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**CABTI**



## **CABTI**

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# On Translating Red Tourist Attractions in Guangzhou Based on the Variational Translation Theory

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## Abstract

Due to the great historical significance of red tourist attractions, special attention needs to be paid to the translation of red tourist attractions. It will be beneficial for the sustainable development of red tourism and telling compelling Chinese stories in a good way. Based on the Variational Translation Theory (VTT), the paper analyzes the translation of tourist texts of the red tourist attractions in Guangzhou on the “List of 100 National CPC-related Tourist Attractions and Scenic Spots (2016)” with the seven translation techniques derived from VTT, which are adding, deleting, editing, narrating, condensing, integrating, and altering. According to the author’s research, most of the translations of red tourist attraction texts applied Complete Translation, though few adopted VTT. On the whole, the current situation of the translation of red tourist attractions is not optimistic, since only a few texts have English translated versions and many problems exist in current versions. The paper is supposed to inspire an increasing number of scholars who can show their interest in the translation of the tourist texts of the red tourist attractions, and thus spread Chinese culture and convey Chinese values in a good and correct way.

**Keywords:** Variational Translation Theory (VTT)<sup>1</sup>, red tourist attractions, the translation of tourist texts

## 1. Introduction

Red tourist attractions, usually known as revolution-themed tourist attractions, are important destinations of patriotism education in China: tourists learn about revolutionary history and legacy during the visit. The centenary of the founding of the Communist Party of China (CPC) in 2021 ignited a wave of studying the history of the CPC by paying in-person visits to the revolutionary sites, conducing to the thriving red tourism.

Translation of red tourist texts is more than cross-language and cross-cultural translating as red tourist texts resonate with political leanings and patriotic mood. In addition to conveying the factual information in the red tourist text to the target reader, the translation aims at finding as much echo in the hearts of foreign visitors as in Chinese visitors, therefore facilitating the cultural exchanges between China and the world.

Liu, Zhang, and Wang (2021) pointed out that “if we follow the original text too much, we cannot express the content perfectly” (p. 4), and suggested that Variational Translation Theory—hereinafter referred to briefly as VTT—is viable to seeking the balance between the original text and the target text. Unlike complete translation, the theme of variation translation is adaption, a way of compromise by taking the demands of the reader, the translator, the source text, and the target text into consideration.

Guangzhou, one of the most visited cities in China by foreigners undertakes the mission of carrying forward the spirit of the red revolution as well as introducing the revolutionary history of the motherland. Therefore, this study selects six red tourist attractions in Guangzhou from the “List of 100 National CPC-related Tourist Attractions and Scenic Spots (2016)” jointly issued by the General Office of the CPC Central Committee and The General Office of the State Council, PRC in 2016 as examples to explore the translation techniques applicable to translating red tourist attractions based on VTT. The six red tourist attractions are The Memorial Museum of Comrade Mao Zedong Sponsoring The Peasant Movement Institute, Guangzhou

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<sup>1</sup> Variational Translation Theory (VTT) is put forward by the Chinese author Professor Huang Zhonglian, and the official English translation of such theory is given in 2020 with the publishing of the book *Variational Translation Theory* by Springer.

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Uprising Memorial Hall, the Martyr Memorial Park, Sanyuanli People's Anti-British Struggle Memorial Hall, Huang Huagang Mausoleum of 72 Martyrs, Site of Huangpu Army Military Academy, Guangzhou.

## 2. Introduction Basis

### 2.1 The Development of VTT

Variation translation has long been widely used and explored in translation practice at home and abroad, though it was in 1998 that Professor Huang Zhonglian formally put forward the concept of variation translation and then VTT systematically four years later.

Tan Zaixi took French translator De Abrangur and German translator Herder as examples in his book *A Short History of Translation in the West* published by the Commercial Press in 2004 to prove that the practice of variation translation has a long history in the west, especially in the unprecedented golden era of the translation theories from 17th century to the 19th century (as cited in Du, 2021). For De Arbangur, the most important thing about translation was to help readers understand the content of the source text rather than translate all the words. Therefore, De Arbangur would do some adding or deleting in the translation as long as it was helpful for target reader's understanding, attending little to the form and content similarity between the source text and the translated one. To be more specific, Herder added some expressions in his translation of *the Temple of Shakespeare* in the hope that the readers could better understand the source text with such a supplement.

As for the exploration of variation translation and VTT in China, both Yang (2018) and Du (2021) suggested that the practices of variation translation could be traced back to the translation of the Buddhist Scriptures in China. Then, the practices of translation saw a further development through the Tang Dynasty, the late Ming Dynasty, the early Qing Dynasty, and the May Fourth Movement in 1919. During this long period, incomplete translation took a great part of all the translation materials. China, however, witnessed the Vernacular Promotion Movement thereafter. Under the influence of Lu Xun and other scholars, the translation practice of Western literature in China began to emphasize the complete translation without missing a word (Huang & Zhang, 2020, p. 2). According to Huang (2002a), Chinese scholars hoped to save the reform of Chinese characters and the development of literature by borrowing western ideas and literature after the May 4th Movement (p. 13). Huang (2002a) also indicated that the liberal changes of content and form by the translator are blamed as betrayal at that time (p. 11). Therefore, the concept of complete translation became prevailing to avoid losses in the learning process of Western literature. In contrast, variation translation was dismissed as a worthless practice of translation and the exploration of VTT in China developed slowly at that time but still captured the attention of some scholars including Zhang Zhongyue and Professor Zhou Zhaoxiang of the Hong Kong Baptist Convention.

In the words of Huang (2002b), he pointed out that variation translation takes the external context as the premise and the reader as the center to solve the cultural contradiction between the source text and the multi-level target language readers' needs. In the same year, based on the studies on Yan Fu's translation works and the practices of translation, Huang (2002c) put forward VTT systematically, pointing out the four key factors, seven adaptation techniques, eleven variational translation methods, and seventeen research directions of VTT. It was also in 2002 that Huang Zhonglian released his book *Variational Translation Theory* published by China Translation and Publication Corporation. Guo (2003, as cited in Yang, 2018) regarded the foundation of the VTT as a breakthrough in the process of translation in China.

Further deepening of and research on the theory was conducted. Ten pairs of typologies were summarized by Huang Zhonglian in the paper *Research Methods of Translation Variation Theory* in 2011. Huang and Li (2014) discussed the twelve translation methods about their similarities and differences by comparison and contrast to deepen the research of variation translation. In addition, numerous conferences related to the study of VTT have been held, such as the second High-level Forum on "Theoretical Translation and Translation Methodology" with the theme of "Criticism and Reflection on Translation Change Theory" at Guangdong University of Foreign Studies in 2018.

Founded in China in the late 1990s, VTT has constructed from 1998 to 2008, developed from 2009 to 2017, and expanded from 2018 on (Huang & Yang, 2018). It was labeled as China's first original translation theory. Based on the Chinese monograph *Variational Translation Theory* which was published in 2002 by China Translation and Publication Corporation, Huang Zhonglian integrated findings and insights from 2002 to publish the English version of *Variational Translation Theory* by Springer in 2020 (Huang & Zhang, 2020).

With social and economic development and the advent of the information age, the application of the VTT has been diversified from traditional literary genres such as fiction, poetry, and drama to "other well established and clearly defined types of text for translation such as multimedia texts, tourism texts, and legal documents" (Williams & Chesterman, 2004, p. 9).

Zhou (2005) suggested that the VTT will provide interpreters with a psychological buffer and a flexible platform to cope with challenges and open up a new field to some extent by analyzing the necessity, feasibility, and evaluation of the adaptation of interpreting such theory. Hu (2004) said that the techniques of variation translation are efficient to meet the needs of advertisement translation as advertisements may be misunderstood because of different cultures if being translated word by word and sentence by sentence. The discussion on the application of variation translation in advertisements has been existing since the end of the 20th century. VTT's application has been widely used in all walks of life with the further development of VTT. Machine translation will also involve variation translation in the future as VTT will "significantly improve the efficiency of making full use of the foreign information" (Huang & Zhang, 2020).

### 2.2 Variation Translation Vs. Complete Translation

Complete translation refers to the translation activity in which the translator converts the cultural information of the source language into the target language to achieve a similar even the same style. Ji (2015) pointed out that complete translation pays attention to the integrity of information conversion, including the integrity of content, form, and style, and seeks to maximize the "similarity" between target text and source text. On the contrary, variation translation is a translation activity in which the translator uses adaptation techniques such as adding, deleting, editing, narrating, condensing, integrating, and altering to ingest the original text's contents to meet the specific requests of specific target readers under specific conditions (Huang & Zhang, 2020, p. 7).

Huang and Zhang (2020) suggested that what existed between complete translation and variation translation is creative writing added in the variation translation, and it is the variation translation that makes the concept of translation specialized and concrete. In the book *Variational Translation Theory*, Huang and Zhang (2020) indicated that the amount of information in the Complete Translation (a) is different from the amount of information in the variation translation (b) because of adaptation (p. 91). Then the seven variational translation techniques can be seen as adding( $a>b$ ), deleting( $a<b$ ), editing( $a\leq b$ ), narrating( $a\approx b$ ), condensing( $a < b$ ), integrating( $a\in b$ ), and altering( $a\sim b$ ). Compared with complete translation, "variation translation is characterized by five words: abundance, swiftness, excellence, economization, and preciseness (Huang & Zhang, 2020, p. 165)". Therefore, variation translation better fits in with the current needs of society in the quest for reading efficiency along with increasing cross-cultural exchanges.

Though some differences, such as content, macro-form, and input of translators, do exist in the complete translation and variation translation, scholars admit that similarity also exists in these two forms of translation as well. Ji (2015) said that complete translation and variation translation are formally opposite, but they both pursue the best integration point between "similarity" and "acceptability" in different ways. It is said that complete translation can be seen as the starting point of variation translation as both of them "involve translating the original work and contain the information of the original work" (Huang & Zhang, 2020, p. 16).

## 3. VTT Applied in the Tourist Texts of Red Tourist Attractions in Guangzhou

VTT is constituted by one core philosophy, two contradictions, four key factors, seven techniques, and eleven methods, and the former ones are the cause of the latter, interrelated with each other (Huang & Zhang, 2020). Generated by the four factors of the VTT and bringing about the eleven variational translation methods, these seven translation techniques have seen wide application in variation translation. Therefore, an analysis of the seven variational translation techniques is conducive to exploring how VTT is applied in the tourist texts of red tourist attractions in Guangzhou. By field visit, the application of VTT in the six Guangzhou red tourist attractions listed in the "*List of 100 National CPC-related Tourist Attractions and Scenic Spots (2016)*" is shown as follows.

### 3.1 Adding ( $a>b$ )

The way of adding information to the original works is adding by means of explanation, commentary, writing and the like to assure target readers easier and more precise unscrambling of information. Generally speaking, the adding part in the translation of tourism translation texts can be divided into two categories according to their functions. One type of adding is to achieve contextual coherence and fluency with the aim of enhancing the target readers' understanding of tourist attractions, and the other is to add explanations of culture-loaded words with Chinese characteristics to ensure textual legibility among foreign tourists.

#### 3.1.1 Adding for Cohesion

Adding for cohesion in VTT refers to writing in the technique of adding. Writing means adding relative content of the source text to the target one. According to the position of the adding part, writing can be divided into three types: writing before translating which is used to explain the background foreshadowing for the post, writing after translating which is used to

supplement the previous, and writing while translating which is used to serve as a bridge to connect the whole article firmly (Huang & Zhang, 2020, pp. 93-94).

#### Translation Example 1.

##### Source text:

毛泽东同志主办农民运动讲习所旧址纪念馆，简称农讲所，是依托全国重点文物保护单位广州农民运动讲习所旧址简历的国家二级博物馆。

旧址为番禺学宫，始建于明洪武三年（1370年），是明清时期广州培养儒生、祭祀孔子的所在地。1926年，毛泽东在此主办第六届农民运动讲习所，深入研究中国农民问题，培养大批农民运动干部，为中国革命做出了重要的贡献。

##### Target text:

The Memorial Museum of Comrade Mao Zedong Sponsoring The Peasant Movement Institute, with the short title of NongJiangSuo Museum, is a Second-Class National Museum that is established on the base of the Guangzhou site of the Peasant Movement Institute, or the national key cultural relic protection unit.

