cultural value of costume dramas is often greater than that of fashion plays, this TV drama involves a lot of cultural information of traditional Chinese medicine, spices, dishes, music and poetry, greatly enriching the cultural value of the drama.

Therefore, the profound cultural value of *Empresses in the Palace* will play an important role in promoting Chinese culture and spreading Chinese civilization.

Cultural translation theory is a translation theory put forward by Susan Bassnett on the basis of “cultural turn”. In her book *Translation, History and Culture*, she makes a specific explanation of cultural translation theory, which mainly includes four aspects. Firstly, translation should surpass the linguistic content of the text, regard language as the carrier, and take culture as the basic unit of translation. Secondly, translation should not be a simple process of bilingual translation, but the key purpose is communication. Thirdly, the translation process should pursue

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the functional equivalence in culture between the source language and the target language. Fourthly, the principles and norms of translation should keep pace with the times, with different requirements in different historical periods. The language content and culture of translation are an organic unity of the whole. In the process of translation, we should not only pay attention to the processing of language content, but also attach importance to the grasp of cultural information. The purpose of translation is to realize cultural exchange. Therefore, film and television translators should always keep Susan's principle of *cultural functional equivalence* and the concept of *taking culture as the translation unit* in mind, take the audience's acceptance and understanding of the relevant cultural information into account, and adopt appropriate translation methods to rewrite the source language in a suitable range, thus the cultural information can be emotionally resonated by the audience.

Culture-loaded words are the product of the interaction between language and culture. For the sake of exploring the translation strategies of culture-loaded words in movies and TV plays, the author utilizes the inductive analysis method and combines Susan Bassnett and Peter Newmark's classification theory of culture-loaded words to divide the culture-loaded words appearing in *Empresses in the Palace* into the following five categories:

- (1) Ecological culture-loaded words, which refer to all the animal and plant species, land forms, and energy resources, closely related to ecological civilization in the region to which the culture belongs. In the drama, they are embodied in the names of various flowers, spices, and traditional Chinese medicine.
- (2) Material culture-loaded words, which refer to all aspects of daily life, such as food, clothing and building names.
- (3) Social culture-loaded words, which refer to all kinds of customs and religious rituals related to certain social and historical conditions in the region where the culture belongs, such as the rank and appellation of empresses of the Qing Dynasty.
- (4) Administrative culture-loaded words, which refer to the sum of various administrative agencies, institutions, and systems in the region where the culture belongs, such as San Yuan Liu Bu (Three Councils and Six Ministries) (三院六部) in the Qing Dynasty.
- (5) Linguistic culture-loaded words, which refer to the culture-loaded words that can reflect the language style and language form in the region where the culture belongs, such as Chinese idioms, two-part allegorical sayings, and puns.

In the process of classifying and translating the culture-loaded words in the play, the author identified the following challenges:

- (1) the classification of culture-loaded words is not unique. This is because the cultural images contained in some culture-loaded words may involve multiple cultural fields. Take the idiom "Qing Guo Qing Cheng (倾国倾城)" as an example. This idiom is used to describe the amazing degree of a woman's beauty. In this idiom, Guo (国) and Cheng (城) should belong to the field of ecological culture. As an idiom, it is also a kind of language culture.

- (2) The translation of some culture-loaded words may involve various translation strategies. Taking the idiom “Zhong Ling Yu Xiu (钟灵毓秀)” as an example. This is an adjective in Chinese, but in translation, it is transformed into a noun by a post attributive according to its meaning, that is, two strategies, free translation and transliteration, are adopted at the same time.
- (3) The translation of culture-loaded words often needs to return to the context. Taking Huafei’s classic line “赏你一丈红” as an example. It is hard for us to translate the material and cultural loaded-word “一丈红” out of the whole sentence. The correct translation method is to contact the context and realize that the meaning of Huafei’s sentence is to order somebody to commit suicide. If we care too much about the translation of “一丈红”, we will fall into the dead end of formalism or mechanization.
- (4) The four strategies commonly used in translating culture-loaded words include literal translation, free translation, domestication and foreignization.

When summarizing the common translation strategies of culture-loaded words in film and television translation, the author suggests that one can select appropriate translation strategies according to the different cultural effects of the culture-loaded words in the source language and the target language. The specific conditions are as follows:

- (1) Cultural resonance and literal translation. When the cultural information contained in the culture-loaded words can arouse the resonance of the audience of the target language, it constitutes the situation of cultural resonance. At this time, literal translation strategy is suitable since literal translation can maintain the original flavor of the translation and stimulate the audience’s interest in further understanding the source culture, but the trace of translation is too obvious.
- (2) Cultural redundancy and free translation. When the semantic value and cultural value of culture-loaded words cannot be taken into account simultaneously, it forms the cultural redundancy. At this time, it is appropriate to adopt the strategy of free translation. Language is the carrier of culture. If something does not make sense in the language level, there is no need to discuss the cultural significance. Free translation can enhance the readability and artistry of the translation, but it will lose some cultural information.
- (3) Cultural vacuum and foreignization. When the cultural information contained in the culture-loaded words do not have equivalent counterparts in the target culture, a cultural vacuum is created. At this time, it is appropriate to adopt the strategy of foreignization. This is mainly due to the relative independence of culture. Foreignization can better reflect the cultural and linguistic characteristics of the source language and it is more creative, but it requires some compensatory methods to promote the understanding of the audience of the target language.
- (4) Cultural mutual learning and domestication. When the cultural information contained in the culture-loaded words do not have the equivalent words in the target culture, but can be explained with similar cultural images, the condition

of cultural mutual learning is created. At this time, it is appropriate to adopt domestication strategy. Domestication can promote *direct dialogues* between the screenwriter and the audience, but it will also cause certain loss of cultural information.

The translation of cultural load words is related to the spread of culture, and there is still a long way to go. There are no 100% untranslatable culture-loaded words, and there is no culture-loaded word that can achieve 100% cultural equivalence. In view of the particularity of film and television texts, translators need to pay more attention to the comprehensive effect of culture-loaded words, i.e., the comprehensive effect of language and culture. Language is the carrier of culture. Without language, culture cannot realize its value. Language is meaningful only in the cultural environment in which it functions. Therefore, when dealing with culture-loaded words in film and television translation practice, on the one hand, translators should consider the expression of film and television language combined with its particularity; and on the other hand, it's necessary to underline the mining of cultural information in culture-loaded words. Under the dynamic balance of language and culture, it is possible to achieve the maximum cultural equivalence.

When President Xi Jinping visited Latin American countries in July 2014, the national gift presented to Argentinian friends was a set of DVDs, containing three popular Chinese TV dramas: *Beijing Youth*, *Love is Not Blind* and *To Elderly with Love*. Films and TV dramas are expected to be another major part of the national gifts in addition to traditional handicrafts such as porcelain, silk and traditional Chinese painting. This trend fully demonstrates China's determination to promote its cultural industry to the world, the world's increasing concern to China and the urgent hope of the people of the world to understand China.

Before presenting the three TV dramas to Argentina, translators provided subtitles in Chinese, English, Spanish and Portuguese in view of the language barrier between the two countries and the language diversity of Argentina. For TV dramas with contemporary themes, it is not difficult for foreign friends to understand the stories with the help of the subtitles, but for costume dramas, there are numerous difficulties from the beginning of the translation process. The main reason is that there are a lot of culture-loaded words in them. Chinese culture is broad and profound with a long history. Even the Chinese who have been influenced by Chinese culture since childhood can't fully grasp the treasures of the five-thousand-year Chinese civilization, let alone the foreign friends who have grown up in different language and cultural environments. In spite of the difficulties in translation and understanding, it is undeniable that costume dramas have gained more and more attention in recent years. This is because, first, China's efforts to improve its international influence through the development of soft power are quite fruitful. The international community is eager to further understand China, including China's history and culture. Costume dramas, especially historical plays, have well restored China in a certain period of the past. Second, in the past, the study of Chinese history and culture was mostly obtained through pictures and books. In contrast, movies and TV plays present all kinds of life in a certain historical period in a dynamic form with a stronger sense

of picture, which are easier to arouse the audience's resonance. At the end of 2011, *Empresses in the Palace*, a costume drama directed by Zheng Xiaolong, became an instant hit. As soon as it was broadcasted, it was widely acclaimed. It was exported to Malaysia, Japan, South Korea and other countries one after another. Even the United States has reached an agreement with the crew to re-translate and edit the play and introduce it to the American audiences. It is reported that at present, the main actors of the cast have completed the shooting of the make-up shot, and the post production work of the American team has come to an end. The play will soon be broadcast on the mainstream TV stations in the United States. The successful entry of *Empresses in the Palace* into the international market has a profound significance. Compared with other TV dramas that have gone abroad, although it has been questioned and criticized by some historians concerning historical details, it has largely restored the intrigues and battles among empresses and all kinds of life in the Yongzheng period of the Qing Dynasty, which has abundant cultural value.

Therefore, for international friends who want to learn Chinese history and culture, this TV drama is a good choice to enrich their knowledge. However, rich cultural information will also bring plenty of obstacles to translation. For example, in the Qing Dynasty, the titles of concubines of different grades are different. From top to bottom, they were Empress (皇后), Imperial high princess (皇贵妃), High princess (贵妃), Princess (妃), Concubine (嫔), Courtesan (贵人), Consort (常在) and Mistress (答应). It took a lot of time to explain these titles to foreign friends in daily life, let alone in the flash of movies and TV dramas. Hence, how to present complex cultural information to the audience in a simple and clear way is a huge challenge in film and television translation. This chapter attempts to sum up the translation strategies of culture-loaded words in audiovisual translation by analyzing the culture-loaded words in *Empresses in the Palace* and comparing the existing subtitle versions.

Empresses in the Palace is adapted from the novel of the same name by the Internet writer Liu Lianzi. In 2011, director Zheng Xiaolong put the work on the screen. The drama evolves around the growing up of the heroine Zhen Huan from an innocent girl to a court lady who is good at political tactics. It recreates the deceit and disturbance between the harem concubines during the Yongzheng period. It is the epitome of the history of blood and tears of harem women under China's more than two thousand years of feudal system.

In recent years, China's film and television industry has been booming, and a number of outstanding film and television works have emerged. The reason why the author chooses *Empresses in the Palace* as the corpus is mainly due to the following considerations:

- (1) *Empresses in the Palace* has a widespread influence. Since it was broadcast in China in 2012, this play has been highly praised by people from different backgrounds for its gorgeous scenery, vivid characters, abundant language features, and intense storyline. In addition to repeated broadcasting on plentiful satellite TV stations in mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, Japan, South Korea and Malaysia have also introduced it, which have achieved good ratings. The play was equally popular on Chinese TV stations in the United States, but it's not

an English version. What is gratifying is that at the end of 2012, Zheng Xiaolong, Director of *Empresses in the Palace*, revealed that the production team had signed a contract with an American company to re-edit the play into a TV drama with six episodes and then broadcast on the mainstream TV stations in the United States. Although there have been other Chinese TV dramas that are popular abroad, it is the first time that an American company has purchased the copyright to broadcast a Chinese TV drama in English, which is a milestone in the history of Chinese film and television industry. At present, the main creators of the play have completed the shooting of the make-up shot, and the post production of the American team has come to an end. The play will soon be on the American screen, bringing an audio-visual feast to the American audience.

- (2) The language is distinctive. Liu Lianzi, the author and screenwriter of the play, has a degree in Chinese language and literature. She has solid classical knowledge and talent in poetry. For example, when the heroin Zhen Huan made her debut, she quoted a classical line from a famous poet as “*the slim waist of the concubines of the Chu Palace*” (“嬛嬛一袅楚宫腰”) to explain the poetic meaning of her name. The quotation is from the Song Dynasty poet Cai Shen’s *A Spray of Plum Blossom: Long Black Hair and Loose Birds’ Feather Piling up on the Pillow Like Dark Clouds*《一剪梅·堆枕乌云堕翠翘》. When Zhen Huan first fell in love, her innocent wish is *to win her beloved’s heart until death keeps grey-haired apart* (“愿得一人心，白首不相离”). In the end, Zhen Huan said goodbye to her once beloved emperor by saying “*The strings are broken. The mirror is incomplete. The morning dew is short, so is my youthful time. I now sing with my grey hair and grieve for our parting. Please eat well and do not forget me. I swear to the flowing river that I and you part forever.*” (“朱弦断，明镜缺，朝露晞，芳时歇，白头吟，伤离别，努力加餐勿忘妾，锦水汤汤，与君长诀”).

These quotes respectively come from Zhuo Wenjun’s *To a Faithless Husband* (《白头吟》) and *Farewell* (《诀别诗》). The quotations of these classical poems are just right. They have enormously enriched the language features and greatly enhanced the cultural value for translation. Besides, in order to pay homage to her beloved classic *A Dream in Red Mansions*, Liu Lianzi consciously imitates the linguistic features of the novel in the process of her creation. For instance, the normal lines of Zhen Huan, such as “这会子”，“巴巴等了来” and “我原是”，were originally from *A Dream in Red Mansions*. On this basis, a unique *Zhen Huan style* came into being, which is close to the language style of *A Dream in Red Mansions*, such as “这真真是极好的”，“最好不过了” (Kang 2012: 163). The overseas broadcasting of this TV drama is not only a great progress in China’s film and television industry, but also a huge opportunity to show the charm of classical Chinese literature.

- (3) It has a profound cultural foundation. Liu Lianzi has created a lot of imagination and exaggeration in her script writing, as there are few records of women in the harem in the history books except for simple descriptions of their life and titles. Therefore, we can’t verify whether Zhen Huan is authentically so good at scheming or whether Huafei, another concubine, is really so domineering.

However, the story remains faithful to history in the main historical events and historical figures. For example, Yongzheng, Nian Gengyao and Huafei are real people in history. The amount of cultural information of costume dramas is always greater than that of fashion plays.

Empresses in the Palace contains much knowledge about traditional Chinese medicine, spices and music. For instance, musk, oleander, saffron crocus, Chinese mugwort leaf, and colla corii asini, which are related to pregnancy. Traditional Chinese medicine is an important part of Chinese civilization. The number of traditional Chinese medicine in the drama can only be regarded as the tip of the iceberg. But the audience, including those from South Korea and Japan, exclaimed that “*Chinese medicine is amazing*”. In addition, Liu Lianzi consciously reflected the principles of feudal moral conduct and ethics of Confucianism in her works. The popularity of the drama is expected to obtain more attention for traditional Chinese medicine, Confucianism, historical Chinese research and classical Chinese music.

In the past, the audience paid more attention to the development of the plot when watching costume dramas, but *Empresses in the Palace* started to shift the audience’s attention to the historical and cultural level beyond the plot. The audiences are amazed by the fresh and graceful poetry, profound Chinese medicine culture, long history of ancient China, and splendid classical Chinese literature. With its profound cultural value, the overseas broadcasting of *Empresses in the Palace* has played an important role in promoting Chinese culture and spreading Chinese civilization. Foreign audiences can find the similarities and uniqueness between the two cultures through the drama. Cultural similarities will be conducive to closer relations between the two peoples and lay the foundation for the establishment of a lasting and stable cooperative partnership. The uniqueness of culture can help the audience broaden their horizons and enrich their knowledge. It is of great significance for *Empresses in the Palace* to go abroad. The subtitle translation of the drama shoulders a cultural responsibility. At the same time, its profound cultural value also poses challenges for translation.

8.2 Translation of Culture-Loaded Words in *Empresses in the Palace*

Eugene Nida, an American translation theorist, has offered the classification of culture-loaded words. According to Nida (1965), culture can be divided into five categories, namely, ecology, material culture, social culture, religious culture and linguistic culture. Newmark (2001: 96), a British translation theorist, has developed this classification method on the basis of Nida’s achievements. He deems that the five principal categories of culture should be “*ecology, material culture, social culture, organization, customs, activities, procedures, concepts, and gestures and habits*”. Based on the classification methods of culture-loaded words from Eugene Nida and Peter Newmark, this section analyzes some of the culture-loaded words in *Empresses*

in the *Palace*, and divides them into five categories, i.e., ecological culture, material culture, social culture, administrative culture, and linguistic culture. The specific analysis is as follows.

8.2.1 Ecological Culture

This kind of culture-loaded words refer to all the animal and plant species, land forms, and energy resources that are closely linked to ecological civilization in the region that the culture belongs. Different countries will form diverse ecological cultures on account of varying geographical and climatic conditions. China enjoys a vast territory, variety of species and complicated terrain. This can be seen in some Chinese proverbs.

(1) Source Text: 不到长城非好汉。

Target Text: He who has never been to the Great Wall is not a true man.

This sentence comes from Chairman Mao Zedong's 《清平乐·六盘山》. The original sentence is to convey the revolutionary spirit of the Chinese nation, which is positive and vigorous. “长城” in the sentence belongs to ecological culture-loaded words. Constructed in the Spring and Autumn period and the Warring States period, “长城” is one of the great projects in ancient China. It has long enjoyed a worldwide reputation and become one of the most popular tourist destinations all around the world thanks to globalization and the booming development of tourism. Since the concept of “长城” has been deeply rooted in people's mind for a long time, it also has its own term—the Great Wall—in translation studies. Therefore, there is no need to worry about translation strategy here, just translate it literally as the Great Wall.

There is no lack of similar culture-loaded words in *Empresses in the Palace*. Imperial Garden of Qing Dynasty is a place full of rare rockeries and luxuriant trees for concubines to admire beautiful scenery and enjoy their leisure. There are many scenes in Imperial Garden in the play. Thus, there are all sorts of valuable and rare flowers blooming and competing with each other. For example, the “绿菊” given by Yongzheng the emperor to Meizhuang, one of his concubines, is the best among the chrysanthemums. Otherwise, how could it make Huafei, another concubine, jealous. On New Year's Eve, Zhen Huan met Yongzheng for the first time when she was praying in the plum garden. At that time, she attracted Yongzheng's attention with Cui Daorong's 《梅花》, and the screen display of plum blossoms has profoundly impressed the audience. In traditional Chinese culture, flowers also have their unique symbolic significance. For instance, peony symbolizes wealth and rank; chrysanthemum means gentleman; and plum blossom stands for noble and exemplary conduct. The terms of flowers contains deep-seated cultural meanings, which is unimaginable to foreign audiences who are not familiar with Chinese culture. Besides, a large number of traditional Chinese medicine and spices in the play should also be included in this category. Traditional Chinese medicine civilization is an important part of Chinese culture. However, due to the variety of traditional

Table 8.1 Translation of ecological culture-loaded-words

| Source text | Target text | Translation strategy |
|-------------|---|----------------------|
| 江山 | The country | Free translation |
| 福如东海, 寿比南山 | May you enjoy a long and happy life | Free translation |
| 麝香 | Musk | Literal translation |
| 艾叶 | Chinese mugwort leaf | Literal translation |
| 藏红花 | Saffron crocus | Literal translation |
| 绿菊 | Senecio macroglossus | Literal translation |
| 腊梅 | Wax plum | Literal translation |
| 夹竹桃 | Oleander | Literal translation |
| 开枝散叶 | To give birth to as many children as possible | Free translation |
| 秋海棠 | Begonia | Literal translation |
| 久旱盼甘霖 | To look forward to a good rain after a long drought | Literal translation |
| 风水 | Geomancy | Literal translation |
| 一支独秀 | Predominating | Free translation |
| 雨前龙井 | The Longjing tea picked before the Grain Rain | Free translation |
| 腊月 | Lunar December | Literal translation |
| 端午 | The Dragon Boat Festival | Free translation |
| 恩露 | Royal honeydew | Literal translation |

Chinese medicine and people's shallow thoughts towards basic knowledge of traditional Chinese medicine, the names of traditional Chinese medicine are always translated into "Chinese herb" in general translation practice. For example, "天麻炖鸡" is usually translated as "stewed chicken with Chinese herb". However, 阿胶, 麝香, 藏红花 donkey hide gelatin, musk, saffron crocus and other traditional Chinese medicine and spices appear frequently in the play, which plays an important role in promoting the plot. Translators cannot use fuzzy processing in translation. The seemingly unimportant ecological culture-loaded words has deep meanings, which should not be taken lightly in the process of translation. Table 8.1 is about the ecological culture-loaded words and their translation.

8.2.2 *Material Culture*

Material culture-loaded words involve all aspects of people's lives such as clothing, food, housing and transportation. The terms of clothing, dishes and architecture in the play all belong to this category. The concubines in the harem need to compete for favor, so they have to work hard on their clothes and make-up. The costumes in the play also leave a deep impression on the audience, such as "云丝锦衾, 蒂衣, 如意月裙, 赤金景福长绵凤钗, 紫金翟凤珠冠", etc. The fact that Chinese people

are willing to seek good luck is also deeply reflected in the naming of costumes, but it hampers efforts to the translation practice of translators. Food culture is another essential part of Chinese culture, so delicacies are another striking feature of the play. As the imperial dishes in the palace, every dish has its own name and special meaning, such as “翠玉豆糕、玫瑰鹿肉、玫瑰腐乳、藕粉桂花糖糕、白玉蹄花、雪顶含翠、梨花白、樱桃凝蜜露”, etc. Moreover, there are a lot of architectural terms in the play. For example, the emperor’s “乾清宫”, the Empress Dowager’s “寿康宫”, the empress’s “景仁宫”, the Huafei’s “翊坤宫”, etc. Actually, every building in the Forbidden City has its own connotation. Taking 坤宁宫 and “乾清宫” as examples. They are actually opposite, and they originated from the founder of Taoism, Laozi’s *Tao Te Ching* (《道德经》). The ancients considered that the emperor and the empress were the most respectable men and women in the world respectively, and the emperor was seen as the heaven and the empress was regarded the earth. In the *Book of Changes*, the male is Qian (乾) and the female is Kun (坤), hence we get the names of “乾清宫” and “坤宁宫”. Since film translation is different from literature translation, its instantaneity and non annotation make it impossible for translators to fully restore the cultural information in culture-loaded words in translation practice. For example, “坤宁宫” is usually transliterated as Kunning Palace, which fails to demonstrate the mystery of the naming of the palace. Furthermore, we frequently hear lines like “打入冷宫” in movies and TV plays. “冷宫” is the palace where concubines who are out of favor or make mistakes reside. Some translators have translated it as limbo, which originally means prison or a place for discarded things, but “冷宫” is different from the prison. “冷宫” is the place where the harem women of certain status live, thus, the author thinks that it is not appropriate to translate it into limbo. Some translators translate it literally as cold palace, which not only can fail to reflect its functions, but also may cause misunderstanding of foreign audiences, mistaking “冷宫” as just a palace with low temperature. Maybe it can be translated as “deserted Palace” or “imperial jail” according to the context. Table 8.2 contains material culture-loaded words and their corresponding target texts in the drama.