The former site of the Canton Panyu Confucian School was founded in 1370 (3rd year of Hongwu Period in the Ming Dynasty). The historical buildings, with yellow tiles and red walls, look solemn and magnificent. In the Ming and Qing Dynasties, it was the main place to develop the Confucianism talents and offer sacrifices to Confucius. In 1926, Mao Zedong sponsored the Sixth Peasant Movement Institute here, with the in-depth study of Chinese peasant problems, training a large number of peasant movement cadres, which made an important contribution to the Chinese revolution. The historical buildings which are the site of Peasant Movement Institute have become a historic revolutionary memorial from then on.

(Selected from the travel brochure of The Memorial Museum of Comrade Mao Zedong Sponsoring The Peasant Movement Institute)

The outstanding characteristics of writing while translating are connecting the preceding and the following and cleverly embedding supplementary content for the translation to make it more coherent and increase the amount of information (Huang & Zhang, 2020, p. 93).

The underlined part of the selected paragraph is the added part of the English translation of the official tourism brochure of The Memorial Museum of Comrade Mao Zedong Sponsoring The Peasant Movement Institute. At first glance, the two supplementary sentences seem unnecessary. After all, if the two supplementary sentences are chopped, the paragraph flows still smoothly, causing little impact on the understanding of the translation. However, if examined in the whole text, the two supplementary sentences make the text more coherent and structured, especially with the use of the two added phrases “the historical buildings”. The first supplementary sentence on the description of the architectural appearance is to highlight the solemnity of the place, which provides rationality for Mao Zedong's sponsorship of the sixth peasant movement here, and the place is rated as the key national cultural relic protection unit. The second supplementary sentence tells the time of this site being regarded as a historical memorial hall of the Chinese Revolution, echoing the last sentence of the first paragraph, which does great help to the tourists' understanding of the historical significance of The Memorial Museum of Comrade Mao Zedong Sponsoring The Peasant Movement Institute.

#### 3.1.2 Adding for Comprehension

When it refers to adding for comprehension in VTT, it is generally related to explanation in the technique of adding. Explanation means explaining part of the content of the source text in the target one because target readers are not that familiar with those parts as it has profound meaning or it is terminology, including literary quotation, ancient sayings, words, and so on (Huang & Zhang, 2020, p. 92).

##### Translation Example 2.

Source text: 番禺学宫是明清时期番禺县最高学府，在这里学习的儒生从秀才出发，正式迈出了漫漫科举路的第一步。科举制度前后经历了 1300 年之久，在中国历史上起过重大的作用，产生了广泛的影响。在光霁堂设有“中国科举文化展”，分为科举沿革、科举流程以及广东状元三部分。

Target text: Canton Panyu Confusion School was one of the main educational institutes in Guangzhou city in the Ming and Qing Dynasties. The Confucian scholar (corrected) studied Confucian here and started from the Title of Xiucui as the first step into the Imperial Examination System. The Imperial Examination System was the (corrected) of talent



and officer selection in ancient China. It was started in the Sui Dynasty, completely established in the Tang Dynasty, and reached its peak in the Ming and Qing Dynasties. Finally, it was abolished during the reform of the new educational system in the late Qing Dynasty. The Imperial Examination System lasting more than 1300 years in China, had played a significant role in the history of China and resulted in a wide range of influences. The Chinese Imperial Examination Culture is displayed in the Guangji Hall, which is behind the Minglun Hall. The exhibition is divided into three parts respectively: The history of The Chinese Imperial Examination System, The process of the Chinese Imperial Examination System, The Number One Scholar Zhuangyuan in Guangdong Province.

(Selected from the travel brochure of The Memorial Museum of Comrade Mao Zedong Sponsoring The Peasant Movement Institute)

The explanation is usually added as part of the text rather than being a footnote. By doing so, the information content and the length of the text would increase (Huang & Zhang, 2020, p. 92). In this example, both phrases and sentences are added to the tourist text as supplementary parts for foreign tourists to better understand the background relevant to Chinese culture.

In Example 2, the word “番禺学宫” is translated into “Canton Panyu Confusion School”. “学宫” is a typical culture-loaded word that appeared in the Western Zhou Dynasty, which refers to the place of learning mainly open to the children of the nobility. “学宫” now refers specifically to Confucius Temple usually set up by local governments in ancient China, and it is where ancient scholars studied traditional Confucian culture. If “学宫” is translated into “School”, its historical implication is dismissed. Therefore, adding the word “Confusion” precisely conveys the connotation of “学宫”. Another adding of the location word “Canton” to modified “番禺学宫” avoids confusing tourists with other Confusion Schools.

In addition, three complete sentences are added here in explanation of what the Imperial Examination was and how the Imperial Examination developed. Meanwhile, they also serve as a supplement to the following sentence which says that The Imperial Examination had a history of more than 1300 years. The Imperial Examination, namely “科举” in China, was one of the most important talent selecting systems in the history of China. The system is well-known to the Chinese but quite foreign to non-native tourists, thereby necessitating exhibiting The Chinese Imperial Examination Culture and the variational translation technique adding is used here. The application of VTT here has indeed been of great help for foreign tourists to break cultural barriers and understand Chinese culture, thus enjoying a better tourist experience. Another culture-loaded word “状元” is translated into “Number One Scholar Zhuangyuan”. The translation explains the meaning by referring to the *New English-Chinese dictionary* and keeps its Chinese pronunciation Zhuangyuan.

### 3.2 Deleting ( $a < b$ )

The way of deleting information unwanted to the target readers is deleting. In the variation translation, translators will tell what is unwanted for the target readers from the original texts and retain information that tallies highly with readers' demands. The deleting unit can be a word, a phrase, a sentence, or a paragraph. Huang (2002a) suggested that any information that directly or indirectly conforms to the needs of readers to a high degree can be retained, and any information that deviates from it or has little relationship can be discarded (pp. 113-115). By doing so, better communication can be achieved.

#### 3.2.1 Deleting for Prominent Information

From the perspective of the reality of translation, need is the initial driving force of translation activities. The goal of deletion is to get the most out of the smaller pieces and make the most of the useful information (Huang, 2002a, p. 114).

##### Translation Example 3.

Source text: 亚历山大·义华业墓碑文：亚历山大·义华业（1790-1847），美国第一任驻华公使。1847年在广州病逝，葬于黄埔岛外国人公墓。墓地是中美早期交往的重要见证。

Target text: The tombstone of Alexand Hiss Everett, who was the first U.S. minister to China.

(Selected from the exhibition of Whampoa Military Academy Memorial)

##### Translation Example 4.

Source text: 詹天佑（1861-1919）：原籍安徽婺源（今属江西），中国首批赴美学童之一，耶鲁大学土木工程系毕业，有“中国铁路之父”之称。1884年至1888年受张之洞之邀任广东实学馆（后改为广东水陆师学堂）英文教习。

Target text: Zhan Tianyou(1861-1919): An English teacher at the Guangdong Real Learning Academy.

(Selected from the exhibition of Whampoa Military Academy Memorial)

The description of honorary titles and awards is a unique expression with Chinese characteristics, which is very common in the introduction of red tourist attractions (Zhang, 2021). However, given consideration to foreigners' reading mentality and requirements for the layout of the scenic spot introduction column, both Zhang (2021) and Huang (2002a) suggested deleting such information properly to remain the appealing tourist text.

In Example 3, the translated introduction of Alexand Hiss Everett keeps only one piece of the information-his title "the first U.S. minister to China" and deleted other details in the Chinese text that he was dead in Guangzhou in 1847 and he was buried in a foreigners' cemetery in Huangpu, a very significant cemetery as the manifestation of Sino-us relationships. From the perspective of foreign tourists, these deleted details were of little help and distract their attention. In example 4, the Chinese version of Zhan Tianyou's introduction tells that he was known as "the Father of China's Railway". The translator has taken this fact as irrelevant to the theme of the development of the Whampoa Military Academy Memorial and thus deleted it in the translation. Such deletion is questionable and Zhan's being the Father of China's Railway reveals the influential power of the faculty of Guangdong Real Learning Academy as well as unveiling him as a household name in China. Thus the seemingly irrelevant information accentuates the prominence of Zhan Tianyou in the eyes of foreign tourists.

### 3.2.2 Deleting for Political Information

From the superstructure level, any translation is to serve the national politics and economy (Huang, 2002a, p. 7), therefore translators generally have a certain sense of cultural input or cultural output when translating. For example, several translations of *Moment in Peking* published in Japan made substantial modifications to the facts and circumstances of China's resistance to Japanese aggression. The discussion of the Japanese editions of *Moment in Peking* here aims at examining the sensitivity of Japanese translators to cultural exchanges.

#### Translation Example 5.

Source text: 国民党军队重占广州后, 开始对起义军民进行血腥大屠杀。从 13 日至 19 日, 5700 多名革命士兵和革命群众遭到杀害, 其中 200 多名共产党员牺牲。白云山下、珠江河畔、大街小巷, 尸骸遍地, 血流成河, 全市笼罩在一片白色恐怖之中。

Target text: After re-occupying Guangzhou, the Kuomintang army began to carry out massacres against the rebels. From 13<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup>, more than 5700 revolutionary soldiers and revolutionaries were killed, including more than 200 Communist Party members. The city was enveloped in white terror.

(Selected from the exhibition of the Guangzhou Uprising Memorial Hall)

In example 5, the Chinese text depicts the blood and carnage in detail: dead bodies were found everywhere from "Under the Baiyun Mountain," by the Pearl River" to "all the streets and lanes of the city". All these appalling descriptions were abridged in the translation. The translator downplays the emotional touch by delivering a condensed version in one single sentence that "the city was enveloped in white terror".

#### Translation Example 6.

Source text: 在国民党广东当局绝对优势兵力的疯狂反扑下, 轰轰烈烈的广州起义最终失败了。为保存和积蓄革命力量, 起义主要领导和部分起义者秘密转移到香港, 在中共中央和中共广东省委的领导下, 陆续开赴各地, 在各条战线上进行不屈不挠的革命斗争。在广州撤出的起义军主力 1000 多人, 在花县改编为工农红军第四军, 奔赴海陆丰, 会和红二师和彭湃领导的海陆丰农军继续战斗; 部分起义者转移到广西, 参加了左右江起义; 另一部分起义军前往韶关与南昌起义军会合, 在朱德的带领下上了井冈山, 走上了农村包围城市的土地革命道路。

Target text: The Guangzhou Uprising was quelled, under the all-out counterattack of the Kuomintang authority in Guangzhou. In order to preserve and accumulate the revolution force and power, key leaders and some rebels in the uprising fled to Hong Kong and later returned back to the battle lines across the country to continue their dauntless fights under the leadership of the Central and the Guangdong Committee of the CPC.

(Selected from the exhibition of the Guangzhou Uprising Memorial Hall)

In an article, the content should be divided into primary and secondary ones. Appropriate deletion of secondary information can make cultural communication smoother. At the same time, under the ideology of peacetime, imperialism, with its obvious military and political components, can be slightly weakened to describe war objectively (Peng, 2017).

In Example 6, the underlined Chinese version lists many place names including "Hailufeng", "Jiangxi Province", and "Jinggang Mountain" where the revolutions continued, the names of the following uprisings “左、右江起义” and land revolution of encircling the cities from the rural areas “农村包围城市的土地革命道路”. All this information is considered secondary and therefore left out in the translation. Keeping these unfamiliar places and culture-loaded terms is of little help but baffling for foreign tourists to understand the red spirit of the revolutionaries.

### 3.3 Narrating ( $a \approx b$ )

The way of translating an original work by changing the form, deleting the details, and keeping the main idea is narrating. In other words, narrating is a kind of paraphrasing. By narrating, what the translators concentrate on are the main ideas rather than the form of the original work. Generally speaking, narrating includes deleting and editing that involve variational translation techniques of which key steps are selection, arrangement and translation to convey contents in a clearer, more logical, and more impressive way.

#### Translation Example 7.

Source text: 1924年第一次国共合作实现后，反帝反封建的革命浪潮迅速席卷南粤大地。然而，正当革命运动迅速发展之际，蒋介石和汪精卫于1927年相继发动反共政变，大规模捕杀共产党员和革命群众，国共合作破裂，大革命的中心广州，一时间笼罩在血雨腥风之中。

Target text: The revolutionary spirit of Anti-Imperialism and Anti-Feudalism swept Guangdong province after the First Kuomintang-Communist Cooperation. However, the Cooperation broke down after Chiang Kai-shek and Wang Jingwei Started their respective Anti-Communist Coups in 1927.