8.2.3 *Social Culture*

The feudal society in ancient China was strictly hierarchical, so was the harem. Women of different grades have different appellations. During the Qing Dynasty, concubines were divided into nine grades. From the first grade to the ninth grade, they were “皇后、皇贵妃、贵妃、妃、嫔、贵人、常在、答应和官女子”. The first four grades are granted titles, such as “端妃、敬妃、熹妃甄嫔、华妃年世兰”. The title of concubines usually symbolizes auspiciousness or stands for some outstanding morality of the concubines. Other concubines that not belong to the first four grade and are from humble family in the harem are usually distinguished by surnames before their grades. Western society is mostly monogamous. In the cognition of Western civilization, a wife is a “wife”, and the other women married to the same man are concubines. They may know that the emperors in the feudal society

Table 8.2 Translation of material culture-loaded words

| Source text | Target text | Translation strategy |
|-------------|--|----------------------------------|
| 乾清宫 | Palace of heavenly purity | Literal translation |
| 坤宁宫 | Palace of earthly tranquility | Literal translation |
| 圆明园 | Summer palace | Literal translation |
| 养心殿 | Hall of moral cultivation | Literal translation |
| 栗子糕 | Chestnut pudding | Literal translation |
| 脑袋 | Life | Free translation |
| 御花园 | Imperial Garden/The Tuileries | Free translation/domestication |
| 后宫 | Harem | Transliteration |
| 寿康宫 | Palace of longevity and fitness | Free translation |
| 龙袍 | Imperial robe | Free translation |
| 牡丹卷 | Crispy peony roll | Literal translation |
| 白玉蹄花 | Pork ribs stewed with tofu | Free translation |
| 乌纱帽 | Post | Domestication |
| 蜀绣 | Sichuan embroidery | Literal translation |
| (赏你) 一丈红 | Just enjoy your slow torture to death | Free translation |
| 紫禁城 | Forbidden City | Free translation |
| 浴汤 | Spring bath | Free translation |
| 冷宫 | Cold palace | Literal translation |
| 千鲤池 | Qianlichi, a pool known for its thousands of carps | Foreignization (transliteration) |

of China had numerous concubines, but they didn't know that the concubines of the emperors also had their unique appellations, which could not find the corresponding cultural images in the western culture. How to explain the different identities of the concubines to the foreign audience who first came into contact with the harem of the Qing dynasty is a problem worth pondering. Besides, under the influence of Confucianism, feudal society particularly focus on grades and seniority, so the Imperial Palace also paid special attention to appellations. The emperor called himself “朕”, the “王爷” called himself “本王”, and the officials called themselves “本官”. The harem has strict regulations on this. The concubines of the first four grades can call themselves “本宫”, and the concubines of the fifth grade call themselves “本嫔”, etc. However, due to the limitation of time and space in film and television translation and the consideration of foreign audience's receptivity, such culture-loaded words are usually domesticated, so foreign audiences will lose a chance to realize the severity of feudal social hierarchy in ancient China. Lawrence Venuti, an American translation theorist, first proposed the concepts of domestication and foreignization in his book *The Translator's Invisibility* in 1995. The so-called domestication means that “the translation which is oriented to the target culture and in which unusual expressions to the target culture are transmuted and changed into some familiar ones so as to

make the translated text easy to be understood by the target readers" (Venuti 1995: 20).

Social culture also includes the specific customs and religious rituals in the cultural area. In feudal society, in order to ensure the transmission of the country from generation to generation, basically, “选秀” was held every three years. The word “选秀” is no stranger to modern people, because in recent years, a large number of talent shows swarm to occupy the major satellite TV stations. But this is not as same as “选秀”. Modern people’s talent shows are mostly about talent competition, while ancient talent shows are more like beauty contests, as the candidates are called “秀女”. Therefore, we learn that even in the same cultural area, with the passage of time and the accumulation of history, the same word will have different meanings. For example, “姐姐” and “妹妹” are usually used as appellations for sisters who are related by blood. In this play, we constantly hear that the heads of various palaces refer to each other as sisters, and they always use “姐姐我” or “妹妹我” to start conversations. “姐姐妹妹” here are no longer concepts that can be explained from biology, but have become a kind of appellation used to refer to oneself. Thus, we cannot translate them literally as sisters. It is necessary to find alternatives according to their actual situation and cultural connotation. So is the word “姑姑”. In the traditional sense, “姑姑” refer to their father’s sisters. But “姑姑” in the drama refer to the older maids in the palace. They are honored as “姑姑” because they have been loyal to the nobles in the palace for many years, and their status is higher than that of ordinary maids. For instance, “芳若姑姑” was sent by Imperial Household Department to teach Zhen Huan and An Lingrong the palace etiquette before they entered the palace. Hence, the word “姑姑” here is not suitable to be translated as “aunt” or “Auntie”. The author thinks that it is more appropriate to transliterate it into Gugu.

One of the differences between Nida’s and Newmark’s classification theories of culture-loaded words is that the religious culture in Nida’s classification is not reflected in Newmark’s classification theory. The author contends that religious culture should be included in social culture since religion plays an important role in cultural life and is an indispensable part of society. The religious beliefs of the people in different times and regions are different. More people in the West believe in Christianity, while the people in Southeast Asia have faith in Buddhism. In addition, the Chinese people in feudal society were deeply influenced by Confucianism and Taoism, which penetrated into all aspects of people’s life at that time. For example, the common people are convinced of the existence of bodhisattvas and a divine Heaven. If they have a wish to fulfill, they usually go to the temple first to “*worship the bodhisattva*.” The emperor, as the ruler, had to perform “*sacrifices to the heavens*” every few years to pray for the peace of the country and the people and good wind and rain. Emperors called themselves the Son of Heaven to consolidate their political power with the help of the common people’s faith in heaven. Table 8.3 is the translations of some social cultural loaded-words in the drama.

Table 8.3 Translation of social culture-loaded words

| Source text | Target text | Translation strategy |
|-------------|--|----------------------------------|
| 老天爷 | The Heaven | Free translation |
| 生辰八字 | The eight characters of one's birthday and birth hour | Literal translation |
| 尼姑 | Nun | Literal translation |
| 姑姑 | Gugu | Foreignization (transliteration) |
| 太监 | Eunuch | Literal translation |
| 天子 | Son of the Heaven | Domestication |
| 公公 | Gonggong | Foreignization (transliteration) |
| 娘娘/小主 | Your ladyship | Domestication |
| 华妃 | Huafei | Foreignization (transliteration) |
| 奴才/奴婢 | Your humble servant | Domestication |
| 陛下 | Your majesty | Domestication |
| 菩萨 | Buddha | Literal translation |
| 朕/本王/本宫 | I | Domestication |
| 熹妃 | Xifei | Foreignization (transliteration) |
| 翻牌子 | To choose one to sleep with by turning over special brands | Free translation |
| 登基 | To ascend the throne | Free translation |
| 满汉通婚 | Intermarriage between Manchus and Han people | Literal translation |
| 秀女 | Candidates for the harem | Literal translation |
| 争宠 | Be one's rivalry | Literal translation |

8.2.4 Administrative Culture

Administrative culture-loaded words refer to all the social, political, economic and administrative institutions and systems related to administration in the cultural area. According to the functions and influences of various institutions in ancient and modern times, the author divides them into the following three categories:

- (1) The general type. Although some social, political and economic administrative institutions and systems have a long history, and their functions have continued to this day, they have different names in different times. For example, “清朝朝廷” is “清朝政府”; the classrooms for the emperor's sons and grandsons is called “上书房”, which is equivalent to today's Royal School; the “大理寺” of the Qing Dynasty is equivalent to today's Supreme Court.
- (2) Cross overlapping type. With the development and evolution of history, the division and powers of administrative institutions and systems may be different, that is to say, some institutions in feudal society may not be able to find the institutions that exercise the same functions in modern society, or they may be subdivided

into several institutions in modern society. Taking the six ministries of the Qing Dynasty as an example, “兵部” is in charge of national defense and military affairs, and its main functions are equivalent to today’s Ministry of National Defense. But in addition, it also undertakes the assessment, transfer and selection of military officers, and civil affairs were handled by the Ministry of Official Personnel, which combined to form today’s State Human Resource Ministry; “礼部” is in charge of national education and ceremonial cultural affairs, which is equivalent to the combination of the modern Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Culture.

- (3) Special oriented type. In modern society, everyone is equal, but in feudal society, people are divided into various classes. At the top of the hierarchy tower, naturally, is the ruling class. In order to maintain the internal order and stability of the ruling class and better serve the ruling class, the rulers set up some special institutions for the royal family. For example, “内务府” was in charge of Court Affairs, the “宗人府” was in charge of royal clan affairs, and the place where the emperor worked was called “御书房”. In *Empresses in the Palace*, the names of these organizations appear frequently. For the translation of organization names, the key lies in the embodiment of their main functions, because for such culture-loaded words, the cultural information they contain is mainly concentrated on their functions. In the translation of such culture-loaded words, if we can find the corresponding organizations in the target culture, although there may be some differences in the name, we may adopt the free translation strategy in the translation as long as the functions are the same, so as to transform the name of the organization into the name of its modern organization and clearly reflect its functions. If we can’t find a completely equivalent institution or system in the target culture, we should translate it by reflecting its major functions and conveying its cultural information. Table 8.4 is the translation of some administrative culture-loaded words.

8.2.5 Language Culture

Chinese belongs to the Chinese Tibetan language family, while English is a branch of the Germanic language family. This means that Chinese and English are different in nature. The main contents are as follows.

- (1) From the syntactic level, Chinese emphasizes parataxis. As long as it can convey information accurately, it cannot be too much bound to the form of language. English emphasizes hypotaxis. The sentence construction must follow certain grammar rules. Wang Li, a famous linguist in China, sums up the differences between the two languages in syntax as “*rule of man*” and “*rule of law*” (Wang 1984: 35), i.e., Chinese syntactic structure is more flexible than English.
- (2) From the phonetic level, the Chinese phonetic system has four tones, while English expresses different emotional colors by changing the tone of voice. The tone system of Chinese creates a special “character game” in China, namely,

Table 8.4 Translation of administrative culture-loaded words

| Source text | Target text | Translation strategy |
|-------------|--|----------------------|
| 朝廷 | Government/court | Free translation |
| 上书房 | Royal school | Free translation |
| 大理寺 | Supreme Court | Free translation |
| 兵部 | Ministry of National Defense (in feudal China) | Free translation |
| 吏部 | Ministry of Official Personnel Affairs (in feudal China) | Free translation |
| 户部 | Ministry of Revenue (in feudal China) | Free translation |
| 礼部 | Ministry of Education and Rites (in feudal China) | Free translation |
| 刑部 | Ministry of Justice (in feudal China) | Free translation |
| 工部 | Ministry of Labor (in feudal China) | Free translation |
| 尚书 | Minister | Free translation |
| 侍郎 | Deputy minister | Free translation |
| 八旗制度 | System of eight banners | Literal translation |
| 宗人府 | Royal Clan Court | Free translation |
| 御书房 | Imperial study | Free translation |
| 内务府 | Royal Household Bureau | Free translation |
| 总督 | Governor | Literal translation |
| 县丞 | Subprefect | Free translation |
| 太医 | Royal physician | Free translation |

the epilogue, as mentioned in example 1 “孔夫子搬家—尽是输(书)”. Chinese people are crazy about the subtlety of homophony, but foreigners can hardly realize its beauty. After all, books (书) in English have no connection with lose (输);

- (3) From the aspect of language expression, Chinese people, especially the ancients, like to speak like a book or take four characters as a unit of speech. However, English does not pay attention to it so much. Therefore, when translating some idioms or poems and songs, the style and content of language cannot be considered simultaneously and it is difficult to achieve the effect of equivalence. *Empresses in the Palace* also has its unique language characteristics. First, the background of the story is the Qing Dynasty, in the feudal society, the characters' speech and content are all with strong hierarchical color. Taking “请安” as an example, the emperor is considered to be the most honorable man in the world. Hence, when people meet the emperor should say “吾皇万岁万万岁”. As the elder of the palace, the Empress Dowager, in order to show respect for her, people usually take the words “福寿安康 (longevity and health)” or “祥安金康” when “请安”. Secondly, the writer and author of the play, Liu Lianzi majored in Chinese language and literature. Therefore, the play quotes a lot of poems and songs and has profound cultural background. In addition, because of

Liu Lianzi's preference for *A Dream of Red Mansions*, the setting of the characters' speaking style is consciously close to *A Dream of Red Mansions* when writing lines. According to Susan Bassnett's cultural translation theory, culture is the decisive force that dominates translation behavior and direction, but it does not mean that translators can break through the constraints of language forms in the process of translation, and destroy the constitution of the translated language or source language in order to achieve cultural effects.

In view of the great differences between English and Chinese, it is impossible to realize the complete equivalence of cultural function in the process of translation. As the intermediate bridge between the original and the audience, the translator should understand the language environment and cultural environment of the audience and the author, and find a balance point between them to realize the dynamic equivalence of culture, i.e., to maximize the output of cultural information under the condition of ensuring the readability of the translation. Table 8.5 is a list of some language and culture-loaded words and their translation in the drama.

When classifying and translating the culture-loaded words in the play, the author notes the following problems.

- (1) the classification of culture-loaded words is not absolute. This is because the cultural images contained in some culture-loaded words may involve multiple cultural fields. Take the idiom “倾国倾城” as an example. This idiom is used to describe the amazing beauty women. In this idiom, 国 (country) and 城 (city) should belong to the field of ecological culture, and as an idiom, it also belongs to a kind of language and culture.
- (2) The translation of some culture-loaded words may involve a variety of translation strategies. Take the idiom “钟灵毓秀” as an example. This is originally an adjective, but in translation, it is transformed into a noun with a post attribute according to its meaning, that is, free translation and translation are adopted at the same time.
- (3) The translation of culture-loaded words needs to return to the context. Taking the classic line of Huafei's “赏你一丈红” as an example, it is difficult for us to translate the material and cultural loaded word “一丈红” from the whole sentence. The correct translation method should be related to the context and realize that Huafei's sentence means to give death. If we stick to the translation of “一丈红”, we will fall into a dead end of formalism or mechanism.
- (4) The four strategies commonly used in translating culture-loaded words include literal translation, free translation, domestication and foreignization. *Empresses in the Palace* has profound cultural heritage. The purpose of summarizing and analyzing the culture-loaded words is to deepen the understanding of culture-loaded words and summarize the strategies for translating such words. Based on the translation of various culture-loaded words in this section, the author will explore the English translation strategies of culture-loaded words in audiovisual translation from the perspective of cultural translation, and make a specific analysis of four common translation strategies.

Table 8.5 Translation of language culture-loaded words

| Source text | Target text | Translation strategy |
|--------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| 福寿安康 | Wish you longevity and fitness | Free translation |
| 奉天承运, 皇帝诏曰 | According to the God-blessed Emperor's order | Free translation |
| 韬光养晦 | To hold one's capabilities and bide one's time | Free translation |
| 以色事他人, 能得几时好 | One who savors seduction won't last | Free translation |
| 会咬人的狗不叫 | A barking dog never bites | Free translation |
| 泛泛之辈 | Ordinary people | Free translation |
| 独善其身 | To remain upright in a restless society | Free translation |
| 不识抬举 | Unappreciative | Free translation |
| 钟灵毓秀 | A place endowed with the fine spirits of the universe | Free translation, transliteration |
| 奇货可居 | Rare commodity | Free translation |
| 谢主隆恩 | Thanks for your immense benevolence | Free translation |
| 吾皇万岁万岁万万岁 | Long live your majesty! | Free translation |
| 一入宫门深似海 | It's hard to survive in the harem | Free translation |
| 倾国倾城 | So beautiful that overthrows the states and cities/extremely beautiful | Literal translation/Free translation |
| 皇上明察 | I'm sure your majesty will make impartial judgments | Free translation |
| 鸡犬不宁 | in an extreme chaos | Free translation |
| 膝下福薄 | To have few children | Free translation |
| 相敬如宾 | Respect comes first between husband and wife | Free translation |
| 一片冰心在玉壶 | My commitment is as pure as the jade ware | Free translation |

8.3 Translation Strategies for Culture-Loaded Words

In the previous section, the author has drawn lessons from Nida and Newmark's classification theory to summarize and analyze some culture-loaded words in *Empresses in the Palace*, and selected appropriate translation strategies for translation. In this section, the author will make a specific analysis of the four common translation strategies, namely literal translation, free translation, domestication and foreignization, according to the relationship between the cultural information contained in culture-loaded words in the target language and the source language culture, that is, cultural resonance, cultural redundancy, cultural mutual lacking and cultural mutual learning.

Before discussing the choice of translation strategies for culture-loaded words, we should make it clear that culture-loaded words are different from general words, and culture-loaded words in film and television translation are different from general culture-loaded words. This is because film and television translation, as a special text, is limited by time and space, and the picture and sound of film and television plays a certain auxiliary role in the transmission of information. Thus, when translating culture-loaded words in film and television plays, the translators should not only correctly understand the cultural information, but also fully consider the above two factors.

Although film and television translation is different from literary translation, they also have similarities. Both screenwriters of film and television dramas and writers of literary works take the readers or audiences of their own nation as the target readers and target audiences with the belief that they have the same cultural background, values and mode of thinking. Hence, they will not consider the acceptance of the audience or readers too much in the creation of language content and language style. But in the process of translation, the cultural background and language environment of the target audience or readers have changed. Once the translation strategy is improperly selected, the cultural information familiar to the source language audience or readers will appear obscure to the target language audience or readers, and the readability of the text will be lost (Zhang 2009: 542). Therefore, the author contends that the general steps to deal with culture-loaded words in film and television translation should be: first take the culture-loaded words as general culture-loaded words, select appropriate translation strategies for translation, then consider the particularity of film and television plays, properly delete or make use of the space of the picture to appropriately add some information. There are plentiful terms about translation methods and strategies in translatology. After summarizing the culture-loaded words and their translation in *Empresses in the Palace*, the author selects two pairs of complementary translation strategies, hoping to better show the application scope and advantages of different translation strategies in the translation of culture-loaded words.

The cultural translation theory put forward by Susan Bassnett plays an important role in testing the translation effect of culture-loaded words in audiovisual translation. The specific content of the cultural translation theory includes four aspects.

First, translation should surpass the language content of texts. We should correctly understand that the language serves as a carrier, and carry out translation practice with culture as the basic unit.

Second, the ultimate purpose of translation is communication, including language exchange and cultural exchange.

Third, in the translation process, we should pursue the cultural functional equivalence between the source language and the target language; Fourth, the principles and standards of translation should also keep pace with the times. Different historical periods have different requirements (Bassnett and Lefevere 1990: 4).

Susan Bassnett's theory aims to promote translation behavior driven by cultural purpose and let culture guide translation practice. However, in the process of translating culture-loaded words, translators often encounter the problem of untranslatability. The so-called untranslatability is not absolute. Nida (1965) proposes that the translation process should maintain the "dynamic equivalence" between the source language and the target language. The author believes that the dynamic equivalence is to maximize the language and cultural effects of the translation and maintain the dynamic balance between language and culture. Next, the author will make a specific analysis of the translation of culture-loaded words in film and television translation under the guidance of the cultural translation theory. The four translation strategies and their applicable conditions are divided into the following four kinds: cultural resonance and literal translation, cultural redundancy and free translation, cultural mutual lacking and foreignization, cultural mutual learning and domestication.

8.3.1 *Cultural Resonance and Literal Translation*

In the previous section, based on Peter Newmark's classification theory of culture-loaded words, the author classifies some culture-loaded words in *Empresses in the Palace* and makes a translation analysis. It is found that when the cultural information contained in the culture-loaded words can cause the resonance of the target audience, that is, cultural resonance, the strategy of literal translation should be adopted.

Cultural resonance means that the cultural effect of the cultural information loaded by the culture-loaded words in the target language audience is basically the same as the effect that the screenwriter hopes to produce in the source language audience. If the conceptual meaning and associative meaning of the culture-loaded word in the target language culture are fundamentally consistent with that in the source language culture, it can be said that the culture-loaded word realizes cultural resonance in the audience in the target language context. Cultural resonance is not to hide or cover up differences, but to better understand each other's cultures and achieve the realm of harmony in diversity.

Literal translation is a common translation strategy. What is literal translation? Some people think that literal translation is word for word translation. In daily life, we often hear such a joke "good good study, day day up" which is a literal translation of a slogan in Chinese "好好学习, 天天向上". Obviously, this sentence is a typical "Chinglish". It does not conform to the features and norms of the English language in terms of syntax or grammar. Thus, literal translation and word by word translation are not the same concept. In the course of English Chinese translation published in 1980, Zhang Peiji and other scholars defined literal translation as taking into account the content and form of the original text on the premise of meeting the language conditions of the target language. The form here refers to the national and local features embodied in the original text. Because English and Chinese belong to different language families, there are apparent differences in language forms and styles. Word by word translation is likely to fall into a dead end of mechanism and

formalism, resulting in “rigid translation” or “hard translation”. Hence, literal translation is by no means word by word. Literal translation emphasizes faithfulness to the original text. On the basis of ensuring the readability of the translation, it pursues the harmony between the original text and the translation in terms of content, form, thought and emotion. The advantage of literal translation is that it can well retain the language style and expressions of the original text, fully present the characteristics and refinement of the original text, and enable the target language audience and readers to understand and gradually accept the style and thought of the source language.