(Selected from the exhibition of the Guangzhou Uprising Memorial Hall)

#### Translation Example 8.

Source text: 国民革命军在广州东较场举行北伐誓师大会：为打倒军阀，统一中国，1926年7月9日，在中国共产党的支持和推动下，国民革命军在广州举行誓师大会，正式出师北伐。

Target text: On July 9<sup>th</sup>, 1926, the National Government of Guangzhou started the Northern Expedition. The picture shows the Launching Ceremony for the Northern Expedition.

(Selected from the exhibition of the Guangzhou Uprising Memorial Hall)

The original text of Example 7 explains the historical background of the rapid development of the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal tide and then depicts the catastrophe in Guangzhou when the cooperation between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party broke up after the outbreak of the anti-communist coup. In the English version, the translator purposefully deletes details such as the historical background and retells the main content of this paper: the development and breakdown of the First Kuomintang-Communist Cooperation. Similarly, the original text of Example 8 gives some details of the Northern Expedition Congress while what is left in the translated version is the Launching Ceremony for the Northern Expedition. If Example 8 employs Complete Translation, the English version should be as such: “The National Revolutionary Army held the Northern Expedition Launching Ceremony in Guangzhou East field. In order to overthrow warlords and unify China, on July 9, 1926, with the support and promotion of the Communist Party of China, the Kuomintang army held its Launching Ceremony in Guangzhou and formally set out for the northern expedition”. More specific and detailed though, the complete translation version is far from being logical and clear.

### 3.4 Integrating ( $a \in b$ )

The way of combing two or more similar or logical parts, like a sentence, a paragraph, a chapter, etc., of the original work during translation is integrating.

#### Translation Example 9.

Source text:

1927年，蒋介石、汪精卫相继发动反共政变，大革命遭到惨重失败。为挽救革命，反击国民党反动派的血腥屠杀，中国共产党继南昌起义、秋收起义后，又发动和领导了城市工农兵联合起义——广州起义。

1927年12月11日，广州起义爆发。起义公开打出“工农红军”的旗号，建立了工农民主政权——广州苏维埃政府，在华南的政治、经济、文化中心树起了一面鲜红的旗帜，被誉为“东方的巴黎公社”。

广州起义终因敌我力量悬殊而失败，但它和南昌起义、秋收起义一起，成为中国共产党独立领导革命战争和创建人民军队的伟大开端，在中国共产党和人民军队的发展史上占有重要地位。

Target text:

In 1927, Chiang Kai-shek and Wang Jingwei started their respective anti-Communist coups, and the Great Revolution encountered a severe failure. To salvage the revolution, the Communist Party planned another revolt-Guangzhou Uprising-after the Nanchang Uprising and the Autumn Harvest Uprising. Named “Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army”, a Worker’s, Peasants’ and Soldiers’ Democratic Regime-Guangzhou Soviet Government was established. It had played an important role in Guangzhou, the political, economic, and cultural center in South China, and was later the “Paris Commune of the East”.

Although the Guangzhou Uprising suffered defeat due to the great disparity of strength between the two parties, it, along with Nanchang Uprising and Autumn Harvest Uprising, marked the beginning of the Communist Party’s independent leadership of revolutions and establishment of the People’s Army and played an important role in the history of the development of Communist Party and the People’s Army.

(Selected from the exhibition of the Guangzhou Uprising Memorial Hall)

Huang Zhonglian and Zhang Yongzhong (2020, p. 100) suggested that integrating should be used when the structure of the original text is not proper, like separating one paragraph into two. In the original text of Example 9, the foreword of the exhibition of the Guangzhou Uprising Memorial Hall is divided into three paragraphs. The first paragraph reveals the historical background of the Guangzhou uprising, the second paragraph depicts the outbreak and development of the Guangzhou Uprising, and the third paragraph unveils the historic significance of the Guangzhou Uprising. In the translated version the three paragraphs are condensed into two: the integrating technique is employed in merging the first two paragraphs into one. Such integration makes sense in that both paragraphs are pertinent to the history of the Guangzhou Uprising while the third paragraph shifts into the historic significance of the event, hence the need for separation from the first two paragraphs.

#### 4. Conclusion

The paper conducts an analysis of the English translated tourist texts of the six of Guangzhou's red tourist attractions which are listed on the “*List of 100 National CPC-related Tourist Attractions and Scenic Spots (2016)*” published in December 2016 from the perspective of VTT, based on the seven variational translation techniques, especially adding, deleting, narrating and integrating. The aim is to encourage further study on the English translation of the red tourist attractions not only in Guangzhou but entire China. As red-themed tourism plays an increasing role in cross-cultural communication, hence the need for quality translation of the tourist texts.

Findings of the translations of red tourist attractions do not seem optimistic. Bilingual or multilingual introductions are not usually accessible to foreign visitors. Yet among the bilingual introductions, complete translation dominates. In this paper, the complete translation is examined in handling red-themed tourist texts as compared with the variation translation, and it is proven through case analyses that the variation translation stands out: the flexibility of the variation translation better fits in with the textual features and political purposes of the red-themed introductions.

To conclude, wide and in-depth research on translating red tourist attractions from the perspective of the VTT is required for China to “tell compelling Chinese stories accurately and in a fantastic way”.

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## On Translating Introductions of Shameen Attractions Based on Textual Information Types from the Perspective of Communication

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### Abstract

Communication researches how people communicate social information by signals. Since tourism translation is of significance for foreign-oriented publicity, it is reasonable to conduct research on tourism translation from the perspective of Communication. Generally, when translating introductions of tourist attractions, to better meet foreign tourists' expectations of different Textual Information Types that are in line with the Theme-Oriented Information-Highlighting Principle, it is suggested that translators not only remove redundancy from the source text by strategies like omission and condensation, but also reduce its noise combining amplification, omission, conversion, restructuring and so forth on account of differences between reading habits as well as the context of Chinese and Western culture; and particularly, strategies like literal translation, transliteration, free translation, and note, should be applied to translating cultural information according to foreign tourists' expected feedback.

**Keywords:** tourism translation, Textual Information Types (TIT), Communication, Shameen

### 1. Introduction

Tourism translation plays an influential role in foreign-oriented publicity and even international communication. However, the English translations of some tourist introductions in Guangzhou are of discouraging quality due to various mistakes, and need to be studied in that many of them fail to precisely convey the original Chinese texts or have received unsatisfactory response from foreign tourists. And to make tourism translation better function as a way of foreign-oriented publicity, it is reasonable to research it by applying Communication theory.

This paper intends to examine the English-translated introductions of tourist attractions from the perspective of Communication theory based on the case analysis of Shameen, a tourist attraction in Guangzhou. Merits and problems of the translated introduction of Shameen have been explored based on Textual Information Types in line with Theme-Oriented Information-Highlighting Principle. Finally, an attempt has been made to summarize the translation strategies applicable to different purposes of information processing as well as to different TITs.

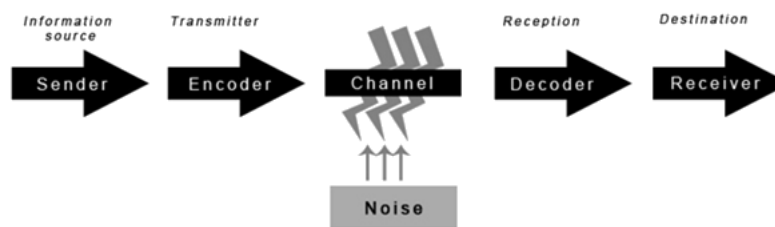
### 2. Applicability of Communication Theory to Tourism Translation of Shameen

If foreign tourists want to get the English introductions of Shameen attractions, they need to scan the QR code at the bottom of the sign of the attraction to enter the official website but not open to comments. As such, the translated texts serve as a static, one-way communication process, and matches the Shannon-Weaver's Model of Communication as shown in Fig. 1.

In this model, Shannon and Weaver unprecedentedly brought forward the idea of "noise", which appertains to anything that clings to communication contents but is undesired by the sender in the process of conversion or acceptance of information. There are two kinds of noise: one generates from inside the information source, and the other one comes from outside the source (Hu, 2017, p.40). For Shameen, "noises" embody one that is generated from the attraction itself, for example, a load of architecture vocabulary in the text, which might make the introductions elusive. And the other one comes from external factors, such as foreigners' stereotypes of China. These noises could easily fuzz communication contents and hinder the

communication process. The receiver may not receive all the messages quite precisely – the expected communication effect will be weakened; even worse, the receivers' misconstruction could be caused (n.d.).

Redundancy conduces to reducing noise and by definition, is the repeated part of information. It doesn't threaten the integrity of information, but helps eliminate the uncertainty of and correct the information, benefiting audiences' perceiving information (Hu, 2017, p.41-42). As for Shameen, for instance, introductions of many attractions in there list quite detailed historical events of the destination, trying to impress tourists with the historical significance of each attraction. Descriptions of historical events in these introductions take nearly two thirds of all the contents, while much information seems trivial in the eyes of visitors as in the case of making a long name list of every U.S. consul general to Guangzhou, China. Such redundancy decreases the information amount that the introduction is capable to carry, and weakens the economical delivery of information, turning out to distance tourists from enjoying their visits.



SHANNON-WEAVER'S MODEL OF COMMUNICATION

Figure 1. Shannon-Weaver's Model of Communication (n.d.)

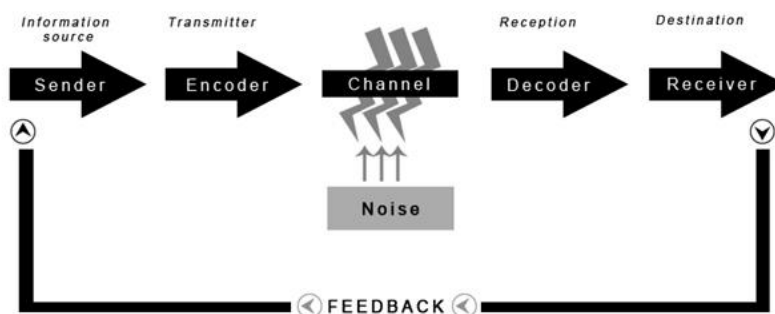
Generally speaking, in the process of communication, to ensure the communication effect, the translator is expected to navigate through noise, redundancy, and information amount. It is advisable that the translator reduces as much noise as possible with the least redundancy, and tries his best to accurately transfer messages through the limited amount of information. Certain criteria help manage the relationship. In the first place, response of the "audience" is a crucial element for evaluating the communication effect. In real life, the flow of information is not one-way. It is unwise for the sender to bombard their target audiences with contents merely on their behalf like what the Silver Bullet Theory suggests. Communication emphasizes more on the connotation of "together", "both sides" and "exchanging" (Hu, 2017, p.20). Translating introductions of attractions, if regarded as a communication process, should not be analyzed completely in accord with the original Shannon-Weaver's Model. The destination of communication contents is the audience, and the final purpose for communication is the identification or much further, the support from the audience. The audience's reaction is rightly a key element for evaluating the communication effect.

"Audience" is the collective name of all kinds of information receivers. They select the information that meets their cognition of reality consciously, manifesting obvious bias in their actions. During the process of communication, the audience would react to information sent by the sender, which is exactly "feedback". The translator, sending the information of the translated introductions, should likewise take readers' demands and reactions into account and take actions to direct their choices of information to a favorable one (Hu, 2017, p.43+226-228). A perfection of Shannon-Weaver's Model is like:

Two considerations are applicable to analyzing feedback. First is the value of information. There is a universal dislike for tedious, repeated, and intricate content among visitors from different cultures. The introduction of attractions, as a channel for information flow, is of limited capacity of information – the physical space for carrying information is limited. To maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of communication, the translator must analyze the value of each TIT and decide on how to process those (Lyv & Pan, 2020). To this end, Zeng once proposed the Economical Conciseness Principle for foreign-oriented publicity translation: firstly, the translator conveys as much information as possible with as few words as possible; secondly, the audience be able to get the clearest and most fluent (as opposed to lengthy and cumbersome) information at the lowest cost (the time and effort made to process information) (2005b).

The second is the audience's cultural background. The audience's bias for selecting information, or "selective behavior", is closely connected with their rebelliousness. For tourism translation, western audiences may ignore or refute information that threatens their cognition, or even derogate the source of the information (Hu, 2017, p. 235). Tourism translation serve as a window for foreign audiences to understand China in the truest way. Therefore, when translating, it is suggested that the

translator endeavor to clear up misunderstandings caused by different cultures and ways of thinking, to increase the readability and acceptability of the translation, and to achieve the foreign-oriented publicity goal as well as the expected communication effect (Yang, 2010).



SHANNON-WEAVER'S MODEL OF COMMUNICATION

Figure 2. Shannon-Weaver's Model of Communication (n.d.)

It is worth noticing that, when processing information, the translator needs to not only “remove redundancy” from the text, but also “reduce noise” of the text – but both of which are not necessarily deleting information; due to the differences between Chinese and Western cultures, and the knowledge gap between Chinese people and foreign tourists, sometimes the translator may have to add information that the original text had failed to deliver. At the same time, such awareness of audience's rebelliousness never amounts to blindly wooing the audience. Both Chinese cultural influence and foreigners' interests in Chinese culture continue to grow, discerning the “noise” and “redundancy” poses a much bigger challenge to the translator. The international status of the country should be taken into account, so as to meet the demands for international cultural communication of a country.

### 3. On Translating Introductions of Attractions in Shameen, Guangzhou Based on TITs

At present, the only theory that exactly for tourism translation is the Theme-Oriented Information-Highlighting Principle proposed by Professor Zeng Lisha. There is not a specialized system for tourism translation theory. In line with this Principle, TIT qualitatively summarizes the nature, function, characteristics, and value of different theme-bound tourist information, categories including factual information, descriptive information, evaluative and appraisal information, cultural information, vocative information, aesthetic information, stylistic information, and information of tips (2005a).

Shameen is a distinctive architectural complex that embodies European style and reflects Chinese modern history about the concession. All the introductions of attractions in Shameen come in 5 TITs: factual information type, descriptive information type, evaluative and appraisal information type, cultural information type, and stylistic information type. Each will be analyzed with examples.

#### 3.1 Factual Information Type

Factual information makes up the largest part of most tourism profiles and provides readers with basic knowledge of the tourist attraction (Luo, 2009, p.32). This TIT is the most objective among all nine textual information types of the theory and carries the largest amount of information. Nevertheless, although factual information is objective, a smart translator should still cautiously discern the redundant information from all the objective facts to maximize the efficiency of communication. How to remove redundancy as well as reduce the noise of these two kinds of information depends on both the target audience's cognitive habit and, things like national condition, nation history, and cultural characteristics of a country where the attractions are in.

Generally, there are two subtypes of factual information: one about the present and the other about the past. Factual information about the present mainly introduces the current situation of the destination; common examples include a description of address, area, and other basic information about the destination (Zeng, 2005a). The detailed address of the destination is included in all of the introductions. Here is an example; parts to be analyzed are highlighted in bold and underlined (similarly hereinafter):

Translation Example 1



Source text: 沙面大街印度人住宅旧址，为广州沙面建筑群的组成部分，位于广州市荔湾区沙面街翠洲社区沙面大街16、18、20号（沙面大街与沙面一街交界的西北转角处）。

Source text Romanized: Shāmi àn d' àiē y òndùr án zh òzh á ji ùzhǐ, w é guǎngzhōu shāmi àn ji ànzh ùqún de zúch éng b ùf àn, w àyú guǎngzhōu sh ìl ìwān qū shāmi àn jiē cu zhōu sh àqū shāmi àn d' àiē 16, 18, 20 h ào (shāmi àn d' àiē yǔ shāmi àn yījiē jiāoji ède xībēi zhuǎnjiǎo chù).

Target text: The Site of Indian Residence is a part of Guangzhou Shamian architectural complex. It is located at No. 16, 18 and 20 Shamian Avenue, Liwan District, Guangzhou.

(Excerpted from the introduction of the Site of the Residence of India Nationals, No. 16, 18, 20 Shameen Street)

The only way for foreign tourists to read the English introductions of Shameen attractions is by heading for Shameen in person, and then scan the QR code at the bottom of the sign of each attraction for access to the corresponding website. That is, the tourists must be in Shameen, Guangzhou if they have scanned the QR code and seen the website. Therefore, the fact that site of the Residence of Indian Nationals “is a part of Guangzhou Shamian architectural complex” is redundant and leads to inefficient delivery of information.

Information value can be evaluated by referring to parallel text in the target language (Lyv & Pan, 2020). As China covers vast stretches of land, to better reign over the whole country, rulers in the ancient time divide the country into many districts with several levels, and the way of administration division established in the Yuan Dynasty is still in use today. A complete description of address in China usually includes information of province, city, district, community, road, and number, while that of Western countries often presents name of city, road, and number only. For example, the British address is written in forms like “2 Drury Way, North Circular Road, London NW10 0TH”, or for American one it goes like “490 2nd Street, Suite 300, San Francisco, California 94107”. Western people do not use “district” to describe address; they might even be perplexed by the word “district” since it means “an area of a town or country, especially one that has particular features<sup>2</sup>.” It would be better to omit the description of “Liwan District”. And, the original translator already removed the redundant “沙面街翠洲社区”.

Moreover, the original author might have a strong willingness to make tourists learn thoroughly about the specific location of the site, thus expressly annotated that the site locates at “沙面大街与沙面一街交界的西北转角处” in brackets. But actually, foreign tourists are not scholars who specialize in Shameen architectural complex, or residents who settle in Shameen. It is of no use for them to know such detailed address information. It is laudable that the redundant parts of “（沙面大街与沙面一街交界的西北转角处）” have already been deleted in the original translation.

Apart from that, the diction for describing the address here also needs attention. Although there is no such convention in the United Kingdom, people in the United States use “avenue” for roads that run north-south and “street” for east-west ones. Since “沙面大街” runs east-west, it would be better to use “Street” instead of “Avenue” here in case of potential noise.

To summarize, an optimized translation should be like this:

Translation Example 1 (Revised Version)

Target text: The Site of the Indian Residence is located at No. 16, 18, and 20 Shameen Street, Guangzhou.

(Excerpted from the introduction of the Site of the Residence of India Nationals, No. 16, 18, 20 Shameen Street)

In addition, caused by different thinking modes of language, when translating a description of an area, redundancy can easily be created. An example is:

Translation Example 2

Source text: 面积约为0.39平方公里，曾是珠江“西十公里”的起点、老广州城的商业文化中心。

Source text Romanized: Mí ànjī yüē w é 0.39 p íngfāng gōnglǐ, c éng sh ìzhūjiāng “xī shí gōnglǐ” de qǐdiǎn, lǎo guǎngzhōu ch éng de shāngy èw ànhu àzhōngxīn.

Target text: Covering an area of about 0.39 square kilometers, it used to be the starting point of the “West 10 Kilometers” of the Pearl River landscape belt as well as the commercial and cultural center of the old Guangzhou city.

(Excerpted from the overall introduction of Shameen)

<sup>2</sup> Oxford University Press. (2014). District. In *Oxford English Dictionary* (8th ed., p.594).

Chinese expression is far different from that of English, and this can easily lead to redundancy and noise in translation. Influenced by the thinking mode of the mother tongue, it is uneasy for the translator to recognize that (Pinkham, 2000). Hence translators have to pay much effort to learn and get used to the expression of the target language. Laudably, the translator converted “面积约为” into “covering an area of” to meet the reading habit of foreign tourists. Still, this translation embodies a typical Chinese thinking mode. The word “cover” means “to spread over the area mentioned<sup>3</sup>.” That is, “area” is the default object of “cover”; the word “cover” involves the meaning of “area” already. It would be better to omit the redundant “an area of”.

#### Translation Example 2 (Revised Version)

Target text: Covering about 0.39 square kilometers, it used to be the starting point of the “West Ten Kilometers” of the 30-kilometer Pearl River landscape belt as well as the commercial and cultural center of old Guangzhou.

(Excerpted from the overall introduction of Shameen)

Factual information about the past is for historical events related to the destination as well as the influence of these events (Zeng, 2005a). Examples include the history of the attraction, stories of celebrities who are in connection with the destination, or some other historical events that are indirectly related to the destination. Often, the original author will introduce some experiences of celebrities related to the attraction, aiming at tourists to obtain a deeper understanding of the destination. Still, if not handled properly, the noise would easily generate, or the passage might be sprinkled with redundant information that does not have a strong connection with the destination, like the following example:

#### Translation Example 3

Source text: 1847 年，法国传教士牧若瑟违反清政府关于西方传教士布道的规定，潜入山西。1854 年，法国传教士孟振生潜入直隶，都被当地官府查获，解送广州法国领事馆。

Source text Romanized: 1847 ni ńn, fǎgu ó chu ńji ńsh ìM ù Ru ńs è w ńfǎn qīng zh ńngfǔ guānyú xīfāng chu ńji ńsh ì b ùd ń de guīd ńg, qì ńr ù shānxī. 1854 ni ńn, fǎgu ó chu ńji ńsh ìM ńg Zh ńshēng qì ńr ù zh ì ì dōu b ń dāngd ì guānfǔ ch ńhu ń, jiěs ńng guāngzhōu fǎgu ó lǐngsh ńguǎn.

Target text: In 1847, the French missionary, Joseph Pastor, broke into Shanxi Province in violation of the Qing government’s provisions on the preaching of Western missionaries. In 1854, the French missionary Meng Zhensheng sneaked into Zhili and was seized by the local government and sent to the French Consulate in Guangzhou.

(Excerpted from the introduction of the Site of the French Missionary Building, No. 42 South Shameen Street)

At the first glance, it seems that the names of the French missionaries have some connection to “the French Missionary Building”, while it does not make sense. There is no information about whether these two persons were once worked in this French Missionary Building or they were finally sent here after being arrested, and the lack of information generates noise – tourists might have no idea what the connection between the two missionaries and the building is after reading these two sentences. The translator should omit the two sentences, or search and add relevant information for clarifying the connection to reduce the noise.

Last but not least, Shameen had been the British-French Concession for nearly 90 years and more than ten countries used to set their consulates here. Shameen is, therefore, of significance in reflecting Chinese modern history about concession, and it would be laudable that relevant content is emphasized instead of being deleted as redundancy in translation.

### 3.2 Descriptive Information Type

Descriptive information describes attributes or qualities with descriptive expressions to help readers better understand the characteristics of the factual information. This TIT combines both subjectivity and objectivity, because of which there might be some exaggeration in the source text. The translator should discriminate the textual information that has been exaggerated from the source text (Luo, 2009, p.32).

Exclusively, Chinese features four-character idioms. Using four-character idioms can make the text much tidier in rhythm and more flowery in language. It also strengthens the power and infectiousness of the text. As it is unique to Chinese, if being fully translated, problems including poor logic and excessive exaggeration could be caused, both of which create redundancy and generate noises, thus reducing the readability of the text.

<sup>3</sup> Oxford University Press. (2014). Cover. In *Oxford English Dictionary* (8th ed., p.470).

For introductions of Shameen attractions, descriptive information is mostly seen in the depiction of building characteristics. For example:

#### Translation Example 4

Source text: 正立面两层均为柱廊式，柱廊线脚简洁明快，整体建筑外观朴素清雅，与建筑周边的绿树、小花园结合，给人一种宁静淡雅之感。

Source text Romanized: Zhèng lì miǎn liǎng céng jūn wéi zhù lǎng shì zhù lǎng xiànjǎo jiǎnjiémínghuā, zhěngtǐ jì ànzhè wǔ àguān pǔsù qīngyǎ, yǔ jì ànzhè zhōubiān de lǜshù, xiǎo huā yuán jiéhé, gěi rén yízhǒng nínjìng dǎnyǎ zhī gǎn.

Target text: The front elevation is a corridor with pillars on both floors, and the corridor line foot is concise. The overall appearance of the building is simple and elegant, combined with the green trees and small gardens around the building, giving people a sense of quiet and elegant.