In the previous section, the author found that most of the culture-loaded words using literal translation strategies are simple ecological culture-loaded words and material culture-loaded words. Most of these ecological cultural-loaded words are Chinese herbal medicine. The civilization of traditional Chinese medicine is broad and profound, with a wide variety of traditional Chinese medicine and different effects. This is reflected incisively and vividly in *Empresses in the Palace*. For example, when Zhen Huan was accidentally scratched by a cat during her first pregnancy, An Lingrong gave her a box of scar softening ointment mixed with musk, which led to Zhen Huan’s miscarriage. Musk is a kind of precious medicinal material. It is the secretion of male musk deer gland. It is named for its special aroma. It has the effect of refreshing the brain and activating blood circulation to remove blood stasis. For foreign audiences, musk may not be strange, because it is often found in some perfumery and drugs for traumatic injuries. What they do not know is that musk has the effect of oxytocic. It is an essential weapon for China’s ancient imperial concubines to fight for the emperor’s love. The conceptual meaning of musk in the culture of English speaking countries is basically the same. With the plots, the audience can produce similar associative meaning and achieve a certain cultural effect. When An Lingrong was pregnant, there were signs of miscarriage. The imperial doctor added wormwood leaves to her medicine and smoked wormwood in the room to improve her situation. Wormwood is a perennial herb, mainly distributed in Asia and Europe. As a common Chinese herbal medicine, it is recorded in the *Compendium of Materia Medica* (《本草纲目》), *Materia Medica of Tang Dynasty* (《唐本草》) and other famous medical works. It has the effects of dispersing cold and warming meridians, dehumidification and hemostasis. It can also be used to make dishes and herbal cuisines. In the past, traditional Chinese medicine nouns in translation practice were usually fuzzed and expressed in “Chinese herb” generally. However, in *Empresses in the Palace*, traditional Chinese medicine terms appear frequently and have abundant kinds. Therefore, Chinese herb cannot be used to replace them in translation. Instead, the strategy of literal translation should be adopted to cooperate with the plots to reflect the differences and effects of various traditional Chinese medicine.

Generally speaking, in view of the diversity and distribution of species, the conceptual meaning of this category of culture-loaded words in the target culture is basically the same as that in the source culture, but the associative meaning may be different. In the target culture, some plants or medicinal materials often appear in their daily life, or for appreciating, or for conditioning their body. Nevertheless, in the source culture, as seen in the above examples, these plants and medicinal materials have

become the useful tools of imperial concubines to gain the emperor's favor in China hundreds or even thousands of years ago. Because the film and television text is a coherent text, the audience can then obtain the correct associative meaning of the culture-loaded word from the lines and pictures before and after, which also has the conditions for cultural resonance. As a cultural carrier, these plants, spices and medicinal materials in *Empresses in the Palace* can stimulate foreign audiences' interest and resonance in Chinese medical civilization to a large extent, and guide them to further understand and understand the treasures of Chinese medical civilization. As a result, the literal translation strategy should be adopted for a large number of ecological cultural-loaded words such as medicinal materials, plants and spices.

Most of the material cultural-loaded words that should adopt literal translation are architectural names, especially the names of a mass of palace complexes in *Empresses in the Palace*. Chinese architectural culture has gradually formed its own style over the long history, and has an indispensable position in the history of architecture. As one of the representatives of Chinese ancient buildings, the Imperial Palace-Forbidden City in the Qing Dynasty has profound cultural value. Although *Empresses in the Palace* was shot in Hengdian Film and Television Shooting Base rather than in the Forbidden City, it managed to display the magnificent buildings in the Forbidden City to a great extent. The screens present the majesty and grandeur of the Forbidden City to the target language audience directly. Coupled with appropriate translation, it is easy to arouse resonance among the target language audiences and stimulate their interest to explore the sites. In this way tourism industry and construction industry may be promoted. Usually, transliteration is adopted for such culture-loaded words.

(1) Source Text: 乾清宫 慈宁宫.

Translation: Qianqing Palace; Kunning Palace

However, in the Forbidden City, the naming of each building is exquisite and meaningful. For example, the Shoukang Gong (寿康宫) where the Empress Dowager lives, we can infer from the literal meaning that we hope the Empress Dowager who lives in it to enjoy a long life and be happy and healthy. If it is transliterated as Shoukang Palace, it cannot reflect its cultural value, resulting in the lack of cultural information. The Qianqing Gong (乾清宫) where the emperor lives and the Kunning Gong (坤宁宫) where the queen lives are more exquisite. This can be seen from the analysis of material cultural-loaded words in the previous section. The author believes that since translation is based on culture, when translating, we should first consider translating the cultural information contained therein to the greatest extent. If it is found to conflict with the actual situation after translation, such as, the lines after translation are too long, causing some difficulties for dubbing and subtitles, we should consider other translation methods. For these typical and representative building names, if the translation length can be controlled within 3–5 English words, it is advisable to adopt the strategy of literal translation, as shown in example 2.

(2) Source Text: 寿康宫; 乾清宫; 坤宁宫.

Literal Translation: Palace of Longevity and Fitness; Palace of Heavenly Purity; Palace of Earthly Tranquility.

8.3.2 *Cultural Redundancy and Free Translation*

The concept of redundancy first appeared in Informatics, but it has been gradually introduced into translation in recent years. It originally refers to “information irrelevant to information content in information”, which strengthens the structure of information transmission, “dilutes” information concentration and helps prediction (Zhan 1993). From the perspective of cultural translation, it is to help form sentences in language structure and make them conform to the language form of the source language; In terms of language content, we should highlight the key points and distinguish the primary and secondary information; In cultural communication, we should help readers predict the cultural information. Therefore, there is the concept of cultural redundancy information in translatology. The cultural redundancy mentioned by the author here is put forward on the basis of cultural redundancy information, but it is different. The cultural redundancy here is defined from the perspective of the relationship between the cultural information in the culture-loaded words in the target language and the source language culture. When the semantic value of cultural information contained in culture-loaded words is greater than its cultural value, the phenomenon of cultural redundancy will appear. The purpose of translation is communication, especially focusing on cultural communication, but as language is the carrier of culture, the translators should also consider the readability of the translation. Another situation is that due to different historical background and social culture, the same cultural image may have different names. In this case, the strategy of free translation should be adopted.

What is free translation? Free translation and literal translation discussed in the previous section complement each other. If faithfulness to the content of the original text, faithfulness to the form of the original text and ensuring the smoothness of the translation are the three major issues to be considered in translation, literal translation is to be faithful to the content of the original text first, then follow the form of the original text, and finally focus on the smoothness of the translation. And the third one can be sacrificed when necessary, which leads to some literal translations with heavy “translation traces”. In free translation, the first thing to consider is to be faithful to the content of the original text, the second is to ensure the smoothness of the translation, and the last is to retain the form of the original text. When there is a large difference between the form of the target language and the source language, the last point can be ignored. Compared with literal translation, the advantage of free translation is that it is more in line with the expression habits of the target language, more smooth and more easily accepted by the target language audience, while the disadvantage is that it makes the translation lose its “exotic flavor” and look less “foreign”. In the case of cultural redundancy, the cultural information in culture-loaded words has become secondary information. If literal translation strategy is adopted to ensure the “original flavor” of the translation, it may lead to “rigid translation” or “hard translation”, which will not only fail to convey the cultural information to the translation audience, but also cause obstacles in understanding and cognition to the translation audience.

(3) Source Text: 赏你一丈红.

Target Text: Just enjoy your slow torture to death.

If the classic line of Huafei's "赏你一丈红" be translated as "give you a 3.333 m red", it will cause confusion and misunderstandings. "一丈红" is the name of a kind of deadly poison, however "3.333 m red" in the translation has nothing to do with its original meaning. China's feudal society has a strict hierarchical system and distinguishes between inferiority and inferiority. Even if the erring slave is sentenced to death by the master, he must thank the master for his "赏赐" ("reward") (Liao 2013: 97). "赏" and "一丈红" are obviously culturally loaded words. Literal translation may cause difficulties for foreign audiences to understand. Therefore, we may wish to adopt a free translation strategy. According to the context, we can infer that all the expressions of Hua Fei mean "slowly enjoy the process of being tortured to death", and then we can translate it into "*Just enjoy your slow torture to death.*"

The translation of culture-loaded words needs to return to the context. Taking the classic line of Huafei's "赏你一丈红" as an example, it is difficult for us to translate the material and cultural loaded word "一丈红" from the whole sentence. The correct translation method should be related to the context and realize that Huafei's order means death.

The titles of administrative units and officials in the Qing Dynasty are greatly different from those in modern times. For example, it is repeatedly mentioned in the drama that Zhen Yuandao, Zhen Huan's father, is 大理寺少卿. Shen Meizhuang, a good friend of Zhen Huan, is the daughter of Shen Zishan, who is 济州协领, and An Lingrong is the daughter of An Bihuai, who is 松阳县县丞. Before translating these official titles, the translators need to have a certain understanding of the administrative culture of the Qing Dynasty. The division of administrative regions and the establishment of administrative institutions in ancient times are different from those in modern society, but some official titles can be found in modern society. For example, 大理寺 is the supreme court of the Qing Dynasty, Then 大理寺少卿 is equivalent to the vice president of today's Supreme Court; 济州协领 is a military attache, equivalent to today's deputy commander of the provincial military region. Naturally, 济州 here is not Jeju Island in South Korea, but Jining in Shandong province; 松阳县县丞 is actually the deputy magistrate of Songyang county. For the names or official titles of these institutions, the cultural information they contain is to clear function.

(4) Source Text: 大理寺少卿; 济州佐领; 松阳县县丞.

Target text: vice-president of the Supreme Court; deputy commander of Jizhou Provincial Military Command; subprefect of Songyang County.

8.3.3 Cultural Mutual Lacking and Foreignization

Cultural mutual lacking means that culture-loaded words have meaning only in the source culture, but can not find the same or similar counterparts in the target culture. In this case, foreignization strategy should be adopted. This is due to the relative independence of culture. As a dynamic process, cultural differences are the most important and direct difficulties faced by translators (Li 2009: 31).

Lawrence Venuti, a famous American translation theorist, first put forward the concepts of foreignization and domestication in *The Translator's Invisibility* in 1995. The so-called foreignization means that “*the translator leaves the author in peace, as much as possible, and moves the reader towards him*” (Venuti 1995: 19). In other words, in the process of translation, the translators should be guided by the source language, try not to change the language characteristics and language expression methods formed by the author in his creation, and preserve the differences of national culture and language style characteristics as much as possible, so that the target language audience can feel the beauty of the source language civilization vividly without going abroad. Foreignization translation is based on the linguistic and cultural differences between the target language and the source language, and relies on these difference to realize the function of cultural communication. Generally speaking, foreignization translation is not bound by the norms of the target language, and sometimes it even appropriately retains some ancient or obscure contents in the source language, bringing an unprecedented audio-visual feast to the audience of the target culture.

In *Empresses in the Palace*, the most suitable part for foreignization translation is the ranking of the empresses in the palace. Most Western societies practice monogamy, while the emperors of Chinese feudal society have lots of empresses. In the Qing Dynasty, empresses were divided into nine ranks. From the first to the ninth, or from top to bottom, they were “皇后, 皇贵妃, 贵妃, 妃, 嫔, 贵人, 常在, 答应和官女子”. The first four grades are given titles, such as “端”, “敬”, “熹”, “华”. The title of a concubine usually symbolizes good luck or because the concubine has some outstanding morality. The other grades of empresses and empresses with humble family background are generally distinguished by their surnames before their grades. In western culture, there are few such cultural phenomena. It is hard for us to find the corresponding language of each grade empress from the target culture, which leads to the mutual lacking of culture.

The author contends that in this case, the most appropriate way is to adopt the foreignization strategy and use pinyin to express the different identities of the empresses in the palace. The Qing Dynasty's regulations on the grade of empress concubines were similar to those of the previous dynasty, but there were also differences. For instance, “答应” and “常在” are the only names in the Qing Dynasty. Taking “叶答应” as an example, netizens translated it as *Leaf Agreement*, which is obviously incorrect. In the written translation, it can be translated into “*imperial concubine Ye of the eighth rank*”. But in subtitle translation, the constraints of time and space make this lengthy translation impossible to be put into practice. Therefore, it is suggested to transliterate it into Ye Daying by using the foreignization method, and when the characters first appear, add “*the eighth highest imperial Concubine*” in the blank of the subtitle space. Such method can not only make the foreign audience recognize the sound and people, but also make the audience understand the identity and status of the characters.

(5) Source Text: 华妃.

Target text: Hua Fei (the fourth highest imperial concubine).

Source Text: 祺嫔.

Target text: Qi Pin (the fifth highest imperial concubine).

Source Text: 沈贵人.

Target text: Shen Guiren (the sixth highest imperial concubine).

Source Text: 苑常在.

Target text: Wan Changzai (the seventh highest imperial concubine).

Source Text: 安答应.

Target text: Ahn Daying (the eighth highest imperial concubine).

8.3.4 Cultural Mutual Learning and Domestication

When the cultural information contained in culture-loaded words cannot find the completely corresponding cultural images in the target culture, but there are similar cultural images that can be used for reference, this situation is called cultural mutual learning.

Contrary to foreignization, domestication conveys information guided by the target language and according to the expression methods and habits of the target language. Foreignization requires the translators to move closer to the original author, while domestication requires the translators to move closer to the target audience or readers, treat the original author as a person born in the target culture, and his works should also conform to the norms of the target language and reflect the characteristics of the target culture (Venuti 1995: 20). Domestication translation can help the target readers or audience better understand the source text and improve the readability of the target text to a great extent. When proposing this translation strategy, Venuti (1998) has reservations about it. He believes that the reason why he thinks that domestication has become one of the mainstream translation strategies in the history of western translation is the leading cultural mentality. Driven by such superiority mentality, translators are required to consciously suppress other civilizations and establish the leading position of their own civilization in the process of translation.

Although the domestication strategy has some disadvantages, it does not mean that it has no use. In the case of cultural mutual learning, the same cultural image may have different expressions in the target culture and the source culture. If the foreignization strategy is adopted to deal with such culture-loaded words, it may lead to ambiguity. For example, a character in the play once quoted a sentence in the Chinese classic *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* that “万事俱备, 只欠东风 (Everything is ready except the east wind)”. The author once thought about such a question, why here must be the east wind, not the south wind, west wind or north wind. After that, the author learned that in fact, the wind direction is different in each season. For example, the southeast wind blows in spring and the northwest wind blows in winter. The east wind here actually refers to the southeast wind. Spring is the beginning of the four seasons, symbolizing new hope. Therefore, the east wind always gives people a warm feeling. But Britain is located in the middle latitudes and controlled by the westerly belt. Therefore, it is not the east wind but the west wind that brings

warm and humid airflow to Britain. British poet Shelley once wrote a famous *Ode to the West Wind*, which uses the natural phenomenon of the west wind to reveal the general law that the transformation of human society will go to victory after tortuous struggles. The British preference for west wind is evident. Thus, when translating the cultural image of “east wind”, we should use the domestication method to translate it into west wind rather than east wind. Another obvious situation of cultural mutual learning is reflected in religious cultural-loaded words. As we all know, westerners believe in Christianity, and God is their spiritual sustenance, while Chinese generally believe in Buddhism. When westerners encounter some unexpected situations, they like to say “Oh, my God!” while Chinese people like to say “天啊” or “我的老天爷!” The God and “老天爷” mentioned here are actually two cultural images that can learn from each other.

Different culture-loaded words may produce different effects in the target language and the source language culture. When the cultural information contained in culture-loaded words can arouse the resonance of the target language audience, it constitutes the situation of cultural resonance. At this time, literal translation strategy should be adopted. Literal translation can maintain the original flavor of the translation and arouse the interest of the target language audience in further understanding the source language culture, but sometimes the translation trace is too obvious.

When the semantic value and cultural value of culture-loaded words cannot be taken into account simultaneously, it constitutes the situation of cultural redundancy. At this time, the strategy of free translation should be adopted. Language is the carrier of culture. That doesn't make sense in language has no cultural meaning. Free translation can enhance the readability and artistry of the translation, but it will cause the loss of cultural information.

When the cultural information contained in culture-loaded words cannot find equivalent words in the target culture, it constitutes the phenomenon of mutual lacking of culture. At this time, foreignization strategy should be adopted. This is mainly due to the relative independence of culture, which leads to the lack of cultural significance of culture-loaded words in the target culture. Foreignization can better reflect the cultural and linguistic characteristics of the source language. It's more creative, but some compensatory means are needed to promote the understanding of the target audience.

When the cultural information contained in culture-loaded words cannot find equivalent words in the target culture, but can find similar cultural images, it constitutes the situation of cultural mutual learning. At this time, domestication strategy should be adopted. Domestication can promote the “direct dialogues” between screenwriters and audiences, but it will also cause the loss of cultural information. In fact, both literal translation and free translation, as well as domestication and foreignization, complement each other.

The selection of translation strategy is not one-dimensional. In translation practice, it is often necessary to integrate the influence of multiple translation strategies in order to complete the translation process. Literal translation and free translation have a long history. The concepts of domestication and foreignization strategy can be regarded as an extension of the concepts of literal translation and free translation. If literal

translation and free translation focus on the semantic level, domestication and free translation deal with a higher level about culture and aesthetics. The two are related and different, and both play an important role in dealing with culture-loaded words.

8.4 Chapter Summary

The treatment of culture-loaded words in film and television translation should depend on the specific situation and be analyzed in detail. In this chapter, based on Susan Bassnett's cultural translation theory, the author attempts to discuss the English translation strategies of culture-loaded words in audiovisual translation through the induction and analysis of culture-loaded words in *Empresses in the Palace*. The author believes that in the translation practice, according to the different effects of culture-loaded words in the target language and the source language culture, the choice of translation strategies can be roughly divided into the following four situations.

- (1) cultural resonance and literal translation, i.e., literal translation strategy should be adopted when the cultural information contained in culture-loaded words can resonate with the target language audience.
- (2) Cultural redundancy and free translation, i.e., when the semantic value of cultural information contained in culture-loaded words is greater than its cultural value, free translation strategy should be adopted.
- (3) Cultural mutual lacking and foreignization, i.e., when the cultural information contained in culture-loaded words cannot find equivalent words in the target culture, foreignization strategy should be adopted.
- (4) Cultural mutual learning and domestication, that is, domestication strategy should be adopted when there are other cultural images that can convey the same meaning despite the lack of equivalent words in the target culture.

As for the choice of translation strategies of culture-loaded words in film and television translation, translators must believe that all culture-loaded words are translatable but perfectly translated ones can be hard to come by. In the past, most of the discussions on the translation strategies of culture-loaded words focused on literary translation. While learning from the research results of English translation strategies of culture-loaded words in the field of literary translation, we must also be aware of the differences between audiovisual translation and literary translation, and deal with the English translation of culture-loaded words in film and television dramas more carefully. In view of the particularity of film and television texts, in audiovisual translation, translators are required to pay more attention to the possible comprehensive effect of culture-loaded words, i.e., the combination of language effect and cultural effect. Language is the carrier of culture. Without language, culture cannot realize its value. Therefore, when dealing with culture-loaded words in film and television translation practice, on the one hand, translators should consider the expression of film and television language in combination with the uniqueness of film and television language; on the other hand, they should also explore the cultural value and

cultural significance of culture-loaded words. Under the dynamic balance between language and culture, it is possible to achieve maximum cultural equivalence.

China's film and television industry is developing rapidly. While we are proud of its development, we should also bear in mind that it is not easy for China's film and television dramas to go international. Chinese culture is broad and profound, and Chinese history is long and rich. How to take film and television dramas to the world as a platform to promote Chinese history and culture and enhance Chinese image is a challenge we must think about in translation. The promotion and introduction of film and television dramas is not only because it has the function of entertaining the public, but also because it is a platform for cultural exchange. As far as cultural and historical plays are concerned, compared with simple text introduction, film and television dramas can more vividly and intuitively reflect the social reality and cultural situation of a certain historical stage. Thus, in translation, we should respect history, restore history, respect culture and reproduce culture. We need to think about how film and television translation will affect the audiences of the source language and the translated language, or what kind of impact we hope it will have as it is a new member in the field of translation. After these factors are clearly defined, we can decide what kind of information should be retained, what kind of information should be discarded, and what kind of information should be rewritten, and then adopt the corresponding translation strategy and follow the corresponding translation principles.

Professor Wang Zuoliang, a famous translator in China, believes that successful translators are true intellectuals. They are influenced by the source language culture and have profound understanding of the essence of the culture. They are also proficient in the target language culture. Only by paying equal attention to both cultures can they be like a fish in the water in translation practice (Wang 2000: 2). In the past two decades, the translation training model has indeed completed the transformation from focusing on language to paying equal attention to language and culture (Gentzler 2004: 70). When the translator's cultural background knowledge is strengthened, he/she can interpret culture-loaded words more comprehensively, promote the deepening of cross-cultural communication, and help the audience better understand and feel the style of foreign culture.

However, culture-loaded words reflect a nation's unique mode of thinking, values, emotional resonance, lifestyle, customs and ideology. The translation of culture-loaded words is bound to be a complex process. The translation of them in audiovisual translation is even more daunting. In order to qualify for the task, translators should take it as their mission to "*be true intellectuals*" as proposed by Professor Wang (2000: 2). By taking various means and ways, translators should aim to deeply understand the cultures of the translated language and the source language, compare the differences between them, take reality into consideration and adopt corresponding translation strategies to achieve the purposes of disseminating Chinese civilization and promoting Chinese culture in the world.