(Excerpted from the introduction of the Czech Consulate, No. 1 North Shameen Street)

“Elegant” means being well-designed, pleasing, and graceful in appearance or style when referring to a person or things<sup>45</sup>. It is obvious that this conflicts with the meaning of “simple”. Putting the two words together as coordination might lead to noise and bewilder foreign tourists. The diction here must be noticed: the conjunction “and” should be replaced for logical purpose.

Besides, “elegant” is not equivalent to the Chinese word “雅”, and it is also not the only meaning for “雅”. Reusing the same word “elegant” in one paragraph also creates redundancy. In the last phrase of the source text, the meaning of “淡雅” in “宁静淡雅” is similar to that of the previous “清雅” in “朴素清雅” in Chinese, and it would be better using another appropriate word to replace the repeated “elegant” in this paragraph when translating. The character “雅” has several aspects of meaning in Chinese; the original translator just misunderstood and failed to choose the correct one here. However it may be, there is one core connotation of “雅” – not being ordinary. As for how to extend it, the translator may refer to the context. In the last phrase, the source text emphasized the quiet and peaceful environment of places surrounding the building with the word “宁静”, intended to highlight the not being ordinary in such beauty. Therefore, the noun forms of adjectives likes “peaceful” can be used as a substitute for that of “elegant”.

Additionally, in Chinese, many words are symmetrical in structure for the passage being more energetic and infectious. But these words are often repetitive in meaning, like “绿树”. “Green tree” is not a popular expression in English-speaking countries. In a metropolis, most trees of the greenbelt are green; it is of no use to emphasize their color redundantly.

Together with free translation, amplification, conversion, and restructuring, the optimization should be like:

#### Translation Example 4 (Revised Version)

Target text: The façade of the first and second floors is designed in prostyle concisely. The overall appearance of the building is simple but elegant. The atmosphere of peace and quiet is made stand out by trees and small gardens around the building.

(Excerpted from the introduction of the Czech Consulate, No. 1 North Shameen Street)

### 3.3 Evaluative and Appraisal Information Type

This TIT evaluates the factual information and its features. It is usually suggestive and inductive. Translators should properly deal with those overloaded expressions with the original author’s strong comments attached to the factual information to avoid being influenced by the subjective ideas of the original authors (Luo, 2009, p.32-33).

Chinese culture is a high-context one. In a high-context culture, communication tends to be imprecise; people assume a relatively high level of shared knowledge with the individual they are communicating with. To better understand the meaning, people need to pay more attention to their physical surroundings (Mitchell, 2009, p.20-21). That is, in whatever written materials or face-to-face conversation, messages are less literally and less directly conveyed. People have to look for more information from the context of a message, action, or event. It is the same for C-E translators when translating.

#### Translation Example 5

<sup>4</sup> Collins Press. (January, 2022). Elegant. In *Collins COBUILD Advanced Learner's English Dictionary* (5th ed.). <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/zh/dictionary/english/elegant>

<sup>5</sup> Oxford University Press. (2014). Elegant. In *Oxford English Dictionary* (8th ed., p.661).

Source text: 沙面见证了广州近代史的变迁，留下了孙中山先生、周恩来总理等伟人的足迹，亲历了许多重大历史事件，成为我国近代史与租界史的缩影。

Source text Romanized: Shāmi àn jì ànzh èng le guǎngzhōu j ònd àshǐ de bì ànqiān, li úxì à le Sūn Zhōngshān xiānsheng, Zhōu Ènlái zōnglǐ dèng wēirén de zújì, qīnlì le xǔduō zh òngdà lìshǐ shìjiàn, chéngwéi wōguó jìndài shǐ yǔ zūjiè shǐ de suōyǐng.

Target text: Shāmiàn witnessed the changes of modern history of Guangzhou, left the footprints of Mr. Sun Yat-sen, Prime Minister Zhou Enlai and other great men, and experienced many major historical events, thus becoming the epitome of China's modern history and the history of concession.

(Excerpted from the overall introduction of Shameen)

First, exaggerations are usually used when Chinese people make comments. The reality might not be completely consistent with the literal meaning of those comments. It is not suggested that translate such comments word for word and sentence for sentence, but try to figure out the original author's idea and restructure the sentences so that unnecessary noise could be reduced. Both the first and the last sentences overstate the significance of the Shameen complex. The first sentence “见证了广州近代史的变迁” exalts that the Shameen complex witnessed the entire modern history of Guangzhou, and the last one “成为我国近代史与租界史的缩影” even likens it to the epitome of modern history (including the history of concession) of the whole country. Both sentences are biased towards the destination; diction here must be carefully treated when translating.

Second, problems of lacking logic appeared frequently in this example. Actually, “changes of history” cannot be witnessed; a place can only witness things like events, phenomena, and so forth. Also, “Shameen” is unable to walk or leave footprints, or experience things like human beings; human beings leave footprints in this architectural complex instead. Moreover, for the fourth sentence, a place cannot become an example of history in terms of logic and it is better to describe a period of history or a historical event as the “epitome of history”. Translators must pay special attention to these kinds of expressions, and try not to be influenced by the thinking mode of the mother tongue. For the problems above, diction, omission, and conversion are feasible approaches to reduce noise.

Third, as the original author wanted to stress the historical importance of the Shameen complex here, what giants did when they stayed here had better be clarified either – giants had been to many places and where they used to stay does not mean anything in most cases – if things giants did are of historical significance. But after investigation, few events about both Mr. Sun Yat-sen and Shameen are found. Considering that “许多重大历史事件” covers those small events, omitting these redundant descriptions would be better, like:

Translation Example 5 (Revised Version)

Target text: Having witnessed many historical events in the modern times of Guangzhou, the Shameen complex is of historical importance for modern China.

(Excerpted from the overall introduction of Shameen)

Since “见证了广州近代史的变迁” and “亲历了许多重大历史事件” are similar in meaning, condensation and restructuring are also used in the above optimization.

Additionally, it is common that Chinese texts would like to make conclusions that can make the theme of the passage more sublime and magnificent. These conclusions are often empty and excessively exaggerated. Here is a typical Chinese conclusion of passage:

Translation Example 6

Source text: 沙面，不仅是广州的沙面，更是中国的沙面、世界的沙面。

Source text Romanized: Shāmiàn, bùjīn shì guǎngzhōu de shāmiàn, gèng shì zhōngguó de shāmiàn, shìjiè de shāmiàn.

Target text: Shamian belongs not only to Guangzhou, but also to China and the whole world.

(Excerpted from the overall introduction of Shameen)

Although it cannot be denied that Shameen is of significance for the history of architecture, it is still exaggerated to describe Shameen as being of the significant meaning to the whole world, especially when compared with well-known tourist attractions like the Leaning Tower of Pisa or the Forbidden City. Descriptions should be downgraded when being translated to be moderate in the lower context of English and to avoid misunderstanding.

Also, the expression of the source text typically embodies the phraseology of Chinese. The original author could have tried to highlight the value of Shameen in specific aspects. But limited to the thinking mode of Chinese, he made the conclusion

sublime using the Chinese rhetoric of parallel structure, sacrificing details. The original translator was then regrettably misled by such means of expression and could do nothing but translate the source text word by word, failing to understand what the original author means.

To reduce the noise of this example, translators should try to figure out what the original author wanted to express actually, and then restructure the information by a large amount. From Chinese thinking mode, the meaning of Shameen to Guangzhou, China, and even the whole world could be connected with its being architectural complex, or covering a wider range, being cultural heritage. Clarification should be extended with conversion if necessary then; the reason why Shameen is meaningful can also be added and amplified as a transition. To summarize, an optimized translation can be:

Translation Example 6 (Revised Version)

Target text: Considering its distinct architectural characteristics and historical meaning, Shameen is a valuable cultural heritage for not only Guangzhou, but also China, and even the whole world.

(Excerpted from the overall introduction of Shameen)

### 3.4 Cultural Information Type

Cultural information introduces unique Chinese culture to help readers better understand China. This TIT can easily overload information, and the translator should carefully analyze foreign tourists' demand for learning about Chinese culture (Zeng, 2005a). When translating, it should be taken into consideration the exact meaning or reference of those culture-loaded words. To translate things unique to China, the translator can combine literal translation or transliteration and explanation, to better publicize Chinese culture (Lyv & Pan, 2020).

Usually, when translating tourism profiles, there is “non-equivalence at culture level” proposed by Christiane Nord, as cited by He & Tao (2010). The non-equivalence is more obvious in translating culture-loaded words. To overcome that, Zheng (2016) offered six strategies: transliteration, transliteration with notes, literal translation, literal translation with notes, the combination of transliteration and literal translation, and free translation. In the following of 3.4 Cultural Information Type, transliteration with notes and literal translation with notes will be mainly adopted for Chinese architectural terms.

Translation Example 7

Source text: 首层大厅宽5间，深4间，有后外廊。第二、三层沿街除楼梯间都设外廊，也有后廊。中间开天井并直通天面。楼梯设在东西入口，东梯只上二、三层，不能上屋顶；西梯不能进首层，但可上二、三层和屋顶。

Source text Romanized: Shǒucéng dàtīng kuān 5 jiān, shēn 4 jiān, yǒu hòu wài láng. Dì èr, sān céng yánjiē chú lóutī jiān dōu shè wài láng, yě yǒu hòu láng. Zhōngjiān kāi tiānjīng bìng zhítōng tiān miàn. Lóutī shè zài dōngxī rùkǒu, dōng tī zhǐ shàng èr, sān céng, bùnéng shàng wūdǐng; xī tī bùnéng jìn shǒucéng, dàn kě shàng èr, sān céng hé wūdǐng.

Target text: The first-floor hall is 5 wide and 4 deep. There are second floors and third floors along the street, except for staircases, with external corridors and back corridors. The stair case is located at the entrance to the east and west. The East staircase only goes up to the second and third floors. It cannot go up to the roof. The West staircase cannot go into the first floor, but it can go up to the second, third and roof.

(Excerpted from the introduction of the former Administration Bureau of Broadcasting of the Nationalist Government, No. 73 North Shameen Street)

“开间”和“进深” are two concepts unique to Chinese traditional architecture. In a room, “开间” is the width of the side parallel to the door, and “进深” refers to the length of the side perpendicular to the door. According to the weights and measures of the Qing Dynasty, for “明间”, or, the main room of a building, one *jian* equals 6 meters, while those for “次间” and “梢间”, or room next to and room furthest away from the main one are shorter. There is no such corresponding architectural term in English, and translators commonly metricate this kind of measurement unit unique to Chinese culture, or foreign tourists would fail to understand them. Still, apart from converting the first sentence into “the first-floor hall is about 30 meters wide and 24 meters long,” the translator may also transliterate and annotate the two “间” as Zheng suggested, but the text can be much longer. To reduce noise, since Shameen is an architecture complex, and, more decisively, since “间” is a concept of Chinese traditional architecture, applying transliteration to “间” with a note helps highlight the characteristics of Eclecticism of this building, contributing to foreign tourists learning about Chinese traditional architecture. As for the note, it would be better to use both an annotation as well as a footnote, which can make the main body of the target text tidier and more concise.

Similarly, “有后外廊” and “中间开天井并直通天面”, not having been translated in the original translation though, well emphasize the characteristic of Eclecticism that it successfully blends Chinese and Western architectural styles, hence are recommended to be translated. And to translate the latter one, the translator has to first deal with the culture-loaded word “天井” – similarly to “间”, transliteration with notes (footnote here also) may suit. As courtyard means “an open space that is partly or completely surrounded by buildings and is usually part of a castle, a large house, etc.,” “天井” can be a small courtyard within a house that is surrounded by rooms, or rooms and wall sometimes. In addition, as *tianjing* itself has never had a roof, translation for “并直通天面” can be omitted in the target text, and “中间” could be amplified to provide audiences with a clearer image.

In addition, as tourists are not allowed to go into the building, foreign tourists do not have to learn about such full details as to where the East staircase and West staircase respectively go up. The last three sentences do not help stress the Eclecticism but create redundancy and are better to be deleted, like:

Translation Example 7 (Revised Version)

Target text: The hall on the first floor is about 5 jian (30 meters) in width and 4 jian (24 meters) in length with corridors outside. There are also external corridors along the street on both the second and the third floors, except for the side the staircase is on. Surrounded by the corridors and rooms, there is a *tianjing*\* on the second floor. The staircases are located near the entrance to the east and the one to the west.