(This chapter is based on the author's 2015 MA thesis *On English Translation of Culture-loaded Words in Audiovisual Translation—Taking Empresses in the Palace (《甄嬛传》) as an Example*.)

Chapter 9

Meme Transmission and Domestication and Foreignization in the CE Translation of Film Titles



Hongjuan Sun

9.1 Theoretical Basis and Film Titles

As the saying goes, films become famous by their titles. The title of a film serves as the eye of its content. It can be a piece of art for appreciation and an effective form of advertisement. For a long time, Chinese scholars have conducted much research on the Chinese translation of western film titles, while ignoring the English translation of Chinese film titles. Meanwhile, most of the guiding ideologies used by scholars on the translation and research of film titles are from traditional equivalence-based linguistic translation theory. In view of this, this chapter attempts to explore the strategies for English translation of Chinese film titles from the perspective of memetics. The concept of meme not only provides a new platform and perspective for the study of translation, but also explains the specific application of domestication and foreignization in film title translation. All new things depend on the inheritance and reproduction of the older ones. For example, gene reproduction is realized through heredity, while culture is spread through meme replication and imitation. Culture is spread and replicated in translation activities, both from the perspectives of national and foreign memes. This chapter sets out to analyze and discuss the strategies in the English translation of Chinese film titles, and points out that although domestication translation is conducive to the dissemination and survival of core memes, it is at the expense of the cultural information attached to the source language, while foreignization translation can relatively faithfully copy the source language memes and spread the source language culture. But sometimes due to cultural differences, it is hard for the target language readers to decode the source language meme, so that meme transmission can be interrupted in the early stage. Therefore, the author proposes to use dialectics to analyze the two translation strategies of domestication and foreignization in the English translation of Chinese film titles. In order to better

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spread memes, we should look at the two translation strategies of domestication and foreignization from a dialectical perspective. When domestication and foreignization are both suitable, foreignization is the first choice, because it is more conducive to cultural communication. Under other circumstances, domestication or combination of domestication and foreignization can be adopted.

9.1.1 Classification of Films

In terms of content, films can be divided into four general categories: feature film, documentary, art film, and scientific education film. Moreover, each category can be subdivided into multiple genres according to various content properties or production methods.

Feature film is an important and influential popular art in the twenty-first century. It is also the main indicator to measure a country's level of film production. "*Feature films have two major characteristics. First, the roles in the film are played by actors and actresses. Second, feature films usually have complete storylines*" (Liu 2004: 89). The screenplays compiled by screenwriters, whether realistic, historical or sci-fi, mostly have complete and appealing plots, which can inspire, educate or entertain the audience. For example, the film *Stand By Me* (《奋斗》) tells the story of a group of brave and kind-hearted young people who fight bravely in the face of various tests of life, so as to finally realize their life value. It sends the message to the audiences that behind success there are unremitting efforts and struggles. From the external plots or manifestation features, feature films cover genres such as comedy, tragedy, thriller, biopic, history, ethics, cartoon, science fiction, and martial arts.

Documentary is a complete and accurate record and report of social life. It abides by the principle of authenticity and does not allow fraud. Its biggest difference from other films is that a documentary deals with facts and presents real people, true stories, authentic feelings and scenes. They can record major current events, reproduce historical events of a certain era, and reproduce the life or period of a certain character. Besides, documentaries can also record natural landscape, social customs, urban and rural features, etc.

In terms of classification, cartoons, paper-cut films, puppet films and films with special effects in recent years are usually collectively referred to as art films. Animation can be regarded as the most common kind of art films. French director Emile Reynaud is regarded as a pioneer in animation. *The Tibetan Dog* (《藏獒多吉》), co-produced by China and Japan, was released in June 2011 and it has been popular with children and adults alike. Paper cut, as its name implies, is a type of film that uses paper cuts with different shapes to show the storyline. Similarly, puppet film is a type of film in which people manipulate puppets behind the scenes or under the stage to produce coherent actions and show the development of the story.

Scientific education film, or popular science film, is used to spread knowledge, promote technology and accelerate cultural communication and exchange. They emphasize science and art. According to the purpose and characteristics of shooting,

they can be divided into: popular science films, technology promotion films, educational films, magazine films, etc. The popular science films refer to films that popularize the knowledge of natural science, social science and military science. The technology promotion films mainly introduce advanced technology and production techniques. They are good learning materials for vocational education and on-the-job training. The educational films serve as teaching aids made to complement classroom teaching. The magazine films aim at introducing scientific and technological trends and related information.

9.1.2 Features of Film Titles

Film is an art loved by audiences. The quality of the film title may directly or indirectly affect an audience's choice of film. A good film title should not only give the audience aesthetic feeling, but also attract the audience to watch the film. Therefore, it is extremely important to understand the respective features of Chinese and English film titles for the EC translation of film titles. This section will briefly analyze the basic features of film titles from three aspects: language, art and culture.

9.1.2.1 Language

As we all know, language is economical. As the logo of the film, the title needs to reflect the general content of the film in a concise and comprehensive way. Hence, in Chinese and English films, most titles have simple structure and concise wording. Nouns or noun phrases dominate in English film titles. Eight of the ten films on the nomination list for best picture at the 83rd Academy Awards in 2011 are named after nouns or noun phrases. Such as *Another Year* (《又一年》), *The Fighter* (《斗士》), *The King's Speech* (《国王的演讲》), and *Inception* (《盗梦空间》). This shows the dominant position of nouns in film titles. When nouns or noun phrases are used in English titles, verbs may be used in Chinese to convey action. The overseas promotional title of the film 《十月围城》 is *Bodyguards and Assassins*, in which the word for action in Chinese is substituted by description of characters in English. Therefore, when conducting CE translating of film titles, such linguistic differences should be taken into consideration.

In addition, English film titles are free of syllables, short and concise. Many titles are composed of one or two words, such as *Crash*, *Speed*, *Twilight*, *Conception*, *Kongfu Panda*, etc. While Chinese film titles are also short and concise, four-character phrases are preferred, such as 《单身男女》, 《建党伟业》, 《谍海风云》, 《人在囧途》, 《孤岛惊魂》. Chinese expressions stress symmetry and balance, while English expressions pay more attention to simplicity. Therefore, in the CE translation of film titles, while conveying the basic information, translators need to conform to the English way.

9.1.2.2 Art

Generally speaking, the artistry of film titles mainly refers to the ingenious applications of rhetorical devices in film titles. The applications of rhetoric render the titles vivid and can double the effect with half the effort with the finishing touch. Hence, rhetorical devices are widely used in both English and Chinese film titles. The rhetorical devices include irony, repetition, pun, metaphor, personification, imitation, exaggeration, contradictory modification, contrast, irony, rhyme and so on. Here are some examples: *Sense and Sensitivity* (alliteration), *True Lies* (contradictory modification), and *Click* (pun).

The word *click* originally means the pressing of a button. In the film *Click*, the protagonist clicks the button on a magical remote control to fast forward or skip all kinds of disappointments in life and directly reach the stages of his ideal life. The above rhetorical devices are also popular in Chinese films, such as 《摇摆的婚约》(personification), 《南京!南京!》(repetition), 《房不剩防》(parody), 《狄仁杰之通天帝国》(exaggeration), etc. The use of rhetoric in film titles creates simplicity and vividness and helps to stimulate the audience's aesthetic pleasure.

9.1.2.3 Culture

From a macro perspective, film is the product of the combination of culture and ideological trend in a specific era, which inevitably reflects the unique history and culture of a country. From a microscopic point of view, the cultural nature of the film is concentrated in the use of idioms, idioms, allusions, and slang that bear cultural imprints in its title. As a result, both English and Chinese films prefer allusions and idioms in titles. For example, the film *First Blood* has been translated into 《第一滴血》, which is an idiom in the online game DOTA. In DOTA whoever kills the other party's hero first will get *the first blood*, or FB. Players winning FB can get extra bounties and boost the morale of the whole team. Therefore, a suggestion is to translate *First Blood* into Chinese as 《初战告捷》. Another example is the Chinese film 《满城尽带黄金甲》. The title takes a line from the poem 《不第后赋菊》, written by Huang Chao, the leader of the peasant uprising in the late Tang Dynasty (“待到秋来九月八,我花开后百花杀,冲天香阵透长安,满城尽带黄金甲”). It alludes to the court coup launched by the second prince for his mother. At the same time, it evokes associations with war and blood in the film.

To sum up, there are similarities as well as differences in Chinese and English film titles in language, art and culture. Therefore, when translating Chinese film titles into English, careful considerations are required in order to better promote Chinese films to English-speaking countries and achieve the goal of cultural dissemination.

9.1.3 Functions of Film Titles

Peter Newmark divides the functions of language into six kinds: “*the expressive function, the informational function, the vocative function, the aesthetic function, the phatic function and the metalingual function*” (Newmark 2004: 39–44). A text can have one function or several functions. For the special text of film titles, Chen (2001) divides the function of film titles into information function, aesthetic function and imperative function.

According to Newmark, “*the core of the informative function of language is external situation, the facts of a topic, reality outside language, including reported ideas or theories.*” (Newmark 2001: 40). The film tells potential audiences some information related to the film through its title, such as the theme, time, place, background or plot of the film. Since film title carry related information, most viewers decide whether to watch certain films by browsing through the titles. Take the film *Eternal Moment* (《将爱情进行到底》) as an example. By glancing at the title, the audience understands that the film is a romance.

The aesthetic function means that the film title not only transmits the basic information of the film, but also gives the audience aesthetic pleasure. Generally speaking, the aesthetic features of film titles are mainly transmitted through the application of rhetorical devices. The application of rhetorical devices in the title makes the title vivid and attractive. The commonly used rhetorical devices in film titles include irony, contrast, repetition, pun, metaphor, personification, parody, exaggeration, paradox, satire, rhyme and so on. Rhetoric has been introduced in the second section of this chapter and will not be repeated here.

The imperative function of film title means that the film title can attract the audience and attract audience to the cinema, so as to realize the commercial value of the film. In a way, the film title is the advertisement of the film. Through publicity, it attracts the audience to watch the film in the cinema and improves the box office value of the film. The information function and aesthetic function of a title all help to enhance its imperative function. An audience needs to understand the general content of the film through the title to become interested in it and have the desire to watch it. Therefore, it is the translator’s responsibility to find suitable translation of the title in the target language based on a thorough understanding of the connotation and style of the film and awareness of the cultural differences in order to make the title succinct and enticing.

9.2 Memes and Translation

9.2.1 Language, Culture and Translation

Culture is a complex concept, which includes a nation’s knowledge, beliefs, values, religion and so on. “*Culture has become a collective subconscious. From our birth*

to our death, all our activities will be restricted by culture” (Samovar 1981: 29). Language is like a mirror, which reflects a nation’s cultural features, aesthetics and values. “Any language is subordinate to a specific culture, and any culture is centered on the structure of a natural language” (1978: 211–32). To study a language, we must study the cultural connotations behind it. Cultural translation theory holds that translation faces two different cultures, so in the process of translation, in order to relatively faithfully copy the source language information, we ought to consider the two cultures behind the language symbols. In short, when translating, the translator should not only achieve the transmission of semantic information, but also complete the decoding and recoding of cultural information. Wang Zuoliang points out that although the translator’s task is to complete the transformation of language information on the surface, he is facing two large cultures behind the language, namely, “source language culture and target language culture” (Wang 1997: 85). Hence, the translator should consider both language and culture in the process of translation, and should not separate them.

Translation enables cultural dissemination and exchange. In 1813, philosopher Friedrich Schleiermacher remarked “to some extent, a lot of beautiful and expressive things in our language are introduced or triggered by translation” (Lefevere 1992: 165). Good translation is conducive to cultural exchange and dissemination, whereas, bad translation may create negative effects. For example, the film 《霸王别姬》 has been translated into *Farewell My Concubine*. Foreign audiences can be misled by the title. Because the word *concubine* fails to convey that Yu ji is in fact the love of Xiang Yu. In addition, the title gives emphasis on the female character while the image of Xiang Yu, the protagonist, is obscured.¹

To sum up, culture, language and translation are closely related and interdependent. At the same time, they bring certain difficulties to translation. Therefore, a good translator should acquire sufficient cultural knowledge and be skillful with translation techniques to find most appropriate expressions to deliver cultural messages accurately and effectively.

9.2.2 Memes and Cultural Transmission

As a unit of cultural transmission, memes replicate and spread themselves by infecting the host. Any information, as long as it can be “copied” through “imitation”, can become a meme. When a cultural unit is spread, it becomes a meme. As cultural forms, architecture, music, books, pottery, idioms, stories, film and television works are constantly copied and spread in human civilization, so they can all be regarded as memes. For example the producers of the film *Red Cliff* (《赤壁》) have used various means to promote it and succeeded in attracting a large number of audience through publicity. This is also a meme. Memes not only copy and spread

¹ Anonymous: *Questioning the Popular English Translation of Farewell My Concubine*. [2010–01–01]. <http://bbs.chinadaily.com.cn/thread-205,980-1-1.html>.

themselves, but also inherit and develop culture. As a result, we can say that the transmission of culture is the evolution and spread of memes. Cultural communication is inseparable from memes. As a crucial way of cross-cultural communication, translation is bound to be inextricably linked with memes.

9.2.3 *Memes and Translation*

In the translation circle, Chesterman is the first to introduce memes into translation theory. He deems that memes need to be spread in the same culture through imitation. If memes want to be spread across cultures through language, they need to be realized through translation, because translation is an important way of cross-verbal and cross-cultural communication. The process of translation is actually the process of cultural communication, that is, the process of meme replication and communication.

Translation is a cross-cultural communication activity, which transforms one cultural meme into another. Memes generally go through two cycles of four stages, i.e., assimilation, retention, expression and transmission. Each stage has to undergo selection, variation and elimination. Finally, only a few memes survive with their strong “infectivity” and are understood, accepted and transmitted by the host. In the process of translation, as a reader of the original work, the translator will first be infected by the source language meme and become the host. After the assimilation and retention stage, the translator encodes, expresses and transmits the meme in the target language. The target language meme (target text) encoded by the translator will enter the next cycle to infect more hosts, so as to replicate and spread itself. The following is an illustration of the process of memes transmission through translation (Fig. 9.1).

In the process of this communication, the translator is the decoder and infected person of the source language meme, so the translator plays an important role in the cross-cultural communication of meme. The new meme carrier encoded by the translator must be able to infect the new host in order to ensure the smooth spread of meme.

9.3 Domestication, Foreignization and Culture

Translation is not a simple word conversion game, but a cultural exchange activity. In tackling the cultural factors encountered in translation, the commonly used translation strategies are domestication and foreignization. These two translation strategies have always been the focus of debate in the translation circle. Domestication means that the translation should be as smooth and natural as the target language. Foreignization signifies that the translation ought to maintain the language and cultural characteristics of the original and convey *exoticism*. Meanwhile, it is worth noting that domestication and foreignization are not the same concepts as free translation and

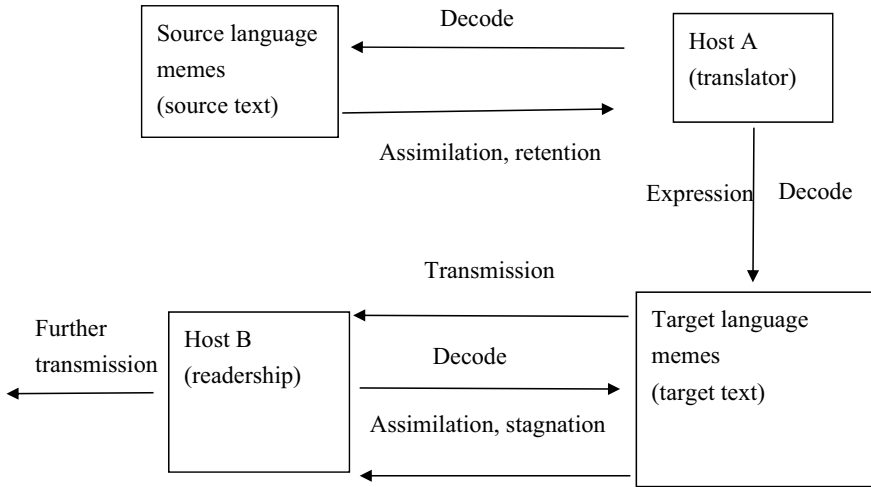


Fig. 9.1 Process of memes transmission through translation

literal translation. Literal translation and free translation are more concerned with the translation methods and skills, which are limited to the discussion at the language level. Domestication and foreignization are translation strategies.

9.3.1 Domestication

Domestication in translation is to try to minimize the exotic flavor of the translated text and reproduce the essence and spirit of the original text with the language mode and language structure that the target language readers can understand, so as to help the target language readers overcome the understanding difficulties caused by cultural differences. Hence, the translation using domestication strategy may be different from the original in language form, but it can better make the readers know the original. For example, the translation of “*She’s always all thumbs*” should adopt the domestication strategy. The Chinese version becomes “她总是笨手笨脚 (*She’s always clumsy*)”. If translated into Chinese as “她都是大拇指”, confusion is created. The translation of “*The pot calls the kettle black.*” Can be rendered into the Chinese idiom “五十步笑百步”. Because the target language readers are familiar with the allusion “五十步笑百步”, such domestication fully conforms to the habits of the target language, so that the readers can easily understand the meaning of the source language.

Eugene A. Nida is one of the main representatives of domestication translation. One of the most familiar aspects of Nida’s translation theory is his dynamic equivalence (i.e. flexible equivalence) translation. In dynamic equivalence translation, the translator focuses on the meaning and spirit of the original text, not on the language

structure of the original text, that is, not on formal correspondence. Nida's view of translation has something to do with his devotion to Christ and his long-term engagement in the study of Bible translation. Christian translators have a belief that God's message is a universal truth that should and can be translated into the languages of all nations and understood by "*people of all nations*". Therefore, Nida deems that the translators should respect the target language expression in the process of translation, because all languages are rich in means to express ideas.

9.3.2 *Foreignization*

Foreignization in translation means that translation should try to retain the exotic nature of the original and convey the exotic cultural characteristics contained in the original to the target language readers, so that the target language readers can have the opportunity to broaden their cultural horizons. For example, "铁饭碗" can be translated as "*an iron rice bowl*" or "*A life-long job*". The former is a typical case of foreignization translation. The translation of "天有不测风云, 人有旦夕祸福" is another example. There are two translation versions: "*Truly storms gather without warning in nature, and bad luck befalls men overnight*" and "*I know the weather and human life are both unpredictable.*" Obviously, the first version has adopted foreignization by clinging to the original text.

9.3.3 *Domestication, Foreignization and Culture*

In recent years, with the deepening of cultural exchanges and researches, people have gradually broken through the linguistic barriers of translation researches and put translation activities in the context of cultural exchanges. Translation is regarded not only as the transformation between different languages, but also as the dialogue and exchange between different cultures. In the translation of culture, there are two translation tendencies: domestication and foreignization. These two translation principles were put forward by Lawrence Venuti, one of the representatives of deconstructive translation theory. In his opinion, domestication refers to a translation method that adopts a smooth writing style of the target language to reduce the exotic color in the original for the target language readers. Foreignization refers to a translation method that retains the exotic characteristics of the original work by breaking the language norms of the target language to a certain extent.

In fact, domestication and foreignization have their own advantages and disadvantages in the applications. Adopting the principle of domestication translation can make the translation smooth and easy to understand for the target language readers, but blind domestication is not conducive to the dissemination of the local culture of the source language and runs counter to the diversified development of culture. Because if you blindly use your own national taste to replace the taste of the source

language culture, or omit some contents in the original that are hard for readers to understand, it can meet the needs of readers to read smoothly, but it is easy to harm cultural exchanges and mislead readers. Newmark (1977: 175) also points out that “*one notices inevitably a great loss of meaning in the dropping of so many Biblical metaphors which the reader cannot understand.*” If these metaphors are deleted, a lot of information will be lost, resulting in incomplete meaning transmission. However, the principle of foreignization translation can retain the form of cultural expressions, but it is easy to make the translation stiff and intricate, which adds the understanding difficulty of the target language readers, and sometimes even causes confusion, misunderstanding or distortion.

From the aspect of translation purpose, the input of culture should prefer domestication in order to protect the purity and uniqueness of the native culture, but the output of culture should tend to foreignization in order to promote the outward promotion of the native culture and expand the influence of the native culture; From the aspect of readability of the translation and the acceptability of the readers, for better enabling the readers to understand the cultural connotation of the source language, the domestication translation strategy should be adopted. But in order to introduce and learn foreign culture, the foreignization translation strategy should be adopted (Table 9.1).

Table 9.1 Film titles translated with domestication strategy

| Film titles in Chinese | Corresponding english titles |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 《杜拉拉升职记》 | <i>Go Lala Go!</i> |
| 《投名状》 | <i>The Warlords</i> |
| 《辛亥革命》 | <i>1911</i> |
| 《锦衣卫》 | <i>14 Blades</i> |
| 《十月围城》 | <i>Bodyguards and Assassins</i> |
| 《叶问》 | <i>IP Man</i> |
| 《南京!南京!》 | <i>City of Life and Death</i> |
| 《风声》 | <i>The Message</i> |
| 《苏乞儿》 | <i>True Legend</i> |
| 《剑雨》 | <i>Reign of Assassins</i> |
| 《赵氏孤儿》 | <i>Sacrifice</i> |
| 《非诚勿扰》 | <i>if you are the one</i> |
| 《唐山大地震》 | <i>Aftershock</i> |
| 《谍海风云》 | <i>Shanghai</i> |
| 《三枪拍案惊奇》 | <i>A Simple Noodle Story</i> |
| 《龙凤店》 | <i>Adventure of The King</i> |
| 《财神客栈》 | <i>Treasure Inn</i> |
| 《武林外传》 | <i>My Own Swordsman</i> |
| 《大笑江湖》 | <i>Just Call Me Nobody</i> |
| 《倩女幽魂》 | <i>A Chinese Ghost Story</i> |
| 《新倩女幽魂》 | <i>A Chinese Fairy Tale</i> |

Culture is one of the most difficult challenges in the process of translation. The translators are required to deal with cultural issues properly. As a matter of fact, domestication and foreignization are in a state of dialectical unity. Hence, translators ought to achieve a reasonable balance between them. They should not only faithfully convey the source language culture to the readers to ensure the novelty or strangeness of the translation, but also appropriately adopt domestication strategy to reduce the reading difficulty and ensure the fluency and integrity of the translation (Zhao 2003: 25). The intervention of cultural factors makes people realize that foreignization or domestication is not a simple question of which is more important, which is right or wrong. Actually they should be analyzed in the context of culture.

9.3.4 *Domestication, Foreignization and Memes Transmission*

As a cultural communication unit, memes' nature is to replicate and spread itself to the greatest extent, and the communication of culture is the transmission of memes. As an important method of cross-cultural communication, translation principally realizes cultural communication and memes transmission through domestication and foreignization.

9.3.4.1 Domestication and Memes Transmission

When involving the two cultures behind the two languages, for facilitating the understanding of the target language readers, translators tend to adopt the domestication translation method, so that the target readers can learn the spiritual thrust of the source language. Here is a sentence "*How can you trust him? Don't you know that he always sits on the fence?*" If translated literally, it becomes "你怎么能相信他呢,难道你不知道他总是坐在栅栏上?" It is confusing for the Chinese readers because they don't know that idiom "to sit on the fence" matches the Chinese idiom "墙头草,脚踏两只船". Both are used to express an uncertain attitude, temporarily holding neutrality, and then falling to the stronger or winning side. Therefore, domestication in translation helps the target language readers to understand and accept the messages more readily. The core meme is successfully spread.

Sometimes, although the foreignization translation strategy is adopted, the target language readers can also understand the main content of the source language, but relatively speaking, domestication is more likely to resonate with the target language readers and facilitate the transmission of memes. Take the English sentence "*you cannot sell the cow and drink the milk*" as an example. The two versions are "你无法卖掉奶牛又饮用牛奶" and "鱼与熊掌不可兼得". Since the target language readers are familiar with the story of "鱼与熊掌", it is obvious that the meme decoded by the domestication translation strategy is easier to attract the readers' attention, so

it can be accepted and spread by the readers. And at the same time, it enhances the communication ability of the source language meme. Another example is the English idiom “*the rat in the hole*”. It is more appropriate to translate it into “瓮中之鳖” rather than “洞中老鼠”. Although the cultural factors in the source language memes have not been copied in this case, the domestication translation strategy is more conducive to the dissemination of core memes and cultural exchanges, creating conditions for the more complete replication and dissemination of memes in the future, which is the requirement for the dissemination and survival of core memes.

Although the source language and the target language may sometimes belong to two completely different language families, sometimes we can find memes that are very similar to the source language in the idiomatic expressions of the target language, so that the core memes and cultural memes of the source language can be well expressed and spread. The English proverbs “*Strike while the iron is hot*”, “*Man proposals, God disposes*”, and “*Honest opinions go against your ear while good medicine tastes bitter*” can all find equivalence in Chinese expressions, which are “趁热打铁”, “谋事在人, 成事在天” and “忠言逆耳”.

However, domestication translation is at the expense of the cultural information attached to the source language, and the readers can't feel the original flavor of the work. In today's increasingly frequent cultural exchanges, readers are no longer satisfied with the core memes conveyed by domestication translation. They are more eager to understand foreign cultures and enrich their own knowledge through translation. Therefore, foreignization translation strategy will become the main trend of meme transmission.

9.3.4.2 Foreignization and Memes Transmission

The ideal replication of memes is that the translation can not only infect and appeal the target language readers, but also highlight the exotic cultural features of the original text from the aspects of language, culture and style. The translated works recoded by foreignization translation strategy may sometimes bring difficulties to the target language readers in understanding, and may also affect the communication scope of the source language meme, but they relatively faithfully reproduce the source language meme. Foreignization translation can greatly enrich the target language and make its expressions more wonderful, vivid and accurate, which is beneficial to the diversified development of the target culture. For example, the English idiom “*armed to the teeth*” is translated as “武装到了牙齿”. This translation strategy not only enhances readers' understanding, effectively copies the core meme of the source language and spreads the source language culture, but also makes the translation more vivid than “全副武装” in Chinese and can enrich the target language culture. The English idiom “*crocodile's tears*” is translated as “鳄鱼的眼泪” in Chinese. Here foreignization is more vivid than “假慈悲” in domestication strategy. On the one hand, this kind of translations not only transmits the cultural information attached to the source language, but also enriches the culture of the target language.

It also enhances the communication ability of the source language memes in foreign cultures.

Sometimes, even if the two cultures are quite familiar with each other, readers can still encounter great challenges in a particular cultural context to fully understand the culture behind another language. Therefore, when encoding the source language memes, the translators should first try to copy these memes and make the translation faithful to the original rather than easily find similar memes to replace in the target language culture. Conservative adoption of domestication translation strategy can reproduce the core memes of the source language, but it is not conducive to the dissemination of the source language cultural memes.

Now, with the deepening of cross-cultural exchanges, people from different cultural backgrounds are willing to accept the cultures of other countries and nationalities with an open mind, and hope to appreciate foreign culture features through translation. Thus, in recent years, foreignization translation strategy has attracted much attention, and plays a more and more important role in cultural communication. However, it is worth noting that foreignization can never replace domestication. Although foreignization is novel and can well convey the cultural memes of the source language, excessive foreignization is easy to make the translation obscure and unintelligible, and even make the memes fail in the early stage of transmission.

Actually, domestication and foreignization are a pair of dynamic concepts. Whether a translation adopts domestication or foreignization should depend on the stylistic style of the original work, potential readers and specific purposes. It is unscientific to discuss domestication and foreignization in isolation from a specific period and a specific group of readers. These two translation strategies have their own advantages and disadvantages, and each plays an irreplaceable role in meme transmission. In the process of translation, the translators should flexibly use these two translation strategies. When both are desirable, foreignization should be the first choice, because it is more conducive to the dissemination of the source language cultural memes. Otherwise, it's necessary to choose appropriate translation strategy according to specific conditions, so as to make the memes spread better.

9.4 Translation of Film Titles from the Perspective of Memetics

As a popular art form, film plays an important role in people's life. With the diversified development of the Internet in recent years, it not only entertains people, but also builds a bridge of cultural exchange among various countries. Through films, people can better understand foreign culture and enrich their own cultural accomplishments. As we all know, the film title facilitates the viewing and promotion of the film, and a good translation of a film title can help break the cultural barriers and spread the film better. Many movie titles reflect a country's culture, so how to convey the cultural information to the target language audience more comprehensively and

accurately? At present, domestication and foreignization are briefly adopted to deal with the cultural factors encountered in translation. The following section attempts to explore the strategies of domestication and foreignization in the English translation of Chinese film titles from the perspective of memes transmission.

9.4.1 *Meme Transmission and Domestication Translation of Chinese Film Titles*

From the perspective of pragmatic function, the film title is a effective advertisement tailored for the film, which plays an inestimable role in the promotion of the film. As a language application style, film title can be regarded as a language meme as long as it can be spread. The key to the EC translation of film titles is to encode the source language memes in an appropriate way, faithfully and completely copy the source language memes as much as possible, and ensure that the encoded memes (translations) can be understood and accepted by the new host (target language readers). Now, the EC translation of film titles mainly adopts domestication strategy, which is convenient for the audience to better understand the content of the original film. Foreign audiences, especially European and American audiences, do not know much about Chinese culture, and are likely to refuse the infection of foreign memes, resulting in difficulties in meme communication in the assimilation stage, which may prevent it and then lose the best stage of communication. Therefore, translators tend to adopt domestication translation strategy. The following 21 Chinese films have adopted the domestication translation strategy:

The English version of the film 《南京!南京!》 adopts the domestication translation strategy and is translated into *City of Life and Death*. When Nanjing is mentioned, Chinese people can be reminded of that unforgettable history, i.e., the Nanjing Massacre. But Westerners who do not know Chinese history will not have similar associations, and then refuse the infection of this meme, which will interrupt the spread of memes. As a result, the title of the film is not transliterated, but translated into *City of Life and Death* so that the target language audience can better understand the theme, which creates a strong atmosphere for the film so that the memes can be spread.

The film 《唐山大地震》 is not translated as *Tangshan Earthquake*, but as *After-shock*, because the Chinese people know Tangshan well, while foreigners may know nothing about it. The city name Tangshan is not suitable for translation here. Besides, the film is mainly about the life of Tangshan people after the earthquake, so the latter translation version is more appropriate and easier to be understood and accepted by the target language audience. It also helps to spread the source language memes.

The film 《非诚勿扰》 directed by Feng Xiaogang has a title with four-character structure, which is so simple and clear that describes the content of the film in four characters. However, its overseas title is not translated literally as *Not Charity, No Disturbance*, but as *If You Are the One*, which is actually echoing the last sentence in

the film: “*I hope you are the one.*” If literal translation is adopted for the film, overseas audiences with different cultural backgrounds will be confused. The English title *If You Are the One* better conforms to the language habits of the target language and accurately stresses the highlights of the plots, attracting the audience’s attention and arousing the audience’s desire to watch the film.

The Chinese spy film 《风声》 has not been translated into *Sound of Wind* but *The Message*, because spies used to send messages by sending telegrams. Therefore, the translated title guided by domestication is easier to be understood and remembered by the target language audience, more in line with the expression habits of the target language, and more conducive to the transmission of the core meme of the source language.

《赵氏孤儿》 was once known as *Hamlet of the East*. Therefore, the version of *Sacrifice* can better reflect the theme and spirit of the film than the version of *The Orphan of Zhao*. Moreover, this translation composed of only one noun is concise and clear, which not only preserves the core meme, but also enhances the communication ability of meme.

The kung fu film 《叶问》 has made considerable box office revenue in the North American market. Its English title is not the literal translation of *Ye Wen*, but *IP MAN*. The word “man” is popular in America as it is used in spiderman and superman. In the eyes of American audiences, “man” is related to superman. Therefore, 《叶问2》 is translated into *Ip Man 2* (《叶侠》). By combining *Ip* and strong meme *man*, it forms a meme complex, which not only caters to the American audience’s love for Spiderman, Superman, Batman and other *man*, but also greatly strengthens the communication ability of memes.

The film 《十月围城》 has a beautiful Chinese film title with four-character structure, but if literal translation is adopted, the translation may not only be cumbersome, but also difficult to be understood by foreign audiences. Therefore, the film is called *Bodyguards and Assassins* in English, which adopts noun phrase structure. It not only conforms to the language habit of English title, but is more concise and clear. When foreign audiences understand the general content of the film through the title, the core meme of the film can be spread.

The film 《龙凤店》 is adapted from the traditional drama 《游龙戏凤 (You Long Xi Feng)》, which tells the thrilling story of Emperor Zhengde of the Ming Dynasty fleeing the palace, taking risks, alluring the rebels, and then catching them all. Once, when Emperor Zhengde paid a private visit to Jiangnan, he fell in love after meeting the heroine Li Fengjie. The title 《龙凤店》 is a pun. It refers not only to the name of the inn, but also to *Fengjie* (phoenix) and *Xiao Long* (dragon). Xiao Long is the emperor who pretends to have lost his memory. The English title of the film also adopts the domestication translation strategy and is translated as *Adventure of the King*, which not only reflects the theme of the film, but also caters to the cognitive system of the target audience, because most Westerners like adventure spirit. Such translation is easier to resonate with the host and make the host accept the infection of the meme, express it, and then spread it and help the meme to infect more potential hosts. If translated as *Dragon & Phoenix Restaurant*, it is bound to produce other associations. The dragon and the phoenix represent good luck, and they are used

together to express festive things in China. But in the west, the dragon is a giant monster and a symbol of evil, and the phoenix is a divine bird. In this case, the translation guided by foreignization translation strategy is not only far-fetched, but also has undesirable extended meaning, so the core of the source language memes cannot be expressed.

The English title of the film 《辛亥革命》 is *1911*. Chinese people are familiar with the revolution of 1911. They know what history they are talking about as soon as they mention it. But this revolution may be completely unfamiliar to most international audiences. Thus, the English title of the film adopts the domestication translation strategy and is translated into *1911*. In this way, many people will want to know what happened in 1911, which can attract international audiences to watch it. The communication ability of memes is strengthened.

The film 《剑雨》 tells the story of two generations involved in a bloody fight for the legendary remains of holy monks that can help people get peerless magic skills under the background of a fictional dynasty. The bloody scenes in the wide world are fully revealed in the film. The English title of the film is *Reign of Assassins*. The word *reign* means “ruling period”, “prevailing period” or “kingdom” in English, so the English title also fully reflects the content of the film. Besides, “reign” and “rain” are homonyms, indicating that the assassination poured down like rain, which corresponds to the Chinese title 《剑雨》, which literally means *rain of swords*. Therefore, the word *reign* is a pun. Compared with the original title, this English title is equally outstanding. It not only fully covers the content of the film, but also makes the source language meme spread well.

The English title of the overseas promotional film of 《杜拉拉升职记》 is called *Go Lala Go!* instead of *A Story of Lala's Promotion*. The former is concise, which not only facilitates the design of posters, but also looks overwhelming and is more in line with the expression habits of the target language, which is more likely to infect the target language audience and replicate the memes. In addition, the translated name also easily reminds people of another more famous film *Run Lola Run!* (《罗拉快跑》), and the target language audience will be very curious about whether the two films are related, which is more conducive to the promotion of the film in the international market and the maximum dissemination of the source language memes.

The film 《苏乞儿》 tells the legendary life of martial arts master Su Qi'er. After suffering a painful life, Su Can, the hero who makes a living by begging, still hasn't given up his lifelong ideal. Finally, he created the highest level of Chinese boxing, *drunken fist*. Hence, the domesticated English title *True Legend* is just in line with Su Can played by Zhao Wenzhuo in the film. In this way, the core meme of the source language has been spread. If transliteration has been adopted, the target language audience may be confused about the film because they don't know who Su Qi'er is. If they were not attracted to the film to accept infection, the spread of memes would be interrupted.

The overseas promotional title of the film 《锦衣卫》 adopts the domestication translation strategy, which is translated into *14 Blades*. The name indicates a special box for carrying weapons. It belongs to the leading actor in the film. It contains 14 delicate swords of supreme functions and performance. The English title has adopted

domestication which can give the audience a sense of battle and the action scenes of traditional Chinese martial arts films. The combination of numbers and nouns is a little mysterious and dangerous, and it shows the whole artistic conception. In order to better reproduce memes, instead of clinging to the cultural information of “锦衣卫 (Royal Guards)” in the original title, the English title has adopted the domestication translation strategy.

Of course, there are also problems with some of the translations. For example, the English translation of the film 《谍海风云》 is called *Shanghai* which can be said to be concise and clear. The audience can also learn about the location of the story. Even though the target language audience can understand and remember the title, it does not reflect the theme of the film and is not attractive enough. As a result, it is not conducive to memes to infect more hosts.

The film 《财神客栈》 is a costume drama. It tells about a story of a certain period in ancient China. In a mysterious inn in the desert under the name of 财神客栈, Kong fu masters and captors staged a treasure hunting battle. At the same time, the film also describes several romantic love stories. The film's overseas promotional film is called *Treasure Inn*, which classifies “客栈” as “inn”. In fact, China's “客栈” is quite different from the western “inn”. Since ancient times, people need to find places to stay when they go on a long journey, and these places were called “客栈” in ancient times. Now, this kind of “客栈” has long been replaced by chain-operated hotels. Compared with the former, the latter can provide better services and accommodation, and there are few illegal things such as robbery and fighting. Nowadays, in order to create a classic atmosphere for the film, a lot of ancient costume dramas choose to decorate some scenes in “客栈”. From the title of the film 《财神客栈》, we can know that this is a costume drama about the old days. The appearance of ancient “客栈” is vivid in our mind. However, the English *inn* cannot evoke similar associations, and the target language audience will encounter difficulty if they associate the film with a hotel. The cultural meme of the source language has not been spread, and the source language information has been misunderstood to some extent.

The film 《投名状》 tells the story of three sworn brothers who eventually turned against each other and killed each other. This film makes people reflect on whether there is real brotherhood in the world. In ancient China, before joining an organization, it was necessary to hand in “投名状” to show loyalty. In the film, the “投名状” refers to the standard oath “不求同年同月同日生, 但求同年同月同日死 (*Not born on the same day of the same month of the same year, but wish to die with you on the same day of the same month of the same year*)”. For this film, the English title is *The Warlords*. Although it is concise and clear, it does not fully reflect the content and theme of the film. At the same time, because there is no meme similar to the “投名状” in the target language, the cultural information of the source language has not been well conveyed.

From the film 《倩女幽魂》 (*A Chinese Ghost Story*) to its remake 《新倩女幽魂》 (*A Chinese Fairy Tale*), it is obvious that the two English titles reflect the general content of the film and are easy to be understood by the target language audience. However, they are slightly dull and unimpressive, so they are not conducive to the wide-ranging dissemination of memes.

To sum up, domestication translation facilitates the understanding of the core memes of the source language by the target language audiences in different cultures. Film titles translated this way can only explain the foreign culture to some extent, and often fail to display the foreign culture itself to the audiences, causing the source language meme to lose its original flavor. Therefore, only appropriate foreignization translation can give the audiences an experience of culture immersion and enable the viewers to understand the core meme and appreciate the unique charm of the film.

9.4.2 *Meme Transmission and Foreignization in Translating Chinese Film Titles*

In recent years, with the deepening of cross-cultural exchanges, people hope to watch movies from different countries, understand foreign cultures, enrich their own cultural knowledge, improve cultural cultivation and expand their horizons. Whether a film can attract the audience, in addition to good content and a strong cast, it is also important to have a good English title. Foreignization translation strives to preserve the content and form of the original title to the greatest extent and highlight the exotic flavor of the source language, which not only meets people's desire for different cultures, but also spreads the cultural factors in the source language title. Foreignization is not a mechanical word for word translation of the original film title, but an in-depth understanding of the cultural information hidden in the film title. The following ten Chinese films have adopted foreignization translation strategy (Table 9.2).

The film 《卧虎藏龙》 has made remarkable achievements in the box office in North America. Its overseas promotional film title is called *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*. We all know that in traditional Chinese culture and Western culture, tigers and dragons have different cultural symbolic connotations. In China, they are symbols of strength, courage, power and dignity. However, in the western culture, the dragon

Table 9.2 Film titles translated with foreignization strategy

| Film titles in Chinese | Corresponding English titles |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 《卧虎藏龙》 | <i>Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon</i> |
| 《疯狂的石头》 | <i>Crazy Stone</i> |
| 《花木兰》 | <i>Mulan</i> |
| 《画皮》 | <i>Painted Skin</i> |
| 《新少林寺》 | <i>Shaolin</i> |
| 《孔子》 | <i>Confucius</i> |
| 《让子弹飞》 | <i>Let the Bullets Fly</i> |
| 《观音山》 | <i>Buddha Mountain</i> |
| 《东风雨》 | <i>East Wind Rain</i> |
| 《武侠》 | <i>Wu Xia</i> |

is a terrible fire-breathing monster with a pair of wings, which is the embodiment of evil. But, translating “卧虎藏龙” word by word into “*Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*” did not affect people’s love for the film. While spreading the core meme of the original title, the title also retains the original flavor of the source meme, so that the target language audience can understand China’s *dragon culture* and the Chinese people’s affection for dragon. Later, Americans felt that the title was a bit awkward-sounding, so they simply adopted the acronym, i.e., *CTHD*, which has become a highly recognized new word.

The film 《疯狂的石头》 is a modern comedy full of humor and satire. In the film, both international thieves and local thieves try to seize a valuable jade. The English title of the film *Crazy Stone* completely retains the form and content of the original film title, and allows the audience to understand the general content of the film. The anthropomorphic rhetoric used in the title will also arouse the curiosity of the target language audience and attract them to watch the film and spread memes.

《花木兰》, starring Zhao Wei and Chen Kun, is a Chinese film version of *Mulan* (《花木兰》), a Disney animated film that created box office miracle around the world in 1998. Although the two films may be similar in story plots, Hua Mulan’s story takes place in China and is a part of ancient Chinese culture. Thus, overseas audiences are still very curious about how the Chinese people reinterpret the image of Hua Mulan, the heroine, in the Chinese way after the great success of Disney’s animated version of Hua Mulan. The English title of the Chinese film version of *Mulan* is directly transliterated as *Mulan*, which happens to have the same name as the strong meme contained in Disney’s animated film *Mulan*. It creates a desire for the target language audiences to watch and find out about the Chinese version of *Mulan*. In doing so, the source language meme will spread and become popular in foreign cultures.

The film 《让子弹飞》 is about a battle of wits and courage between the righteous bandit Zhang Muzhi and the bully Huang Silang during the period of the Northern Warlords. The film is humorous and full of exciting scenes such as horse battle and street battle. There is humor in violence, which fully shows the aesthetics of violence. “让子弹飞 (*Let the bullets fly*)” is a line that appears frequently in the film. The same line produces various artistic effects on different occasions. Therefore, its English title is directly translated as *Let the Bullets Fly*. It’s quite eye-catching and appropriate. It will not cause any difficulty or confusion in understanding to the target audience, and it will also easily infect the target audience and promote meme transmission. The English title guided by foreignization spreads the core meme of the source language and retains the cultural information loaded by the source language.