\*Note: ① *Jian*: a unit of length unique to Chinese ancient architecture; one *jian* equals six meters referring to the weights and measures of the Qing Dynasty. ② *Tianjing*: a small courtyard within a house that is surrounded by rooms, or rooms and walls sometimes; one house may contain one or more *tianjings*.

(Excerpted from the introduction of the former Administration Bureau of Broadcasting  
of the Nationalist Government, No. 73 North Shameen Street)

In addition to Chinese architectural terms, *Fengshui* terms also characterize introductions of attractions in Shameen. First of all, *Fengshui* itself, a large proportion of whose ideas are at variance with materialism and Marxism, is inconsistent with Chinese social ideology. When dealing with issues – including translation ones – relevant to that, we have to differentiate the idealistic ideas and remove relevant descriptions from the text. To carry forward the positive part of such a culture, notes can be added to explain the reason why some ideas make sense or work. For Shameen, *Fengshui* terms appeared in almost every piece of the introduction, for instance:

Translation Example 8

Source text: 楼高四层，坐北朝南，平顶。

Source text Romanized: Lóu gāo sì céng, zuò běi cháo nán, píng dǐng.

Target text: The building is four stories high, sitting in the north and facing the south, with a flat roof.

(Excerpted from the introduction of the former Administration Bureau of Broadcasting  
of the Nationalist Government, No. 73 North Shameen Street)

“坐北朝南”, or facing south, is a principle of house building following Chinese *Fengshui*. This is because most buildings in ancient China are low in height, few of which being with big trees, tall buildings, or high mountains surrounding. And, much of Chinese territory, especially in ancient times, is on the north of the Tropic of Cancer (23°26' N) – that is, for those regions, sunshine goes into houses from the south side. Consequently, a majority of house buildings in ancient China face the south to obtain better lighting, and at the same time, to take shelter from the north wind and keep the house warm.

*Fengshui* terms like “坐北朝南” “坐南朝北” can usually be seen in introductions to traditional house buildings in China. Really, in most cases, the “坐北朝南” can make domestic tourists understand the good location of a building, especially residential ones. Considering that foreign tourists are not familiar with Chinese *Fengshui*, when translating “坐北朝南”, the translator may add notes or annotations to explain its origin, meaning, and effect.

Translation Example 8 (Revised Version)

Target text: Facing south\*, the four-storied building has a flat roof.

\*Note: “facing south” is a Chinese *Fengshui* principle of house building, aiming at good lighting and keeping warm since much land of China locates on the north of 23°26' N; although Shameen locates at 23°10' N, “facing south” is still helpful for lighting in most seasons; and being in the Subtropics, Shameen possesses a warm climate already.

(Excerpted from the introduction of the former Administration Bureau of Broadcasting  
of the Nationalist Government, No. 73 North Shameen Street)

Except for “坐北朝南”, the rest of this kind of description is better to be omitted, since locations like “坐南朝北”, “坐东朝西” and “坐西朝东” are true of no use to lighting or keeping warm or other else but cause noise.

The imperial era name originates from ancient China and can be also seen in ancient North Korea, ancient Vietnam, ancient Mongolia, and modern Japan. Since the Revolution of 1911, or the Xinhai Revolution, the monarchy being overthrown, imperial era name had been abolished in China. However, being a special and unique way of numbering years, it would be better not to omit the main part of the Chinese imperial era name, for reducing noise so that foreign tourists can learn more about Chinese culture. For example:

Translation Example 9

Source text: ……建于清同治四年（1865），重建于1920年。

Source text Romanized: ... Jiàn yú qīng tóngzhì sì nián (1865), chóngjiàn yú 1920 nián.

Target text: The building was first built in **1865** and rebuilt in 1920.

(Excerpted from the introduction of the Site of HSBC, No. 54 Shameen Street)

To optimize, the literal translation and annotation should be like:

Translation Example 9 (Revised Version)

Target text: The building was first built in the 4th year of Emperor Tongzhi's reign in the Qing Dynasty (1865) and rebuilt in 1920.

(Excerpted from the introduction of the Site of HSBC, No. 54 Shameen Street)

There is not a commonly used pattern for translating Era name yet. Still, literal translation, relatively less information being missed, might be more suitable. Or, for descriptions like this example:

Translation Example 10

Source text: ……建于中华民国十三年（1924），……

Source text Romanized: ... Jiàn yú zhōnghuá mínguó shísān nián (1924), ...

Target text: Built in 1924, ...

(Excerpted from the introduction of the Dodwell & Co. Ltd.(British), No. 61 Shameen Street)

Optimization could be like this:

Translation Example 10 (Revised Version)

Target text: Built in the 13th year of the era of the Republic of China (1924), ...

(Excerpted from the introduction of the Dodwell & Co. Ltd.(British), No. 61 Shameen Street)

It is worth attention that, the feudal system had been overthrown before the Republic of China establishing. Therefore, the translator should be careful not to use the word “reign”, or additional noise may be created.

The last problem with translating cultural information is that, because of cultural non-equivalence, there is no corresponding word or expression for many appellations like ancient toponyms or government positions in ancient times. For instance, “总督” is the governor who is in charge of the military and political affairs of commonly two provinces. In English, the only word whose meaning is similar to it is “general” – a high-ranking officer in the armed forces, usually in the army<sup>6</sup>. These two words are not equivalent in meaning. If the translator wants to accurately express the meaning of “总督”, he must use phrases or sentences to explain the responsibility as well as the jurisdiction of this position in the form of notes.

The following is also representative of non-equivalence:

Translation Example 11

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<sup>6</sup> Collins Press. (March, 2022). General. In *Collins COBUILD Advanced Learner's English Dictionary* (5th ed.). <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/zh/dictionary/english/general>

Source text: 明代在此设“华节亭”，管理外商货物进出；清代中叶在此建西固炮台，拱卫广州城池。

Source text Romanized: Míngdài zài cǐ shè “huá jié tíng”, guǎnlǐ wàishāng huòwù jìnchū; qīngdài zhōngyè zài cǐ jiàn xī gù pàotái, gōngwèi guǎngzhōu chéngchí

Target text: Huajie Pavilion was set up here to manage the foreign trades; in the mid Qing Dynasty, Xigu Fort was built to defend the city of Guangzhou.

(Excerpted from the overall introduction of Shameen)

The “亭” of “华节亭” is not an ornamental building in a garden or park<sup>7</sup>, and should not be translated as “pavilion”. For “亭”, there are 3 ways of interpretations that involve border or military affairs: military post set near the border for reconnoitering hostile forces; inn, courier station for resting and staying the night; or kiosk, usually sells articles of daily use. Referring to the context, the first interpretation is more suitable. The adaptation of translation having reduced noise can be:

Translation Example 11 (Revised Version)

Target text: In the Ming Dynasty, Huajie Post was set up here for administrating foreign trades; in the mid-Qing Dynasty, Xigu Casemate was built in defense of Guangzhou.

(Excerpted from the overall introduction of Shameen)

### 3.5 Stylistic Information Type

Stylistic information refers to linguistic features conveyed through the style of the writer who uses effective devices to organize the text so that the text may be attractive to the audience. This TIT can influence the acceptability of the introduction. Its transferability is relatively weak; proper adjustments should be made in the process of translating (Luo, 2009, p.33-34).

In Chinese tourism profiles, stylistic information is distinguished by rhetoric in most cases, parallelism and antithesis in especial; some authors who excel at writing may even compose several lines of poetry. For this reason, stylistic information is usually flowery in language but inefficient in conveying messages. The information amount of it can be low if it were completely translated. Foreign tourists are probably unable to make out what the author is driving at after reading floods of ink either. The following one can be a typical example:

Translation Example 12

Source text: 文物还原，修旧如旧，露出真容；翠洲古楼，千米花街，古树衬映；完善公共设施，致力民生实事；创设防洪花堤，水患渐告远离；和谐三维视角，塑造文化主题，赢得各界好评。

Source text Romanized: Wénwù huányuán, xiū jiù rú jiù, lùchū zhēnróng; cuìzhōu gǔlóu, qiānmǐ huājiē, gǔshù chènying; wánshàn gōnggòng shèshī, zhìlì mínshēng shíshì; chuàngshè fānghóng huā dī, shuǐhuàn jiàn gào yuǎnlí; héxié sānwéi shìjiǎo, sùzào wénhuà zhǔtí, yíngdé gèjiè hǎopíng.

Target text: Cultural relics have been well restored to show their original charm; ancient trees, flowery streets and historic buildings benefit by associating together; public facilities have been improved to upgrade people’s livelihood; flowery dike has been renovated to protect Shameen from flooding. All these measures shape the cultural theme of Shameen, winning it praise from society.

(Excerpted from the overall introduction of Shameen)

At first sight, the translation is like a jumble of ideas: cultural relics, trees, streets, buildings, public facilities, dike, and cultural theme, totally of seven subjects are mentioned with poor coherence and cohesion, making it hard for audiences to understand the connection among each subject. The heavy use of parallelism and antithesis does not help to communicate information clearly at all.

A translation would be acceptable provided that it conveyed the necessary message of the source text and brought the effect that conforms to the cultural context of the target language to readers successfully, even though there might be some differences between language styles or contents of the two texts (Li, 2012). To translate the above stylistic introduction, the translator needs to remove redundancy by recapitulating and condensing key messages, and reduce the noise by toning down

<sup>7</sup> Collins Press. (March, 2022). Pavilion. In *Collins COBUILD Advanced Learner's English Dictionary* (5th ed.). <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/zh/dictionary/english/pavilion>



the stylistic expressions of the original author as well as restructuring key messages, also improve coherence and cohesion by conversion, to make the text more logical and more readable, like:

Translation Example 12 (Revised Version)

Target text: The government well restored the cultural relics, improved public facilities, and beautified the environment of Shameen, all of which helped show the cultural charm of Shameen and make it enjoy great popularity.

(Excerpted from the overall introduction of Shameen)

**4. Summary of Translation Strategies**

In this paper on translating the introduction of Shameen attractions based on TIT from the perspective of Communication, translation strategies including literal translation with notes, transliteration with notes, free translation, amplification, omission, condensation, diction, conversion, restructuring, and extension are involved.

Generally speaking, Chinese tourism profiles focus more on flowery language, abundant rhetorical devices, emotional expressions, etc., which are hard for foreign tourists to comprehend and bring about redundancy and noise. It can be seen in the previous analyses of the nineteen examples that, probably, though not necessarily, redundancy is of a stronger connection with contents like human geographical characteristics and social identity of the destination, which Chinese, the source language features; while noise is more closely related to language style or in-text logic influenced by the thinking mode of mother tongue.

According to Li, when composing tourism profiles, English writers prefer to objectively describe concrete objects with fewer rhetorical devices, emphasizing more on providing audiences with a specific image of the scenery of the destination. While, Chinese writers often pay more attention to the social identity (e.g. social significance, stage of development) and human geographical characteristics of the destination, depictions excerpted from histories or literature accounting for a large proportion of the whole introduction in especial; all these might make the destination seemed more appealing to domestic tourists, still, for foreign audiences with a different cultural background, such contents can be redundant or hardly understood (2012). For removing redundancy, there are mainly two strategies: omission and condensation. Both of them are not only used for removing content that contributes nothing to audiences’ learning about things like geography and infrastructures of the destination, or their understanding of Chinese culture, but also for improving wording that looks powerful and infectious in Chinese but is repeated in meaning in English sometimes.

Still, when composing tourism profiles, Chinese writers are accustomed to reinforcing a personal perception of the beauty of the destination, then making the scenery attractive and alive in tourists’ imagination and resonating with audiences through description and rhetorics like exaggeration and metaphor. Hence Chinese tourism profiles are usually filled with flowery language and useless content, causing noise in the process of communication (Li, 2012). To reduce noise, more strategies, including literal translation with notes, transliteration with notes, amplification, omission, condensation, diction, conversion, restructuring, and extension, are involved. If there were more corpora, not limited to Shameen in other words, free translation, and even all the above translation strategies, might be also involved in the translation of the five or even all TITs. And, different translation strategies need to be flexibly combined and applied when translating, to remove redundancy as well as to reduce noise, especially the latter one, helping achieve a better communication effect.