As for the film 《新少林寺》, it is not hard to see that it is a kung fu film about Shaolin Temple. It is extremely appropriate for the film title to be transliterated directly as *Shaolin*. The 1982 《少林寺》 first allowed audiences to enjoy special Chinese martial arts. At that time, its English title was *Shaolin Temple*. Today, when the target language audiences see *Shaolin*, they know that it’s about Chinese martial arts or Chinese Kung Fu. Thus, the overseas promotional title of 《新少林寺》 has abandoned the word *temple* and has adopted transliteration directly as it is clear and easy to spread.

The film 《孔子》 describes the life of Confucius from his appointment as Zhongduzai (中都宰) at the age of 51 to his death at the age of 73. As a great thinker, educator, theoretical politician and founder of the Confucian school in ancient China, he is not only highly respected at home, but his Confucian ideas have been widely disseminated around the world. In the West, Confucius, Shakyamuni and Jesus are regarded as *The Three Saints of the World*. Consequently, the overseas title of the film also directly uses *Confucius*, which is not only faithful to the original title, but also caters to the cognitive structure of the target language audience, so as to stimulate them to watch the film and then spread Chinese culture.

The English title of the new martial arts directed by Chen Kexin is transliterated as *Wu Xia*, the Chinese phonetic symbols for the two Chinese characters. It is used not because it can be translated into “侠客” in English, but because this word enjoys more Chinese characteristics. The word *Wu Xia* is gaining recognition just like *Kung Fu* in foreign countries. Although it completely adopts the foreignization translation strategy, foreign audiences know it is a Chinese martial arts film at a glance, which is easier to attract foreign audiences, so as to better spread the memes.

Although foreignization translation can be relatively faithful to the title of the source language, retain its form and content, and spread the cultural information of the source language, the titles guided by foreignization translation strategy sometimes confuse the target language audience, which is of no value to the dissemination of memes and the promotion of films. For example, the film 《画皮》 has been translated into *Painted Skin* by foreignization. For Chinese audiences, the simple word “画皮” is associated with a classic short story in Pu Songling’s *Strange Tales from Liaozhai* (《聊斋志异》). Hence, anyone Chinese who has a certain foundation in English can think of “画皮” according to the English film title. But for overseas audiences who don’t understand Chinese characters and Chinese culture, such a translation naturally conjures up images of art forms like tattoos or body paintings, which is a misunderstanding about the film title. Hence, the source language cultural memes have not been copied and the core memes have not been effectively spread.

The film 《观音山》 is a film about the dreams and puzzles of the youth looking for love and falling in love. It staged a modern adventure story. Because there are some clips in the film about the reconstruction of a station that bears the name of 观音山. It is a stop along Chengdu Railway, which also implies “a stop” in life. Two groups of strangers met at a certain station in their lives, and then the two different attitudes towards life collided. Finally, they found their own answers to life. The Chinese title of the film adopted the name 观音山. The English title is rendered *Buddha Mountain* which seems to correspond to the original title, but for the target language audience who does not know that “Buddha Mountain” is the name of a railway station, this translation will not make them associate, let alone understand what the film is about. The meme can be misunderstood as some kind of a mountain. Therefore, this foreignization translation is not conducive to the dissemination of the core meme of the source language as well as the promotion of the film.

To sum up, in the process of English translation of Chinese film titles, domestication translation is demanded for core meme communication and survival, which can make the translated titles more likely to infect the target language audience, but

it is harmful to the transmission of cultural information in the original film titles; Although foreignization translation helps to spread the cultural information of the original title and make the translated title equivalent to the original title in form and content, it sometimes makes the target language audience confused, even misunderstood, affecting the spread of memes, or stopping the spread of memes because the target language audience cannot decode memes. Therefore, we should treat these two translation strategies dialectically. Simply emphasizing either one is unscientific. In fact, domestication and foreignization are two dialectical and unified translation strategies that are interrelated, complementary, interplaying and mutual-promoting. We should make full use of these strategies to better serve the EC translation of film titles.

9.4.3 *The Dialectical Relationship Between Domestication and Foreignization in Translating Film Titles*

In order to gain comprehensive knowledge about certain things, we should check the good side as well as the bad side. As for domestication and foreignization, we should not exaggerate their differences, but see their commonalities. Although there has been a trend of “*belittling domestication and praising foreignization*” in translation circles in recent years, we know that foreignization cannot replace domestication or vice versa. The two translation strategies are not incompatible. They are complementary and dialectical. This is especially true in the EC translation of Chinese film titles.

The official translation of the newly released film 《关云长》 is *The Lost Bladesman*. We all know that Guan Yu, also known as Guan Yunchang with a Green Dragon Crescent Blade who rides a red horse, is a famous general under the leadership of Liu Bei at the end of the Eastern Han Dynasty. He is Liu Bei’s sworn brother. However, the word *bladesman* here does not seem to be adequate to reflect Guan Yu’s impressive image. Hence, there is certain loss in the core memes. In fact, a better way is to adopt the foreignization translation strategy and use transliteration, or combine domestication and foreignization and use transliteration and annotation. In this case, it not only leads the audience to understand the leading character in the film, but also retains the cultural information of the source language.

The film 《霍元甲》, which tells the life of Huo Yuanjia, a great master of Chinese Kung Fu, has been translated into *Fearless*. But fearless can be used to describe anybody, not necessarily the Kung Fu master. Obviously, this translation version can’t reflect the essence of the film at all. It is better to adopt the strategy of combining domestication and foreignization by using transliteration and annotation. For example, it can be translated into *Huo Yuanjia—A Kongfu Master*. Westerners are fascinated by Chinese Kung Fu, so this translation version can be used to make Westerners understand Chinese Kung fu master Huo Yuanjia, so as to grasp the core meme of the source language, infect the audience, and finally copy and spread the meme.

The film “《精武风云·陈真》” is translated as *Legend of the Fist: the Return of Chen Zhen*. The English title produced by the combination of domestication and foreignization has a strong correlation with the film, which not only spreads the core meme, but also remains the cultural information of the original title. At the same time, the audience can well understand the content of the film.

The film 《日照重庆》 is based on a real case in Chongqing. The hero of the film is a captain who spends most of his life on the sea. When he learns that his son was killed as a suspect, he decides to go back to Chongqing to find the truth. In the film, “日照 (Rizhao)” is the city where he lives now, so the film is called 日照重庆 (Rizhao Chongqing). In addition, because Chongqing is a cloudy City, “日照 (Rizhao)” also represents sunlight, so it can be seen as a pun. Adopting the strategy of combining domestication and foreignization, the overseas promotional title of the film is *Chongqing Blues*. Although the English title does not have the pun effect of the original title, it implies that the film tells a sad story that takes place in Chongqing. If the foreignization strategy is adopted, foreign audiences who do not understand the name of Chinese cities may be confused. It is harmful to the dissemination of memes.

The film 《可可西里》 also adopts the strategy of combining domestication and foreignization in its English title which is *Kekexili: Mountain Patrol*. This translation not only makes the audience understand the general content of the film, but also makes them remember an exotic name of *Kekexili* (可可西里). The core memes and cultural factors of the source language have been well spread.

As a result, in the process of English translation of film titles in China, both domestication and foreignization should be adopted, which complement each other. When both domestication and foreignization can be taken, foreignization is preferred, because it is more conducive to the dissemination of cultural characteristics. When foreignization becomes an obstacle to the audience’s understanding of memes, it is best to adopt the strategy of domestication or the combination of domestication and foreignization, because if the audience can’t understand memes, it is likely to refuse meme infection, so as to lose the opportunity of meme transmission.

9.5 Chapter Summary

As a new theory, memetics has not attracted enough attention in China. This chapter attempts to explore the strategies of domestication and foreignization in the English translation of Chinese film titles from the perspective of memetics. I hope it can provide some new ideas and inspiration for film title translation. Besides, I hope more people can understand memetics and apply it to their own research field.

Film title is an advertisement tailored for films. It is a type of practical writing. It can be said that film title is a special part of the set of language memes. In the English translation of Chinese film titles, domestication and foreignization play equally important roles in the process of meme communication. The translated title guided by domestication is more in line with the expression habits of the target

language, which is more convenient for the target language audience to know the source language meme, so as to incorporate it into their own cognitive structure, and finally express and spread it. The translated titles guided by domestication translation are more likely to infect the target language audience. We can say domestication translation is a necessary stage in the early stage of meme communication and the requirement for core meme communication and survival. However, since domestication translation caters to the cognitive structure and cognitive ability of the target language audience, it inevitably lose the cultural information attached to the source language. Reproducing the original title in the form of the target language is more conducive to the spread of the source language core meme, but it is not conducive to the spread of the source language cultural meme, which makes the source language title lose its original flavor.

Compared with domestication translation, foreignization translation may sometimes bring difficulties to the target language readers in decoding the source language memes and affect the large-scale dissemination of the source language memes, but it can faithfully and completely copy the source language memes, so as to achieve the maximum equivalence between the translated title and the original film title in form and content, while retaining the cultural memes of the source language. It is conducive to the diversified development of culture. In today's society, with the deepening of cultural exchanges, people don't refuse but welcome foreign cultures and are more eager to understand the "heterogeneous elements" in culture. Thus, foreignization becomes more and more popular. Whereas, we should note that foreignization depends on the cultural curiosity and cultural heritage of the target language audience. Excessive foreignization will make the translation obscure and difficult to be decoded by the target language audience, resulting in the failure of meme in the initial stage of communication.

The author believes that domestication and foreignization are not contradictory to each other. They can complement each other in the process of English translation of Chinese film titles. Only by unifying the two and achieving a balance between them, can they be conducive to the translation of film titles, the dissemination of memes and cultural exchange. In the English translation of Chinese film titles, when both strategies can be adopted, foreignization is of course the first choice, because it is more conducive to the dissemination of cultural memes and cultural exchange. Besides, domestication translation or the combination of domestication and foreignization can also be useful.

In summary, in the translation of film titles, it is not wise to blindly adopt the domestication translation strategy to meet the cognitive structure of the target language audience. The danger is the loss of the source language cultural information. It is equally unwise to blindly adopt the foreignization translation strategy to retain the source language cultural information. The danger is that the translation may not be understood and accepted by the target language audience. The trans-

lation of film titles is a complicated task. Translators should maintain the spirit of perseverance and meticulousness to promote Chinese films and Chinese culture to the world.

(This chapter is based on the author's 2012 MA thesis *Memes Transmission and Domestication and Foreignization in the CE Translation of Film Titles*.)

Chapter 10

Translation for International Film Festival Under the Guidance of Functional Equivalence Theory



Yuchao Xie

10.1 Introduction

With the vigorous development of China's film market, according to the statistics of the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television, China's urban box office revenue reached 10.172 billion yuan in 2010, ranking among the top 10 in the global film box office market.¹ Such a huge film market not only promotes the rapid development of Chinese films, but also requires and promotes the prosperity of Chinese film festivals. However, among the traditional four Chinese film festivals (Shanghai International Film Festival, Golden Rooster and Hundred Flowers Film Festival, China Changchun Film Festival and Zhuhai Film Festival) and the new five great Chinese film festivals (Taiwan Film Golden Horse Award, Hong Kong Film Awards, Golden Rooster and Hundred Flowers Award, Shanghai International Film Festival and Beijing International Film Festival),² only the Shanghai International Film Festival founded in 1993 has great international influence. Even so, compared with other renowned international film festivals in the world, it still looks junior.

In order to implement China's *One Belt One Road Initiative* (BRI), a newer international film festival was launched by the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television, i.e., *Silk Road International Film Festival*, in 2014. With distinctive features, the film festival takes the countries along the maritime and land Silk Road as the main body and strategically set our sights on the international from

¹ *Overview of China's Film Industry*. [2016–11–30]. <http://www.askci.com/news/201406/05/051715639797.shtml>.

² *China's Four Major Film Festivals*. [2016–11–30]. <http://baike.baidu.com/link?url=-P2bHHkg53XSjP2QGsqqmms8M-B76IDccmtGCqIzxqmaljzHh4VMf9fbRbjQRBYb3AXRtA5At371OUXiocr5zk>.

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the beginning. As a new international film festival, its content requires a lot of translations. Although we can refer to the materials of Shanghai International Film Festival and other international film festivals, the translations of this theme film festival is quite distinctive because the “Belt and Road” focuses on countries along the land and maritime Silk Road. In other words, the translation of this film festival not only has something in common with other international film festivals, but also has its unique exploration.

As a large-scale external activity with broad contents, abundant activities and plentiful participants, the translation contents of International Film Festival are complicated, numerous and diverse. The author has the honor to participate in the work of the Executive Committee of the 2nd and 3rd Silk Road International Film Festivals (Fuzhou), experience the preparation of the 2nd and 3rd film festivals, make a lot of front-line translation practices, and accumulate rich first-hand materials. Under the guidance of the theory of “functional equivalence”, this paper analyzes the translation process, summarizes the translation materials, in order to get some translation experience and provides some ideas for the translation specialization of international film festivals, hoping to provide good suggestions for the professionalization of translators.

The Silk Road International Film Festival is jointly organized by the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television, the people’s Government of Fujian Province and the people’s Government of Shaanxi Province. It is held in Xi’an and Fuzhou at the same time every year. Its main purpose is to implement the national strategic concept of “Silk Road Economic Belt”, “twenty-first century Maritime Silk Road” and “film and television bridge project”, promote cultural exchanges and cooperation among countries along the Silk Road, inherit and develop the spirit and culture of the Silk Road, highlight the features of the Silk Road, the sea and the strait, build an international platform for film exchange and trading, and improve the international influence of Chinese films.

The materials related to the film festival mentioned in this paper are produced by the Executive Committee of the Silk Road International Film Festival (Fuzhou) and used in the holding of the 2nd and 3rd film festivals. Due to the diversity and large amounts of texts, under the guidance of functional equivalence theory, the text materials are divided into three categories for discussion according to the use occasions of the text. The first type is introductory text translation, including introduction and articles of association of the 2nd and 3rd film festivals (Chinese and English), translation of introduction of the 2nd film festival website, content translation of the 2nd film festival website, translation of introduction of Fuzhou cuisine; The second category is communicative text translation, including the translation of e-mails of the 3rd film festival; e-mails with the Ministry of communications and mass media of Russia; The third category is the translation of speech texts, including speeches by all parties of the 2nd film festival (Chinese and English).

I have translated all the above-mentioned texts, but due to the complex process of text modification, the translations and the original texts have been changed. It has gone through many steps from turning it out by myself to uploading it to the website, sending it to guests or printing it on materials, including submitting it to

the Foreign Affairs Office of Fuzhou Municipal People's government for review and modification, the Beijing consultant team of the 2nd film festival reviewed and received feedback from guests, leaders and colleagues, revised and submitted to Fujian Translation Association for translation. Each text has many different versions. The official final version is provided here. In the official final version, the text in the introductory text and communicative text category is the version provided by me, and the text in the speech text category is the version provided by Fujian Translation Association.

10.2 Translation Process

10.2.1 Preparation Before Translation

10.2.1.1 Knowledge Reserve of International Film Festivals

As an independent subject, the international film festivals have their own histories, complete system and self-operation system. To perfectly finish the translation of the international film festivals, we must first understand the knowledge of the film festivals to the greatest extent, including the production, distribution, publicity and capital operation of the film, the personnel composition and working structure of the film crew, and the structure composition and capital operation of the film festival, features of famous international film festivals, differences in markets, etc.

While understanding the basic knowledge of the film festivals, we should also master various professional terms. For the translation of film festival materials, it is extremely important to learn the multilingual expressions of various professional terms. For example, for “电影展映”, the direct translation of “Film Screening” is not as professional as “Film Panorama” on the official website of Shanghai International Film Festival. This part of knowledge can be obtained from relevant books, various related websites, especially the official websites of major film festivals. In addition, visiting the film festival site to obtain relevant manuals and first-hand sensory experience is also a special and meaningful way to accumulate this knowledge.

10.2.1.2 China's Political Knowledge Reserve

As the Silk Road International Film Festival is hosted by the government, it has a close relationship with the government in all aspects. In particular, the speeches of leaders and the introduction of the film festival can not escape the relevant knowledge of the government. For example, the introduction of officials requires an understanding of the hierarchy of Chinese officials and the hierarchy of foreign officials, the introduction of the film festival requires a certain understanding of the basic official names of Chinese government institutions. If there is no reserve of this sort of knowledge, you

need to check the texts before translation, find them online, or consult the relevant foreign affairs personnel of the government.

10.2.1.3 Knowledge Reserve of Fuzhou Culture

As a cultural project undertaken by Fuzhou municipal government, the Silk Road International Film Festival is naturally aimed at publicizing Fuzhou culture and building Fuzhou cultural brand. In order to better serve the guests of the film festival in Fuzhou, we must fully introduce the city of Fuzhou to them, including local transportation, food, famous scenic spots and so on. Hence, it is greatly important to understand Fuzhou knowledge and Fuzhou culture. Susan Bassnett (2002: 23), a British translation theorist, once had such a metaphor: “*In the same way that the surgeon, operating on the heart, cannot neglect the body that surrounds it, so the translator treats the text in isolation from the culture at his peril.*” As an indispensable factor in the process of translation, culture must be paid enough attention. As a famous historical city, Fuzhou has a good development of cultural tourism. Generally, there are already established translations of contents in this aspect, such as all kinds of authentic snacks in Fuzhou. The relevant contents are highly professional, and the relevant translations must be verified. It is not allowed to create translation blindly. Finding relevant books, collecting travel brochures at relevant places, online search and so on are all feasible methods.

10.2.2 Translation and Revision

Due to the special internship environment, the translations of the texts are carried out at a high speed. It is often required to get a text in the morning and turn it out in the afternoon. After other translators review and discuss it together, it is sent to the Foreign Affairs Office of Fuzhou Municipal People’s government, and the revised version is obtained the next day. However, in a few days, the Chinese version of the text may be revised by leaders at a certain level, so it will be translated and submitted for approval on the basis of the above translation. Therefore, the translation of the final version is obtained under the condition of continuous modification. Or after I translate the text, other translators look at it and discuss it, send it to the relevant staff of the Tourism Administration for review, and then upload it directly to the official website without review in other links. When the official website is running, if relevant colleagues, consultants and guests find problems, they will immediately discuss them with themselves and other translators of the film festival, and then modify them on the official website immediately. As a result, in the whole process of translation, feedbacks are fast and timely. These feedbacks and modifications raise questions from small punctuation or case errors to big question of caring about form or content. Even the final version cannot be regarded as the best. For instance, after the profile of the 2nd film festival was finalized, when the profile of the third

film festival was compiled, some of its English translations were revised again to be simpler and more authentic.

As far as the whole text is concerned, I have generally translated the meaning of the original text. Under a lot of searches, I basically get the standard translation. In terms of the whole process of feedback and modification, the main problems lie in the lack of simplicity, authenticity and vividness of English expressions and the superficial understanding of Chinese texts. From the perspective of functional equivalence theory, these problems are the reasons for the failure to achieve functional equivalence between the translations and the original text, which can be divided into two aspects: on the one hand, there is no deep combing of the textual logic of the original text and an in-depth analysis of the reader's reflection of the original text; On the other hand, the natural smoothness of the translation is not further achieved on the basis of expressing the meaning. In this regard, the second point can be continuously optimized under the guidance of functional equivalence theory, which is discussed in the analysis of translation examples; for the first point, solutions are consultations, asking the original author's intention and asking him to give a clear explanation. For example, the slogan of the film festival is “丝路通天下, 光影耀福州”. My emphasis on the original text is different from that of other translators. In this case, we finally need to find a more powerful third party, which is the superior leaders' interpretation of Chinese as the standard.

10.3 Case Analysis of Translation

10.3.1 *Introductory Text*

Introductory text is mainly descriptive text. Its function is to introduce and explain. The difficulty in translation is how to translate accurately and formally. In order to translate this type of text successfully and meet the standards advocated by the Functional Equivalence Theory, we first need to query and search a large number of relevant terms in the early stage. Secondly, we should pay attention to the language features of Chinese and English. Chinese introductory texts, especially official ones, are characterized by cumbersome, repetitive, exquisite terms and various parallel sentences. However, in any case, English language prefers to express meanings in a concise and clean way. Redundant expressions are even regarded as errors. Hence, when translating Chinese into English, we should not only accurately translate the content, but also “re-express” the translation (English), so as to make the English version authentic and meet the natural standard of functional equivalence. The original texts of the following examples are in Chinese, Target Text 1 is translated by the author, and Target Text 2 is translated by colleagues or translators of the Municipal Foreign Affairs Office.

(1) Source Text: 贯彻落实国家“丝绸之路经济带”、“21世纪海上丝绸之路”战略构想和“影视桥工程”, 促进丝路沿线各国文化交流与合作, 传承丝路精神, 弘扬丝路文化,

凸显海丝、海洋、海峡特色，搭建电影交流交易国际平台，提高中国电影的国际影响力，将丝绸之路国际电影节打造成具有国际影响力的电影节。

Target Text 1: To comprehensively implement national strategic ideas of The Silk Road Economic Belt and The 21 Century Maritime Silk Road, and The Pictures Bridge Project, promote the cultural exchanges and cooperation among countries along the Silk Road, inherit the spirit of silk road, spread the silk road culture, highlight the silk road and strait features, marine, build up an international platform for film exchanges and trade, increase the influence of Chinese films, we strive to make it an international film festival with global influence.

Target Text 2: To comprehensively implement national strategic ideas of The Silk Road Economic Belt and The 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, and The Pictures Bridge Project, to promote the cultural exchanges and cooperation among countries along the Silk Road, to spread the Silk Road spirit, culture and features, to provide an international platform for film exchanges and trade, and to increase the influence of Chinese films, we strive to make it an international film festival with global influence.