Grouping the strategies by TIT, there are also interesting discoveries: there are connections between the selection of translation strategies and the information amount carried by the TIT. Strategies of free translation, amplification, omission, conversion, and restructuring, are applied to the translation of almost every TIT. Particularly, diction should be paid more attention to when translating TITs that are with a relatively large amount of information, factual information, descriptive information, and cultural information often included. While extension and condensation are more frequently used in the translation of TITs carrying a relatively small amount of information, including descriptive information, evaluative and appraisal information, and stylistic information in terms of this paper.

Table 1. Translation Strategies for TITs Based on Goals of Processing Information

| TIT                 | Information Amount Carried | Translation Strategies |  |
|---------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|--|
|                     |                            | Removing Redundancy    | Reducing Noise   |
| Factual Information | large                      | omission               | free translation, amplification, omission, <b>diction</b> , conversion, restructuring, |

|                                      |                  |                        |   |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------|---|
| Descriptive Information              | relatively large | omission               | free translation, amplification, omission, <b>diction</b> , conversion, restructuring, <b>extension</b>                         |
| Evaluative and Appraisal Information | relatively small | omission, condensation | free translation, amplification, omission, <b>condensation</b> , conversion, restructuring, <b>extension</b>                    |
| Cultural Information                 | large            | omission               | literal translation with notes, transliteration with notes, amplification, omission, <b>diction</b> , conversion, restructuring |
| Stylistic Information                | small            | omission, condensation | free translation, amplification, omission, <b>condensation</b> , conversion, restructuring                                      |

## 5. Conclusion

There are differences between the languages and aesthetics of Chinese and Western cultures, Chinese and English tourism profiles being good embodiments. To overcome problems caused by the differences and to achieve a better communication effect, the translator needs not only to “remove redundancy” from the text, but also to “reduce noise” of the text – both of which are not necessarily deleting information. Due to the differences between Chinese and Western cultures, the translator may add information or explanation sometimes, or even make changes to the original contents, to fill the gaps in knowledge about Chinese culture of Western tourists that the original author did not take into account. At the same time, the translator should not only beware of the rebelliousness of the audience but also avoid simply catering to the audience’s preferences – as Chinese cultural influence continues to grow, what should be defined as “noise” or “redundancy” should be considered carefully.

In reality, according to Melvin L. Defleur, noises exist in every part of the communication process, and all these noises might affect the receiving of information and could have an influence on the communication effect (Hu, 2017, p.104, 106-107). In contrast, Shannon and Weaver considered elements and relationships among them in the communication process unchanged; they also segregated the process of communication from the society and neglected social influence like political and economic factors. In this way, this research can still be extended.

Shameen is an architectural complex that is of significance in reflecting modern China. This paper, studying translating introductions of Shameen attractions, can help enrich research on tourism translation from the perspective of Communication and fill in the gap that there is no research on tourism translation of Guangzhou with TIT being applied. Analyses as well as conclusions drawn in this paper are not perfect and need to be polished and completed yet. Still, this paper, hopefully, may shed some new light on studies on tourism translation of Guangzhou, and even studies on tourism translation from the perspective of Communication.

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# The Characteristics and Translation Strategies of Fuzzy Language in Diplomatic Communiqués

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## Abstract

Fuzzy language mainly refers to the vagueness of words, phrases, and fuzzy meanings. In the official documents of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, the appropriate use of vague language can make the language more polite and show the position and attitude of the issue. After collecting the information of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' communiqués of China from 2019 to 2021, this paper uses the software of AntConc to build a corpus and sort out the data about the use of fuzzy language in the documents. Under the guidance of the Politeness Principle, this paper summarizes the frequency and characteristics of the four fuzzy hedges in diplomatic communiqués. In addition, the Skopos Theory is further employed to explain and analyze the characteristics of relevant translation strategies.

**Keywords:** fuzzy language, translation strategy, diplomatic communiqués

## 1. Introduction

Under the background of the new era, the voice of the Chinese government can be heard further, and China now is more influential worldwide than before. The accurate and convincing articles symbolize the position and actions of the Chinese government that must eliminate any tiny mistakes. This paper discusses the functions of different types of fuzzy expressions in language, covering the implied meaning behind the sentences and analyzing their structure via the software AntConc. By analyzing the various semantic roles of different types of fuzzy words, their function to refine the corresponding and practical strategies behind the sentence can be determined. This research will use the corpus analysis method and detailed text analysis to advance the research on translation. Compared with the mainstream studies mainly focusing on the research of the colloquial content like speeches and talks, this research pays attention to the official communiqué of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the writing perspective and practical application. This paper mainly studies the official English communiqué issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 2019 to 2021. Under the guidance of the Politeness Principle and the Skopos Theory, it uses the corpus method to analyze the characteristics of fuzzy language and then summarize the translation strategies. Feasible strategies could be put forward based on China's unique conditions to help solve the difficulties in the translation of ambiguous language.

This paper mainly answers these questions:

- (1) What are the main types of fuzzy language and their frequency of usage?
- (2) What are the fuzzy language's main characteristics in the Politeness Principle framework and the Skopos Theory?
- (3) How can the characteristics contribute to the translation practices in the context of foreign affairs?

## 2. Literature Review

Professor Zadeh (1965) of the University of California published a paper on fuzzy sets, which first mentioned the concept of fuzzy language or hedge. As soon as the concept came into being, it attracted significant attention and was widely used in various natural and social sciences disciplines. Later on, Georgy Lakoff (1972), a famous Generative semantic linguist in the United States, clarified hedges as "words whose job is to make things fuzzier or less fuzzy." Then, Brown and Levison (1987) explained hedges as a particle word or phrase that modifies the degree of membership or a noun phrase in a set.

Zadeh (1972) divided hedges into four categories based on grammar, which contained adjectives and adverbs, adverbial and expressions, affixes, and some politeness structures. According to Prince et al. (1982), there are two types of hedges: approximators and shields. Approximators are the fuzzy words that limit the degree of variation. It enables the listener to hear from the speaker new concepts related to, but different from, the original topic. Shields are fuzzy words that limit variable

norms. This kind of variable hedge is often used in measuring things. There is no need to pay attention to how close the actual situation is to the topic because specific numbers are often provided.

He (1985) followed the classification of Prince and made the further investigation. Then he subdivided approximators into rounders and adaptors. Adaptors indicate a change in some degree, like sort of and a little bit, are a way of saying something close to being accurate, but not exactly true, closer to the actual situation and avoiding being too dogmatic. The use of rounders in verbal communication gives the listener the range of the subject and enables him to understand things within that scope. He also divided shields into two types: plausibility and attribution. The reason for using variable language is that the speaker does not want to exaggerate the figures to deviate from the facts or because he cannot give an exact figure at once.

In addition, Hyland (1998) also carried out different categories from a semantic perspective: lexical hedges and strategic hedges. Moxey et al. (1993) explored the problem of fuzzy quantifiers from pragmatic and psychological perspectives, and their research objective was how people understand and use quantifiers in natural language.

In 1973, Lakoff analyzed examples from semantics and summarized the functions of the hedge. Using these fuzzy languages, he found his words became more objective and gained authority, and the speaker's tone softened. Joanna Channell (1994) outlined the various forms of fuzzy words under the pragmatic principles. She emphasized that interpreters cannot separate interpretations of fuzzy language from specific contexts and inferences. She also found that "semantics + pragmatics = meaning," which means the fuzziness of language should be analyzed not only from the semantic level but also from the pragmatic sense. She concluded ten fuzzy language functions by analyzing several examples, including self-protect, politeness, and persuasion.

In short, hedges are those expressions that make things fuzzier or less fuzzy, displaying a speaker's commitment. From the various explanations above, it can be inferred that the primary function of fuzzy language is to avoid being dogmatic and to be polite. To better explain the characteristics, this thesis follows the Prince's and He's categories of hedges because of its clear classification standard and widespread usage. After the fuzzy concepts' first appearance, many scholars conducted further investigations in this topic, and until now, the fuzzy language is still appealing to scholars and attracting them to take efforts on it.

### **3 Theoretical Framework**

#### *3.1 Politeness Principle*

English famous linguist scholar Leech G.N. (1983) combined the previous studies like Brown and Levinson's and then put forward the Politeness Principle. This principle has six maxims: the Approbation maxim, Agreement maxim, Tact maxim, Generosity maxim, Modesty maxim, and Sympathy maxim. Accordingly, two sub-maxims are divided under each maxim. Among these maxims, the Tact maxim is of great importance because it is used for avoiding conflicts in communications. Furthermore, people inherently attribute to the invisible rule under explicit configuration (Goffman, 1986).

Some euphemisms can make the original statements pleasant, decent, and elegant, thus reducing the purpose of insulting others in the expression. That action is the embodiment of the Tact maxim. The maxim of agreement mainly refers to reducing the expression of their differences with others, minimizing the differences with others, and increasing the agreement with others as much as possible. The translator should appropriately choose euphemisms and use polite wording to make the translation clear and indirect. Furthermore, this thesis mainly discusses fuzzy language in the two maxims.

#### *3.2 Skopos Theory*

Skopos comes from the Greek word Skopos, meaning aim. In the book *A Framework for a General Theory of Translation*, published in 1978, Vermeer first elaborated the Skopos Theory's basic principles, claiming that translation belongs to intercultural interaction. Moreover, translation is a type of social activity. The writer defines the intention, while function refers to the introducing context. The intention of the original author may differ from the translator. Translation can have multiple purposes, which can be further divided into three categories:

1. The general purpose of the translator (such as making a living)
2. The communicative purpose of the translation (like enlightening or instructing the reader)
3. Special needs acquired by the context (such as literal translation to explain the particular aspects of the grammatical structure of a language)

In most cases, "purpose" refers to the communicative purpose of the target text. It also means "the communicative function of the translation to the target readers in the social and cultural context" (Vermeer, 1989). In the Skopos Theory, translation means to produce a text in the target context for the target recipient in the target language. In contrast, the source text is

subordinate (Nord, 2001). In other words, the source text is not at the center of authority but an open entity with infinite possibilities. The primary principle of the Skopos Theory in all translation processes is to understand the “principle of purpose,” which means translation should be able to function not only in the context and culture of the target language but also in the expectation of targeted readers. The whole translation process is determined by the goal to be achieved; that is, the result handles the method. Therefore, the translator should clarify his specific purpose in the given translation context and decide which translation method to adopt according to this purpose.

## 4 Results and Analysis

### 4.1 Data Collection

Corpus is a crucial tool used for collecting statistics and analyzing. Without its help, efficiency and accuracy could not be guaranteed. This research chooses to use the software AntConc (Version 3.5.9) because of its easy accessibility and economy. AntConc was developed by a Japanese professor Laurence Anthony at Waseda University, and it is famous for its neat interface and simple operation. AntConc can generate a list of the total occurrence of the targeted word from all texts provided and locate it in the passage. Then the frequency is calculated and stated within a second.

Diplomatic communiqués in recent three years (2019-2021) have been collected from the official website, and there are a total of 70 articles and about 150 thousand words. According to Prince’s and He’s classification, the hedges can be categorized into two main types: shields and approximators. Of the two types, each includes two subtypes. Shields include plausibility and attribution, while approximators contain adaptors and rounders. Based on this category, each type of hedge’s overall frequency and distribution are calculated. Here is the detailed statistic.

Table 1. Frequency and Distribution of Hedges

| Category      |              | Number | Percentage |
|---------------|--------------|--------|------------|
| Shields       | Plausibility | 19     | 3.00%      |
|               | Attribution  | 14     | 2.21%      |
| Approximators | Adaptors     | 312    | 49.29%     |
|               | Rounders     | 288    | 45.50%     |
| Total         |              | 633    | 100%       |

From this table, it can be found that the most frequently used hedges are approximators, which account for 94.79% of all the hedges. As for the shields, only 33 words are used and take the percentage of 5.21%. It’s obvious that the fuzzy expressions used in communiqués are mainly approximators. It can be inferred that shields are not very welcomed in diplomatic communiqués because shields are often used to strengthen the speaker’s politeness and avoid a sharp tone accompanied by a personal style.