Chinese language, especially the language of government documents, is often cumbersome. It is common to find different words used in the texts to express the same meaning repeatedly to show solemnity. In this example, the literal translation is adopted in Target Text 1. Although the translation faithfully expresses the original meaning, from the perspective of “functional equivalence”, the English translation is quite unnatural. It does not conform to the reading habits of English readers, and cannot achieve the textual function of the original text in the original readers. In Target Text 2, “*inherit the spirit of Silk Road, spread the silk road culture, highlight the Silk Road and straight features, marine*” is translated into “*spread the Silk Road spirit, culture and features*”. Although the original meaning is slightly lost, it satisfies the purpose and intention that the author wants to express, and it is also more in line with the English expression habits. The wording is smoother and more natural.

(2) Source Text: 以电影为纽带，通过举办国际性、综合性、创新性、开放性的电影主题活动，打造三个平台：即中外电影艺术“展示、合作、贸易”的平台，展现中外优秀电影艺术，促进中国与丝绸之路电影的融合。

Target Text 1: Through the international, comprehensive, innovative and open film-themed activities, we aim to build up three platforms for Chinese and foreign films, namely, the platform for art performance, the platform for cooperation and the platform for trade, displaying the excellent Chinese and foreign film art and advancing the Chinese films to go global, promoting the interaction between films of China and countries along the silk road.

Target Text 2: Through holding international and comprehensive film theme activities with creativity and openness, we aim to build up platforms for Chinese and foreign films to display, cooperate and trade, not only presenting film artistry of excellent Chinese and foreign works but also promoting the interaction of films from China and Silk Road regions.

According to the functional equivalence theory, the above examples classically show the effect of “re-express”, making the translation more natural. Target Text 1 is literal translation, it’s very cumbersome, and the trace of translation is obvious;

the modified Target Text 2 integrate the content, remove the repeated parts, then it becomes concise, its content becomes clearer and it more accurately expresses the expression intention of the original text.

(3) Source Text: 届时将向国内外公开征集,特别是丝绸之路沿线国家的百部优秀影片,在福州各大院线展映。

Target Text 1: The selection of hundreds of films for screening will be open to all at home and abroad, especially from the countries along the silk road, and the films will be on display in major cinemas of Fuzhou.

Target Text 2: A number of excellent films will be collected from China and abroad, especially from the countries along the Silk Road, and will be screened in cinemas of Fuzhou.

From Target Text 1, it can be seen that the translator tried to translate the original text literally. The main stem of the first sentence of the translation is “the selection will be open to all”. From the aspect of grammar, this sentence not only has debatable fuzziness, but also failed to successfully translate the connotation and expression purpose of the original text. After being translated into Target Text 2 by free translation, it is not only more natural, but also expresses the intention of the original sentence. Similarly, the word “major” in the second half of Target Text 1 clearly shows its literal translation style. In this way, the intention of the original text is not translated, and even the intention of the original text is distorted. The “各大” of the original “在福州各大院线展映” really wants to express the meaning that it will be displayed in the main and most cinemas in Fuzhou, not just emphasizing the major cinemas. Therefore, Target Text 2 is closer to the connotation and expression purpose of the original text.

(4) Source Text: 福州人特爱吃甜的东西,芋泥就是款甜食,作为宴席上的常菜,一般以“压轴”形式上桌。……色泽灰暗,虽然不冒热气,但尝起来却爽口无比,香甜甜润。

Target Text 1: Fuzhou people like sweets as Taro, which is almost a must-be dish in local banquets often in the form of the final desert... It looks gray and cold, but tastes sweet and hot.

Target Text 2: As a traditional dessert beloved by Fuzhou people, taro paste is used to be a required entrée in local banquets... It is the signature dessert of Fuzhou and is a delicious treat in spite of its deceptively plain looks.

According to the theory of Functional Equivalence, the translation not only needs to express the meaning, but also needs to be natural and fluent in language and conform to the stylistic norms of the target language. Target Text 1 is literal translation, and the translation of the first sentence falls into Chinese thinking. Chinese is a paratactic language. There can be two different subjects before and after the comma and the Chinese contexts are connected by the meaning. But English is a hypotactic language. Its context needs relational words or sentence patterns to organize. The Target Text 1 is translated in Chinese thinking style. After the first sentence, the theme of the full text will focus on the “福州人民爱吃甜食” of the first sentence, which is obviously not in line with the theme of the original text. In Target Text 2, the translation follows the English thinking mode, and the theme of the full text focuses on “芋

泥”, which is in line with the theme of the original text. Secondly, in Target Text 1, “色泽灰暗, 虽然不冒热气, 但尝起来却烫口无比, 香郁甜润。” is translated very specifically. Although the meaning of the original text is clearly expressed, which makes you understand the specific taste of “芋泥”, it does not translate the vivid flavor of the original text. The modified Target Text 2 adopts a more general translation method to explain the main thrust of the original text. In terms of the reader’s reading effect, it makes the reader understand what “芋泥” is, but loses the sound and color beauty in the specific description of the original text. If the specific description of sound and color is added on the basis of Target Text 2, this deficiency can be made up to a certain extent, such as “*As a traditional dessert beloved by Fuzhou people, taro paste is used to be required entrée in local banquets... As a signature dessert, although it looks gray and apathy, it tastes burning hot for your tongue but yummy for your heart*”. This sentence also achieves functional equivalence in reading aesthetics.

(5) Source Text: 洋人们见不冒热气, 犹如凉菜, 立马大口大口地吃, 结果被烫的大叫。

Target Text 1: When the unsuspecting consuls scooped up the cool-looking dessert, they got more heat than they bargained for and burnt their tongues.

Target Text 2: When the unsuspecting consuls scooped up the cool-looking dessert, they found it taste much hotter than they bargained for and burnt their tongues.

As in the above example, Target Text 1 adopts a rigid literal translation, resulting in mistranslation, but the revised Target Text 2 correctly translates the meaning of the original text. Whereas, although Target Text 2 has translated the connotation of the original text, it has lost its original interest and failed to vividly show the accident in the “result” and the sound “被烫的大叫”, it can be translated as “*Regarding the cool-looking dessert as cool, the consuls began gobbling, but unexpectedly were hot burnt to scream.*”

(6) Source Text:烧开滚烫, 鲜香味立即扑鼻而来, 汤清不糊, 润滑爽口。

Target Text 1: ...boil it as the fresh scent spreads.

Target Text 2: ...boil it as the fresh scent spreads. Then it is complete, looking clear and tasting smooth and refreshing.

As in the above example, the vivid description of the taste of the pot side paste is omitted in Target Text 1 of this example, but in Target Text 2, it’s supplemented. And because it’s the direct supplement, the English translation seems illogical, so it adds the translation of “Then it is complete” to undertake the above “*boil it as the fresh scent spreads*” and open the following content about its appearance and taste “汤清不糊, 润滑爽口”. Although Target Text 2 expresses the content of the original text in more details than Target Text 1, there are still deficiencies. For example, “smooth” may not be the most appropriate translation of “润滑可口”.

10.3.2 *Communicative Text*

The function of communicative text is to achieve communicative purpose and produce communicative effect. There are a wide range of text types, including descriptive text, illustrative text, affective text and so on, which vary due to their communicative purposes. The communicative text of these examples is the translation of the e-mails for the Third Film Festival. Its communicative purpose is to communicate the logistics of star invitations of the festival, and preliminarily establish contact with the Russian Ministry of Communication and Mass Media.

The email translation of the 3rd Film Festival is a real-time interactive process. Because this kind of files comes from the real email dialogue. Its dialogue attribute is prominent and the text is more flexible. In addition, the strong sense of participation in the dialogue background environment puts forward higher requirements for dialogue translation. In the 3rd film festival, one of the purposes of e-mail content translation is to serve guests. Guided by the demands of guests, in order to achieve “functional equivalence”, domestication translation methods are required to be used to ensure the functional equivalence between the target text and the original text. The purpose of the e-mail communication with the Russian Ministry of communications and mass media is to establish contact, and the main content and basic principles of the original text are to introduce the festival and express sincere politeness. Based on the functional equivalence theory, it is necessary to flexibly use various translation methods, including addition and subtraction, so that the content of the original text can be naturally transmitted without cultural offence.

Specific examples are provided below.

(7) Source Text: 酒店入住订单以及机票事宜, 我们已再次加急上报领导, 会尽快给您回复。

Target Text: More details about your hotel and air tickets would be our next priority; we would email you about that as soon as we can.

The translation of this sentence is a typical free translation. According to the overall meaning of the whole sentence, “加急上报领导” is not the most important information from the reader’s point of view. “酒店入住订单以及机票事宜” is the most concerned information in this email. Moreover, reporting to a leader is a strange expression in the context of western culture. Thus, from the perspective of the functional equivalence theory, it can be reduced to “*More details about your hotel and air tickets would be our next priority*”, meaning, the hotel reservation and air ticket will be dealt with.

(8) Source Text: 福州傍海而生、依海而兴, 天蓝、地绿、水净、气候宜人, 旅游资源丰富, 空气质量常年位居全国前列, 是一座独具特色和魅力的宜居宜业城市, 素有“有福之州”的美誉。

Target text: Fuzhou, located and thriving by the sea, with nationally ranking-high air quality, rich tourism resource, pleasant climate and friendly environment, is a unique, attractive, livable city, known as “a blessed city” in the world.

The original text is typical in Chinese, which conforms to parataxis rather than hypotaxis. The logical connection between sentences is not clear. Concrete and abstract descriptions are juxtaposed, which makes the sentence patterns uneven but rhythmic. It is not easy to translate the content of the original text without losing the rhythm and beauty of the original text. It is hard to achieve the purpose of communicating meaning and beauty with the original text with one go. First of all, the expression “傍海而生、依海而兴” has both foot rhyme and reduplication. When translating it into English, we should first consider that reduplication in Chinese may not be suitable for English. Certain changes have to be made to adapt to English expression habits during translation. Secondly, we ought to consider that personification in Chinese is often expressed by metaphor, while English personification generally appears in novel styles and cannot be used randomly. Therefore, the “生” of the original text can be translated as “located”; “傍海而生、依海而兴” can be translated as “*located and thriving by the sea*”. Besides, for “天蓝、地绿、水净、气候宜人, 旅游资源丰富, 空气质量常年位居全国前列”, it can be translated into “...with blue sky, green landscape, clean water, friendly climate, rich resources of tourism, and perennial nationally-ranking-high air quality...” The translation provides both concrete and abstract expressions. Although the translation has specific details, it is not quite in line with the English expression habits. To translate this sentence from Chinese parataxis style to English hypotaxis style, it is necessary to sort out the logic of the original text. Concrete parts can be generalized. A better translation is to omit “blue sky, green land, clean water” and put “pleasant environment”. As for “pleasant climate, rich tourism resources, air quality ranks in the forefront of the country all year round”, it can be rendered as “...with nationally ranking-high air quality, rich tourism resource, pleasant climate and friendly environment...”. In the translation of this paragraph, the methods of addition, subtraction, literal translation and free translation are used comprehensively, and domestication translation methods are adopted for approaching the translation requirements of functional equivalence.

10.3.3 Address

As far as the nature of the address is concerned, its function is reflected in two aspects. One is about the etiquette for the event and the other is the purpose of the address. Based on the Functional Equivalence theory, the revision of the original translation can also be conducted from two aspects. The first is to find the proper style for the address. The other is to verify the content to determine whether the translation has achieved the functional purpose of the original text. Examples are as follows.

(9) Source Text: 电影作为增进两国人民相互了解, 加深友谊的重要载体, 深受两国人民的喜爱。

Target Text 1: Film has won hearts of the two peoples as it served to promote the mutual understanding and strengthen the mutual friendship.

Target Text 2: Film has won great popularity in both peoples and served to enhance mutual understanding and friendship.

As for Target Text 1, the literal meaning of the original text has been translated, but it is apparent that it adopts literal translation. The gap between Target Text 1 and Target Text 2 can be seen clearly by comparison. For “深受两国人民的喜爱”, the modified Target Text 2 not only translates the meaning of “受到喜爱”, but also adds a wide connotation of “被喜爱”, which is obviously more in line with the textual purpose of the original text; Secondly, Target Text 2 treats “深受喜爱” and “增进了解, 加深友谊” as a parallel relationship, rather than the causal relationship of Target Text 1, which is more in line with the logic of the content. After all, “增进了了解, 加深友谊” is not necessarily the reason for “深受喜爱”. From the perspective of Functional Equivalence, the two changes in Target Text 2 obviously improve the naturalness and logicity of Target Text 1 on the basis of the correct literal meaning, which is closer to the functional equivalence with the original text.

(10) Source Text: 中、印两国都是历史悠久的文明古国, 两国文化交流源远流长。

Target Text 1: India and China both have a long history of civilization and cultural exchange.

Target Text 2: As two ancient civilizations, India and China have shared a long history of cultural exchanges.

Although Target Text 1 is a literal translation of the original text, the meaning of Target Text 1 obtained by the readers is that “中、印两国分别对外文化交流源远流长”, rather than “中、印两国之间的文化交流源远流长” as intended in the original text. From the perspective of Functional Equivalence”, Target Text 1 apparently fails to meet the standard. The stylistic logic of the revised Target Text 2 is different from that of the original text, and the subject-predicate order of the original text “中印两国都是文明古国” is translated into the appositive structure of “中印两国作为两个文明古国”. But from the result, the connotation expressed in Target Text 2 is the same as that of the original text, and conforms to the translation standard of Functional Equivalence.

(11) Source Text:《流浪者》《大篷车》等印度电影在中国家喻户晓、妇孺皆看。

Target Text 1: Such Indian films as *Awaara* and *Caravan* were well known by almost every household of China, including the old and the little.

Target Text 2: Such Indian films as *Awaara* and *Caravan* were well known in each household of China.

Target Text 1 of this example has made a translation mistake since the translation does not completely match the original text. The translator has translated the original contents such as “家喻户晓、妇孺皆知” into their literal meaning. Target Text 1 doesn't pay attention to different features of Chinese and English. The Chinese “家喻户晓、妇孺皆知” is actually a Chinese idiomatic expression. Two identical phrases are repeated to express the same meaning, and subtraction is required when translating them into English. As a result, Target Text 1 has not achieved functional equivalence with the original in proximity and naturalness.

(12) Source Text: 我们希望通过印度主宾国活动, 深入挖掘两国在“一带一路”上的文化共同点, 传承丝路文化, 弘扬丝路精神, 为构建中、印更加紧密的发展伙伴关系注入新活力, 为中印友谊谱写新篇章。

Target Text 1: Through such an event, we hope to dig out the cultural commons of both countries in terms of One Belt and One Road, inherit silk road culture, spread silk road spirit, bring in new vigor to strengthen the development partnership between India and China, and turn the friendship to a new chapter.

Target Text 2: We anticipate that in this event, the cultural similarities of China and India in terms of One Belt and One Road will be further explored, and the silk road culture and spirit will be carried forward, so that new vitality will be injected into a closer development partnership between both countries and a new chapter will be written for the bilateral friendship.

In this example, Target Text 1 adopts the literal translation method to express the meaning of the original text clearly, but according to the functional equivalence theory, the original Chinese text is natural and smooth, in line with the Chinese writing standard, while the parallel structure and sentence patterns of Target Text 1 is irregular in length and its logical connotation is not clear. Taking the English writing standard as the criterion, Target Text 1 is not natural or smooth, failing to achieve the functional equivalence between the translation and the original text. The revised Target Text 2 modifies the logical order and writing order through free translation, so that the translation is natural and smooth under the standard of English writing, and achieves the functional equivalence between the translation and the original text.

(13) Source Text: (多年来中印两国采取了诸如国际电影节这样的举措来增进双边关系, 促进文化交流。)此举恰为加强两国友谊的纽带。

Target Text 1: Such film festival is indeed a bond to strengthen our friendship.

Target Text 2: Film festivals like this one have also contributed to nurturing the bond of friendship.

Target Text 1 is a literal translation of the original text, which has a logical error. As for Target Text 1, in “电影节作为纽带加强中印的友谊”, “纽带” cannot exercise the dynamic effect of “加强”; Besides, according to the context, the semantic purpose of the original text does not refer only to this film festival, but to “诸如电影节这样的举措”. Actually, “such” in Target Text 1 can be understood as referring to “诸如国际电影节这样的举措” of the previous sentence, but, from the perspective of functional equivalence, Chinese is a language whose meanings are connected with each other, English is the language whose forms are connected with each other. The clear context and word meanings of Chinese need to be clearly expressed in English expression habits, which is more in line with the writing norms of English. Therefore, the direct restatement of Target Text 2 obviously meets the requirements of functional equivalence.

(14) Source Text: 在印度电影业中著名的宝莱坞位于孟买, 摄制的电影数量是全印度最多的。孟买还是马拉地电影院的发源地。(金奈、海德拉巴、班加罗尔是南印度主要的电影摄制中心, 而加尔各答是孟加拉电影的中心。)

Target Text 1: The most famous Bollywood of Indian films is based in Mumbai and is largest contributor to Indian film revenues. Mumbai is also the home to Marathi cinema.

Target Text 2: Bollywood, as the Hindi film industry is popularly known, is located in Mumbai where the largest of Indian films are shot and produced. Mumbai is also the birthplace of Marathi cinema.

As can be seen from the above example, Target Text 1, which is the literal translation of the original text, actually deviates from the true meaning of the original text. In the original, “印度电影业中著名的宝莱坞” means that we often talk about Bollywood when discussing Indian films, that is, Bollywood is the most well-known expression of Indian films. Based on the functional equivalence theory, the equivalence between target text and original text is not only literal equivalence, but also content equivalence and equivalence in readers' response. Literal translation of the original text is only literal equivalence, and does not achieve content equivalence. Thus, the correct translation is to completely convert the expression of the original sentence to translate, so as to translate the connotation of the original. Besides, for “摄制的电影数量是全印度最多的”, Target Text 1 adopts free translation and translates it as “...is largest contributor to Indian film revenues”. Target Text 2 adopts literal translation and translates it as “...where the largest of Indian films are shot and produced”. Target Text 1 is actually a further derivation of the meaning of the original text. There is a difference between its expression effect and the expression effect of the original text, which cannot meet the requirements of functional equivalence; Target Text 2 is the direct meaning of the original text, and its expression effect is equivalent to that of the original.

(15) Source Text: 今年我们专门在第二届丝绸之路国际电影节中设立印度主宾国电影展映单元,集中展映十余部题材丰富,风格多样的优秀印度影片。

Target Text 1: This year we specially design a unit of film panorama for India as the focus country in our second film festival to show more than ten excellent Indian films with various themes and styles.

Target Text 2: At this festival, we have designed a unit of film panorama for India—the focus country, in which more than 10 excellent Indian films with enriched themes and diversified styles will be screened.

As can be seen from the above example, Target Text 1 has translated the general content of the original text. However, as far as the speech is concerned, the establishment of the exhibition unit of India's guest of honor is over, so the past tense is added to Target Text 2. Besides, Target Text 2 treats “集中展映十余部题材丰富,风格多样的优秀印度影片” as a non-restrictive attributive clause. Compared with Target Text 1, Target Text 2 focuses on “今年我们专门在第二届丝绸之路国际电影节中设立印度主宾国电影展映单元” rather than “今年我们专门在第二届丝绸之路国际电影节中设立印度主宾国电影展映单元”. In terms of the theme of the original text, Target Text 2 is more in line with the purpose of the original text and closer to the principle of functional equivalence. At the same time, as for “题材丰富,风格多样的优秀印度影片”, Target Text 1 handles it very simply and translates it as “excellent Indian films with various themes and styles”, while Target Text

2 translates it as “*excellent Indian films with enriched themes and diversified styles*”. The latter is more accurate in expressing the meaning of the original text, which is more in line with the purpose of the original text to emphasize diversity.

(16) Source Text: 印度地域广阔, 给广大电影工作者提供了绝佳的拍摄环境。我想在此邀请来自中国和在座其他国家的电影制作人来印度拍摄。印度新闻和广播部正致力于组建电影促进中心, 协助外国电影摄制组走进印度从事电影拍摄工作。

Target Text 1: The large expanse of India provides the best shooting environment for filmmakers. Hereby, I would like to invite filmmakers from China and other countries who is present here today to shoot in India. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting of India is setting up a Film Facilitation Center to help foreign film shooting crew to shoot in India.

Target Text 2: The huge geographical expanse of India also offers film makers beautiful shooting locales and I would like to invite Film makers from China and other countries present here to come and shoot in India. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is also in the process of setting up a Film Facilitation Center for assisting foreign film crew to shoot their film in India.

It can be seen from the above example that for the original “印度地域广阔, 给广大电影工作者提供了绝佳的拍摄环境”, Target Text 1 adopts literal translation, which ignores the relationship between the subject and object of the English translation, resulting in mistranslation in this sentence, while Target Text 2 has a deep understanding of the original text and corresponds the subject “地域广阔” to the object “绝佳场所”. Obviously, Target Text 2 is more in line with the meaning of the original text and English grammar. Besides, as for “印度新闻和广播部正致力于组建电影促进中心”, “正致力于” is treated as the present progressive in Target Text 1, while it is translated with “*in the process of*” in Target Text 2, which is more rigorous and avoids the potential ambiguity caused by the present progressive, so as to more accurately translate the connotation of the original text and achieve functional equivalence with the original text.

10.4 Reflections

Through the translation practice and reflection from the perspective of the Functional Equivalence theory, the author has gained a broader understanding about functional equivalence in translation. The following conceptions deal with issues related to the realization of functional equivalence in translation so as to make the target text consistent with the source text and give target language readers the same reading experience as the source language readers.

From the perspective of text analysis and under the guidance of the Functional Equivalence theory, the three types of texts discussed in this chapter are all analyzed from the angle of functional purpose. But there are also differences. The focus of the introductory text analysis is whether the translation accurately expresses the connotation of the original text. The focus of communicative text analysis is whether

the translation has completed the communicative purpose of the original text and achieved the communicative effect. The analysis of address not only pays attention to the communicative purpose and effect of the target text, but also stresses the language habits and etiquette of the target language on a given occasion.

Secondly the whole process of translation should be covered. Firstly, translators should understand the background of the original text and grasp the purpose and style of the full text before translation. To realize the functional equivalence between the target text and the source text, translators cannot afford to just focusing on the current paragraphs and words. Instead, they should first distinguish the text types and determine the overall purpose of the text. Clarifying the purpose of the full text can help the translators keep the parts from deviating from the main purpose. Secondly, before applying domestication, translators ought to confirm the purpose of the translated paragraphs on the premise of grasping the theme of the original text. Flexible use of various translation skills is required in order to realize equivalence between the target text and the original. The Functional Equivalence theory states that in order to realize the functional equivalence in translation, word-for-word translation is unnecessary as the goal is for the effect produced in the reader of the target text to be nearly the same as that of the source text. By applying domestication in reducing the gap between ST and TT, the translators should then strive to achieve naturalness through modification.

Through this translation practice and reflection, the author has sorted out the translation process in detail, starting from the analysis of each stage of translation, and under the guidance of the theory of Functional Equivalence, the author has discussed how to further improve the translation quality of practical texts, which has yielded great gains. But there are regrets. Constrained by the limitation of the author's understanding of the Functional Equivalence theory and the limitation of the author's translation ability, the translation works can be improved in many aspects. Besides, due to the limitation in case analysis, the conclusion lacks certain depth. Finally, cultural connotation has not been carefully examined and the effectiveness of applying Functional Equivalence theory in translation has been weakened.

With the transformation of China's economy, culture has become the trend of the times. As an important part of cultural economy, the status of film is self-evident. With the vigorous development of Chinese films, the trend of internationalization has become clear. Major film festivals also respectively seek their own characteristics, quickly seize resources and develop themselves. The translation of materials from all parties of the film festivals is an vital step in its internationalization. It has countless relationships with media translation, commercial translation, political translation and so on, but it also has its own unique features. To do this kind of translation work more professionally, we are not only required to learn from the experience of existing classical international film festivals, but also to deliberate the features of Chinese film festivals. We need not only to do numerous researches, checks and imitations, but also to innovate and create boldly. Finally, based on my own experience, the following suggestions are provided to translators interested in working for film festivals.

First, one should strive to be professional. Knowledge about films and film festivals is essential. Translation skills belong to the domain of languages. Professional

knowledge requires that one knows the contents. A positive attitude from the beginning is required. Then, one should learn and understand the knowledge of films and film festivals with an open mind, make friends with people in the film industry, participate in activities related to films and film festivals, improve one's professional level, and even become a practitioner in the film industry.

Second, one should focus on both preparation at all times and preparation before translation. Being ready at all times requires translators to pay attention to major international film festivals and major events in the film industry and continuously accumulate knowledge and widely learn from all parties, including Chinese politics, economy, marketing, media language, etc. Preparation before translation requires the translators to query, study and learn the content of the task after receiving the translation task, so that each detail in the translation is clear and accurate.

Third, it is necessary to make a circular progress of practice, feedback, reflection, and summary. After practice, one should get feedback and constantly reflect on it. After reflection, a summary can help one to continuously improve the translation ability. Translation skills can only be improved in practice. However, without feedback, it is difficult for one to make progress in translation. Only by constantly deliberating the translation in the feedback can one further improve the translation skills. Only by ceaselessly reflecting and summarizing can one lay a higher translation basis for the next task.

Fourth, constant language training is required. One should keep an eye on rhetoric at the same time. A low language basis cannot possibly yield high quality translation. To produce a good translation, one should first acquire good language skills. Translators should practice bilingual expressions into daily life and draw vivid nourishment from language in life. Learn to give life to language and strive for excellence in translation with ingenuity and creativity. We've better fully grasp the Chinese and English, especially English. For Chinese translators, it is even more urgent for them to improve their English skills so as to produce English that is concise and effective. Rhetoric requires training as well. Translators need to reflect upon how and why questions about expression. They also need to know how to use rationality and sensibility to convince people to achieve the expected effect and meet the goal. Rhetoric is a basic tool that can help translators achieve subtlety in translation.

Fifth, translators should strengthen theoretical construction. One cannot make much progress without been assisted by the guidance of theories. Doing repetitive translation does not help a translator to become more proficient. Instead, one should aim at knowing other possibilities in translation. The collision of different translation theories helps a translator to achieve breakthroughs in translation and enable the translator to translate the original text more cleverly, more accurately, and more to the intention of the source text.

Sixth, translators should possess a stable mentality and a sense of value. It is not easy because translation is a work behind the scenes. Being an intermediary, translators carry many responsibilities. They need to communicate and understand the source text. They must get used to sitting for hours like writers. They need to be like sales people to sell their works without caring too much about fame or profit. Translators need to find satisfaction, meaning and pride in their work. They build

patience and self-confidence in long-term translation. Only by possessing patience and self-confidence can one truly become a good translator and remain calm and competent.

China's going global is accompanied by China's development. More and more competent translators are in urgent need. The time calls for excellent translators. The demand for film festival translators is only the tip of the iceberg. Doing a good job of translating for film festivals is still valuable. Translators are provided with unprecedented opportunities to make great achievements, but the road ahead can be long and arduous.

(This chapter is based on the author's 2017 MA thesis *Report on Translating for International Film Festival under the Guidance of Functional Equivalence Theory*).

Chapter 11

Considerations for CE Translation of TV News and Production of Foreign-Related TV



Feng Yue

11.1 Considerations for the Translation of Chinese TV News

Generally speaking, a translator grows through the accumulation of translation practice and matures by reviewing other translators' works. This section discusses *the reversed learning method* for media translation. In this mode, a novice translator first learns to do translation review before taking up professional translation. This is based on the assumption that on the basis of learning the evaluation system of media translation, trainees begin to learn to review other translators' works so that they can master relevant translation skills and theories faster and take a short-cut to engage in media translation later.

The author has worked as a CE news translator in Fujian TV station since 1993. We had two Americans to assist our language work. They took the differences between Chinese and English news styles very seriously and made major revisions of translation works done by their Chinese colleagues. After a period of time working in this way, we came up with a working process that we later named *editorial translation*. The process includes news analyzing, message extracting and information reorganizing. Our findings have been published in the paper *On the Editing and Translation of News* in the journal *Foreign Languages in Fujian* (present name: *Foreign Languages and Literature Studies*) in 1994. This kind of translation method alters the source text to a large extent, which aims at foreign audiences and is based on functional theory. English teachers have been surprised by this novel idea. The author gave talks to introduce the method and was often asked by the audiences' questions such as "can we translate like this in the exam?" and "how can such big revisions be made translation when translation requires

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© China Social Sciences Press 2022

F. Yue (ed.), *Translation Studies on Chinese Films and TV Shows*,

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-6000-0_11

283

faithfulness?” We propose that *editorial translation* method is effective for the market and workplace within the media and business circles.

Later in Fujian TV station, the broadcasting of English news expanded. Professional translators were hired, and the author served as an editor. A common working scenario is that a translator is given 15 min to translate the Chinese news and the editor about six minutes to review and revise it before it is recorded and broadcast. When the job is done, the translator would often ask the editor about the revisions. Having given the same answers to the same type of questions, the author came up with an idea: what if the relevant principles were shared with the translators? If the translators learn to be translation reviewers first, would the translation level be higher? Can translators make faster progress in this reversed learning mode? The author decided to conduct an experiment in the Master of Translation program of the School of Foreign Languages of Fujian Normal University. The experiment is supported by Fuzhou Yiguo Yimin Co., LTD.

In order to effectively and systematically implement the reverse-order teaching method of media translation, the author designs the evaluation system of translations, and puts forward those five kinds of consciousness that media translation must be equipped with, namely information consciousness, style consciousness, inquiry consciousness, cultural consciousness and political consciousness. Of course, translators must have language skills, grammatical basis and rhetorical ability. At the same time, they must have a serious attitude. Such basic requirements are not included in the evaluation system. What are included are the translation strategies specifically designed for English media style, i.e., editorial translation.

11.1.1 Information Consciousness

The most important element of news is information, which gives substance to news and other media texts. One Chinese news entitle read: “航海日‘五缘之水’台湾采集活动结束”. It should be made clear in the text that “五缘” are “亲缘、地缘、神缘、业缘和物缘”, i.e., links of kinship, geography, religion, business and products respectively. If translated as “*five-link*”, the desired information is lost. For another example, now the mainstream media are using “three links” in news report. It is puzzling for foreign audiences. If the “three links” come with the details of “*cross straits transportation, communication and business*”, it becomes clear to the audiences.

11.1.2 Style Consciousness

We should know that the romance of Chinese is everywhere, even in news, but English news belongs to formal style and should not be too romantic. For example, the title of a Chinese news is “10 头台湾艺术创作牛来厦逛大街”. It is followed

by a description “作为 2010 厦门国际奔牛节的重要配套活动之一, 昨天 (1 月 31 日), 台湾 10 头艺术创作牛跨洋过海来到厦门, 首次与大陆游客见面”。(TT: as one of the important supporting activities of the 2010 Xiamen International bull Running Festival, yesterday (January 31), 10 Taiwan artificial bulls crossed the sea to Xiamen to meet mainland tourists for the first time.). As we know that it is quite impossible to have “artificial bulls walk on the street”. But the Chinese expression is not a problem for Chinese viewers. However, if translating it as *Ten artificial bulls visit Xiamen from Taiwan*, there will be style problems caused by the use of personification. It is better to be translated as *Xiamen Bull-running Festival: Artificial Bulls from Taiwan on Show*.

Some Chinese News reads like prose. For example, a news article entitled “鲜花相伴, 先人走好” in Chinese, which literally means: *flowers around, depart well*. It is difficult to guess the content of the news from the title. In fact, it is a report about Fuzhou Funeral Home providing flowers for funerals. So the title can be better translated as *Fuzhou: Flowers For Funerals*.

11.1.3 Inquiry Consciousness

Every translator knows that organizations and other proper names need to be queried. But there are still many pitfalls in practice. For example,

Source Text:

省政协港澳委员施若龙: 新婚燕尔 携妻参会

1 月 23 日是省政协十届三次会议开幕的日子, 也是来自香港的省政协委员施若龙结婚的大喜日子, 新婚燕尔的他, 为了履行好自己的职责, 婚后第二天就带着妻子赶到福建参会。施若龙是法学博士, 这次他带来了一个《加强闽港两地法律交流, 以调解解决商务纠纷》的提案。祖籍福建晋江的施若龙是上届省政协港澳委员施学概的儿子, 父子两辈人怀着同样的爱国爱乡情怀。

Without inquiring, the translator transliterated the name “施若龙” to Shi Ruolong. Beginners also know that the English names of many Chinese outside the mainland are not Chinese names read according to the mainland pinyin system. For example, 成龙’s English name is Jackie Chan. Novices pay more attention to the English names of celebrities. Unfamiliar names are often ignored and difficult to verify. According to the news, 施若龙’s ancestral home is Jinjiang, Fujian, but he is a second-generation Hong Kong resident. It is likely that he has an English name that is quite different from the Chinese name. Looking up the Chinese name online, we found that “在香港出生。在香港完成高中毕业后, 他赴美国留学, 在美国取得了法学博士学位, 现在是美国、中国香港和内地三地的职业律师。(he was born in Hong Kong. After finishing high school in Hong Kong, he went to the United States to study, obtained a doctor of law degree in the United States, and is now a professional lawyer in the United States, Hong Kong, China and the

mainland.)”¹ This provided us with more clues, and we also found his photos. In the news² in Hong Kong, I found his English name, Ben Sze. There is a group photo on the Internet. Compared with the photos, we found they are the same person. Overseas, lawyers can be found on the Internet, and 施若龙’s name can be found on two lawyer (registration) websites.³ The English name provided is SZE YEUK LUNG BENEDICT. This English name should be Ben Sze provided by the previous website. Sze is the target text of the surname 施, lung is the target text of 龙, and Ben is a variant of Benedict. Use Benedict (Ben) Baidu to find out the names of several celebrities. In this way, Both SZE YEUK LUNG BENEDICT and Ben Sze can be used. In a short, translators should have the sense of verification. The author joked with the translators that we should have the sense of verification like a detective.

11.1.4 Cultural Consciousness

Culture is a classic topic, covering a wide range, such as historical culture. However, no amount of talk can catch up with the actual needs. Every day we translate news, we deal with cultural issues. In a news article “晋江扩大廉租住房保障对象范围”, there is a sentence: “下阶段, 晋江计划将廉租房保障对象范围由市区扩大到镇村危旧房家庭、农村二女户住房困难家庭等。” The so-called 二女户 are families with two daughters but no sons, which is definitely unfamiliar for westerners. In China’s rural areas, it means the problem of lack of labor. In areas with poor public security, it can also mean the problem of security. Some people translate 二女户 into *two-female family*, which may arouse the association of lesbians. In the west, there is no such concerns for a *two-daughter family*. The translation of TV news is different from the translation of books. The latter can use annotations. However, TV news is very short with limited space and time. So the news is reported with the most important information in translation as *two-daughter rural family lacking in farming hands*.

A news entitled “浦城发现一座宋代古桥” can be easily translated by beginners as *Song-Dynasty bridge discovered in Fujian Pucheng*. However, foreign readers do not know when the Song Dynasty was, unless they are scholars studying China. In this case, we can directly show the approximate historical period and translate the title as *1000-year-old bridge discovered in Pucheng of Fujian*.

¹ Provincial CPPC Member, Shi Ruolong: Came to Fuzhou for a Meeting on the Second Day of his Wedding. [2012–09]. http://www.fjsen.com/zhuanti/2010-01/27/content_2697856.htm.

² Representatives from Dacheng Law Firm Visited Our Firm on April 2, 2013. [2013–09]. <http://www.lamleelai.com.hk/zh-hant/2013/04/%E5%A4%A7%E6%88%90%E5%BE%8B%E5%B8%AB%E4%BA%8B%E5%8B%99%E6%89%80%E7%9A%84%EA%BB%A3%E8%A1%A8%E6%96%BC2013%E5%B9%B4%E6%9C%88%E6%97%A5%E5%8F%83%E8%9A%7%80%E6%9C%AC%E6%89%08/>.

³ Lawyer website. [2013–09]. <http://www.32guide.com/item.php?act=detail&id=10204916>.
Lawyer website. [2013–09]. <http://www.welltech.hk/shop/shop.php?shopid=10,204,916>.

11.1.5 *Political Consciousness*

Many political issues can be appeared in languages. For example, what does the 中国大陆 say? VOA uses mainland China. Here's a question. If this expression of mainland China is true, how many other China can there be? Based on the principle of *One China*, we reached a consensus on Fujian TV station to use China's Mainland to translate 中国大陆, and China's Taiwan to translate 台湾. Taiwan's intellectuals will not deny the history of cross-strait integration. Taiwanese students who grew up and studied in the United States will at least say, "we used to be one." In international sports venues, the Taiwan team has been called *Chinese Taipei* in English. The corresponding Chinese expressions are quite different. In China's Mainland it is "中国台北". In Taiwan it is "中华队". In Hong Kong and Macao it is "中华台北". We have decided to use *China's Taiwan* in our English broadcast as we think that it is simple and clear. To overdo the translation is not proper either. Once a leader suggested that we use *Taiwan Province of the People's Republic of China*. We didn't adopt the suggestion because we didn't want to cause discomforts among audiences or arouse unintended international reaction.

We refer to Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan as regions. Sometimes it is easy for journalists to fault in the details. For example, in a news report about opening ceremony of the 6th *Pinghe Pomelo Festival* (第六届中国平和蜜柚节开幕), there is a line that says in Chinese: "在现场举行的订货签约仪式上, 来自以色列、荷兰、俄罗斯、中国香港、日本等地的海内外客商分别与平和县的蜜柚加工企业签约。" If translated literally, Hong Kong is placed immediately after Russia and can cause a misunderstanding that Hong Kong has become an independent country like Russia. In fact, the order here needs to be changed during translation, such as: *At the signing ceremony, buyers from home and abroad signed purchase contracts with the pomelo-processing factories in Pinghe County. There are buyers from China's Hong Kong, and from such countries as Israel, Holland, Russia, and Japan. Such a translation is much clearer.*

(This section is part of the author's paper *From Translation Review to Translation—A Reversed Teaching Method for MTI Media Translation*, originally published in *Chinese Translators Journal*, No. 5, 2014.)

11.2 **Considerations for the Production of Foreign-Related English TV Programs**

This section provides suggestions for the production of foreign-related TV programs which are based on the practical experience of the members of the research team. Apart from the considerations related CE news translation, there are also important considerations for the production of English TV programs, including the preparation by the news anchors, material selection, broadcast style and the cooperation between and Chinese and foreign anchors. The production of

English TV programs includes collecting, writing, translation, editing and other work. We have engaged in the production of nearly 200 episodes of English TV programs for satellite channel Southeast TV station, including news program *What's new*, news English teaching program *Listen & Learn* and some documentaries. Although different English TV programs have different characteristics, they also have something in common as all of them deal with foreign-related publicity. To win the audience and get the expected results, the producer must pay attention to the following issues.

11.2.1 Preparation of the Anchors

Anchors should be aware of two things. First, when Chinese and foreign hosts are on the same stage, they must turn up the voice of the Chinese side on the control machine, because the voice of Europeans and Americans is thick with strong resonant in the chest, so the voice is obviously louder than that of the Chinese, which can be seen clearly on the instrument board. Second, when a Chinese and a western anchor perform on the same stage, the Chinese should wear heavy make-up. Asian people have yellow skin while Caucasians have white skin. When sitting together, yellow skin will appear unexpectedly darker under the strong light, which is very obvious on the monitor. Some Caucasians may not appear white due to long-term sun exposure, but they will look extremely white on the lens under the light. In most cases, the anchors should be warm and friendly, as if he/she is always ready to communicate with the audience. For example, this type of sentence is used at the beginning of the program: "*Hi, there, Listen & Learn is back again.*"

11.2.2 Material Selection

Some of the materials of English TV programs are selected from existing Chinese TV programs in China, so we must pay attention to their visual effects. For example, Chinese news items contain lots of meetings and conferences. For foreign-related news, only major national conferences should be selected, because these are the concerns of people at home and abroad. Chinese programs without novel ideas and practical information should not be adopted. In addition, there are some traditional practices in China, such as treating the audience as students and the program as teachers. The feeling of watching the program is like that the host is educating the audience. Even if the translation of this type of program is carefully to be moderate, it is easy to arouse the disgust of foreign audiences. In international competitions, domestic programs often show that the program producers are strongly dissatisfied with the referee's punishment, while foreign viewers say they prefer to watch sports programs broadcast in a neutral manner in European and American countries. Domestic programs often invite experts to participate, but the

performance of experts is too different. The material selection of English programs should identify the performance of experts with a serious attitude and resolutely put an end to some bad expert comments.

11.2.3 Oral Style

The language of English TV programs is mostly oral style, which carry the following characteristics:

- (1) Short sentences are preferred, usually no more than 30 words.
- (2) The expressions are straightforward, simple and easy to remember.
- (3) Don't use difficult words or sentence patterns, such as independent nominative case, and try to avoid dangling participle phrases.
- (4) Use pronouns carefully to avoid the audience's misunderstanding.

In short, avoid long sentences and be clear and easy. In the article *On Editing and Translation of News*, the author points out:

Translation must conform to TV programs. There are four basic considerations. First, the broadcast time of the translation should not be longer than that of the source text. In the case when literal translation is the main translation method, the English version will generally be longer than the Chinese version. To adapt to the length of the program, we can simplify the translation by cutting out some redundant information.

Second, although it is well known that news sentences should be short rather than long, in oral broadcast the opposite is true. During oral broadcast, the host gives a commanding sentence to the TV audience to summarize the whole text (headlines). If the headline is too short, or less than 15 syllables, it would sound unnatural. Give the headline a subordinate clause, so that the host can perform more naturally.

Third, for the convenience of a foreign anchor, the use of transliterated names, translators should use semicolon to separate the syllables to make the broadcasting easier. For example,

In the city of Yi-cun, Hei-Long-Jiang province, there exist seldom-seen nests of ants, which appear to be of medical and nutritional value.

If the anchor is Chinese, translators should adopt English rather than Arabic numerals avoid unnecessary pauses. It is better to write down the number 196372969 as *one hundred and ninety-six million, three hundred and seventy-two thousand, nine hundred and sixty-nine.*

Fourth, Renminbi (RMB) should be converted to U.S. dollars, Li should be converted to Kilometer, and Mu should be converted to Hectare in translation according to international metric standards. (Yue Feng, 1994:104)

11.2.4 Cooperation Between Chinese and Foreign Anchors

In the program, the cooperation of Chinese and foreign anchors directly affects the broadcasting effect. For example, for difficult English words, the foreign host can ask the Chinese host how to say it in Chinese. In order to enhance the effect, the foreign host can repeat it in stiff Chinese before the Chinese host says it a second time while praising the foreigner's progress in Chinese pronunciation. Such interaction during the program can impress and entertain the audience as well.

Difficult English words can also be explained in English in the program, which is quite common during broadcast. For example, there is a sentence in the news: "*The wires of two Americans being held in an Iraqi jail are calling for their quick release. Friends in their hometowns are showing support with yellow ribbons.*" Most Chinese viewers may not know the meaning of *yellow ribbons*, so the anchors explained it in the following dialogue:

A: So, why yellow ribbons?

B: That's a good question. Yellow ribbons were first used to honor those Americans held in Iran after the fall of Shah.

A: Does yellow ribbon come from any story or song?

B: Yes, the idea came from a song *Tie a Yellow Ribbon Round the Old Oak Tree*, which was popular at the time.

Knowledge comes with practice. Only by participating in the production of English programs and interacting with foreign audiences can we gain experiences for the production of foreign-related programs.

(This section is a part of the author's paper *Nine Considerations for Making Foreign-related English TV Programs*, originally published in *Science and Technology Horizon*, Issue 2, 2015.)

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