### 4.2 Frequency Distribution

Table 2. Frequency and Distribution of all Types of Hedges

| Hedge         | Type         | Word         | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|------------|
| Shields       | Plausibility | we believe   | 19        | 3.00%      |
|               |              | according to | 13        | 2.05%      |
|               | Attribution  | is reported  | 1         | 0.16%      |
| Approximators | Adaptors     | more         | 220       | 34.76%     |
|               |              | some         | 21        | 3.32%      |
|               |              | only         | 20        | 3.16%      |
|               |              | even         | 19        | 3.00%      |
|               |              | large        | 13        | 2.05%      |
|               |              | many         | 9         | 1.42%      |
|               |              | almost       | 7         | 1.11%      |

|          |           |     |        |
|----------|-----------|-----|--------|
|          | kind of   | 2   | 0.32%  |
|          | little    | 1   | 0.16%  |
| Rounders | over      | 108 | 17.06% |
|          | more than | 56  | 8.85%  |
|          | about     | 38  | 6.00%  |
|          | recent    | 25  | 3.95%  |
|          | most      | 24  | 3.79%  |
|          | around    | 21  | 3.32%  |
|          | nearly    | 12  | 1.90%  |
|          | less than | 3   | 0.47%  |
|          | roughly   | 1   | 0.16%  |
|          | Total     |     | 633    |

Here are the details. From this table, the shields are used less than approximators in these diplomatic communiqués. Among the shields, “we believe” and “according to” contribute significantly. The phrase “we believe,” which contains hope and implies calling on for something, displays writer’s position and can often be seen at the article’s end. Also, the “according to” expresses the source of the content, making readers convinced that the articles are reliable and genuinely subjective.

Adaptors are words that supplement and modify the original meaning of utterances to some extent, serving writers with more accurate expressions (He, 1985). The word “more” appears most frequent, holding 34.76% of total hedges. In further investigation, it is found that most “more” is used to modify nouns and adjectives. Compared to other adaptors, “more” ranks top frequency, conveying information that The Ministry of Foreign Affairs picks up formal and more concrete expressions and makes the passages exact and convincing. Among all the articles, all the adaptors only account for 0.2%.

He (1985) also mentioned that a rounder is a word or phrase that limits the range of movement. If all the rounders and compare them with all research materials, it can be seen that only 0.19% of the whole words are rounders. Among all the rounders, “over” accounts for 17.06% and is used 108 times. After a deeper check, it is obvious that “over” is also used in modifying nouns, especially on the time and numbers. These fuzzy words are tools to make figures less absolute and ideally convince readers.

Now, after collecting enough data about the categories and frequency of the fuzzy words, the core principle of the usage can be refined. In the table, “more” and “over” stand for maximum frequency among all the hedges. Some examples are listed to help elaborate better on the characteristics.

#### 4.3 Content Analysis

This part makes an explanation on the reasons and effects based on the Politeness Principle and the Skopos Theory. The tact maxim and empathy maxim are fundamental in diplomatic translation, which should be paid more attention to.

##### 4.3.1 Plausibility Analysis

On behalf of the Chinese position, the communiqués should show their readers not only polite but also friendly words. Plausibility plays a vital role in making proposition less assertive and absolute, thus building a comfortable reading experience. The most frequently used plausibility, “we believe,” is analyzed below.

###### Translation Example 1:

Source text: 互联互通是国家间、人民间、社会间的纽带。我们相信，共建“一带一路”促进不同民族、不同文化、不同文明之间交流互鉴、对话互鉴。(2019.4)

Target text: “Considering connectivity as a means of bringing countries, peoples and societies closer together, we believe the Belt and Road Cooperation promotes exchanges, mutual learning and dialogue among different peoples, cultures and civilizations.”

Here, “we believe” shows a wish that China wants to build up Belt and Road Cooperation to strengthen development and calls on other countries to join our cooperation instead of demanding and ordering other countries. Moreover, if “we believe” is deleted, the meaning of the content becomes a little bit arrogant. Without the plausibility, the sentence’s tone would be aloof

and stiff, as if ordering other countries to cooperate. Shields used to avoid too direct and absolute saying. In this regard, the tact maxim is extensively represented, making the tone persuasive and polite. This communiqué aims at enlightening other countries to join the Belt and Road, so advantages are put forward to persuade.

#### 4.3.2 Attribution Analysis

Attribution is a symbol of the quotation from authorities, and it can indirectly show the attitude of China in communiqués.

Translation Example 2:

Source text: 我们呼吁所有国家与相关利益攸关方合作，提高国家、区域和全球能力，按照世界卫生组织（世卫组织）规定的严格标准开展疫苗研发和生产，提供安全、有效、高质量的新冠疫苗。（2021.8）

Target text: “We call upon all countries, in cooperation with the relevant stakeholders, to increase national, regional and global capacities, carry out vaccine research and development as well as production in line with strict standards according to the World Health Organization (WHO) regulations, and provide safe, effective and high-quality COVID-19 vaccines.”

Here “according to” contains many functions, including quoting authoritative documents from WHO, expressing wishes to other countries, and implying our vaccines are high-quality and up to standards. This attribution intends to display authority and calls on other countries to provide vaccines that reach standards. According to the Skopos Theory, this context is persuasive, and the attribution can help the translator achieve this intention.

#### 4.3.3 Adaptors Analysis

About adaptors, they are used to modify a change to some degree. They are a way of saying something closely true but not exactly true. The most frequently used adaptor is “more” in these communiqués, appearing 220 times. Here are the details.

Table 3. Frequency of “More”

| Function  | Determiner | Adverb | Pronoun |
|-----------|------------|--------|---------|
| Frequency | 148        | 67     | 5       |

Translation Example 3-1

Source text: 双方将鼓励在“一带一路”倡议下开展更多项目，体现马中密切、友好和相互信任的伙伴关系。（02/2020）

Target text: “Both sides would encourage more projects to be enlisted under this initiative as the reflection of the close and warm partnership and mutual trust between Malaysia and China.”

Translation Example 3-2

Source text: 各国利益交融、前途交融前所未有。（12/2019）

Target text: “The interests and future of all countries are more intertwined than ever before.”

Translation Example 3-3

Source text: 中国对非合作坚持多予少取、先予后取、不求回报的原则。（11/2021）

Target text: “In its cooperation with Africa, China applies the principles of giving more and taking less, giving before taking, and giving without asking for something in return.”

“More” mainly serves as a determiner to adjust the range of targeted objects, showing a fuzzy description of the number. In example 3-1, “more” is a determiner to modify the projects to show the strong desire of both two countries to enlist projects; it obeys the Tact maxim. Adaptors are used widely to modify the progress and benefits in the countries’ relationships, expressing the future rewards of the cooperation plan and convincing readers that this cooperation is helpful and beneficial. In example 3-2, “more” functions as an adverb to picture the intertwined situation, implying all countries share a common future reasonably. “More” also emphasizes that the relationships among all countries would be even more critical in the future. It shows persuading and seeking deeper cooperation. This adaptor obeys tact maxim and agreement maxim and expresses the intention clearly. In example 3-3, “more” serves as a pronoun, hiding the detailed information of benefits but serving China’s



selfless and polite image. Based on the Skopos Theory, a translation should serve the intention, and the “more” here perfectly fulfills its mission of clarifying the Chinese position.

#### 4.3.4 Rounders Analysis

Rounders are words that limit the range of the utterance, often accompanied by numbers. Sometimes it is hard to get the precise number, or the exact number is not so acquired to understand. Then it is time for rounders to make efforts. The use of rounders in communication gives the listener a scope of the subject and enables him to understand things within that scope. Below are the most frequently used rounders “over.”

Example 4:

Source text: 同时，中国对外提供援款 4000 多亿元人民币，向近 170 个国家和国际组织派出 60 多万名援助人员。(9/2019)

Target text: “Meanwhile, China has provided over 400 billion RMB yuan in foreign aid and sent over 600,000 aid workers to nearly 170 countries and international organizations.”

Like “over” or “nearly,” rounders always appear near the numbers, showing a slight vagueness in the sentences. In Example 4, “over” modifies the number of money and aid workers. The numbers here are fuzzy, but the figures are still reliable and straightforward due to the large base of the nouns. The translator takes a method of ellipsis in which the total number is not written entirely. If translators just put all the exact numbers here, the sentence would be messy, and readers may be distracted by the complex information. Avoiding exact numbers releases readers’ reading pressure and helps them receive information quickly. By doing this, the readers’ attention will be focused on the Chinese contribution. The usage of rounders does not affect the intention of conveying information, so it is acceptable based on the Skopos Theory.

The fuzziness of official documents is mainly reflected in the following aspects:

1. The ambiguity brought by the indeterminacy of the thing itself. For instance, “more.” More time can be a few days, a month, even years. These similar words contain ambiguity itself and are also widely used.
2. The vagueness caused by the variability of things. For example, teenagers.
3. The uncertainty of the meaning of words. Among the words that describe the nature, degree, and scope of things, the specific boundaries of some words are difficult to define, and there are always fuzzy intersecting areas, for example, “a bit” and “a little.” They both show a small degree, and it is not easy to distinguish them just by understanding the degree.

The function of these fuzzy expressions is mainly reflected in three aspects: firstly, they are used to show some words that are nearly but not entirely correct in degree or quantity to avoid being too arbitrary. Secondly, they can be used to modify or restrict the expression of some content that is not necessary or cannot be precise. Third, implying some messages and making articles look clear and polite.

As a content text, the communiqué clarifies China’s position on many areas and issues, provides guidelines for work, and veritable authoritative information. The specific function of these official articles is to let readers home and abroad know about China’s national conditions and government work. It represents the official thoughts and actions of the Chinese government.

## 5 Translation Strategies

### 5.1 Criteria

As a practical language communication and social practice, translation is always full of infinite possibilities. The criterion of the Skopos Theory to evaluate the quality of translation is adequacy rather than equivalence (Duan, 2000). Adequacy refers to the translation text being suitable to the requirements of the translation purpose. That is to say, and the translated text should fulfill its communicative function in the target language context and culture.

Compared to other translation content, the diplomatic translation needs more accurate and proper expressions, which is a high demand for translators. Diplomatic content always includes national issues, international affairs, bilateral cooperation, and official announcements with solid political characteristics and significance. Therefore, the translators should use standardized strategies and faithfully convey the information.

According to Pan (2010), the Skopos Theory advocates that translation is a kind of behavior with a specific purpose like any other action. The most crucial role of the Skopos Theory is to guide the selection of translation strategies. Purpose or intention is the most direct and fundamental factor in determining strategy. Purpose determines every process and detail of translation.

The fundamental criterion of translation works under the guidance and demand of the author (Duan, 2000). It means that no matter how hard the translator tries to catch the author's thoughts and feelings, the translation is not a pure reproduction of the author's actual psychological process but a re-creation of the text, which is also guided by the translator's understanding of the text. Any tiny misunderstanding may cause considerable trouble, especially in the diplomatic translation. Therefore, during the translation process, the translator should concentrate on the purpose of translation and get the work done accordingly.

### *5.2 Tactics*

Based on the Politeness Principle and the Skopos Theory, to conclude the characteristics and usage of these types of hedges is now available. Whether oral or written, the Chinese often use fuzzy expressions or rhetoric to share ideas, while other people from western countries are likely to use logical and direct ways. Therefore, some adjustments are needed to help foreigners better understand what the author wants to convey. Below are some suggestions for translators based on what is discovered from the statistics elicited from the corpus.

#### *5.2.1 From Precision to Fuzziness*

The precise translation is the norm, but sometimes ambiguity is a better choice. For example, it is ubiquitous to translate figures and data into official documents. Not all figures need to be placed directly in the communiqués. To ease the reader's pressure, translators often omit some data details, leaving only the central part. That is where the hedges come in. Adaptors play an essential role in modifying the degree, while rounders do well in adjusting ranges. Regardless of the specific data or the scope of something, approximators can help translators better convey the original meaning without causing difficulties for readers. At the same time, adding shields can make the article read less aggressive, which also shows the connotation of the Politeness Principle. Plausibility makes the translation subjective and highlights the official position, while attribution attaches importance to quotation authority and convinces people. The use of these fuzzy words often makes the translation more palatable to readers, ensuring the intention of conveying information and giving people a polite impression, which is also conducive to the official agreement of readers.

#### *5.2.2 From Fuzziness to Precision*

Fuzzy messages in diplomatic primitives are retained in translation in some cases. Most semantically fuzzy words can be translated directly by using fuzzy words corresponding to the literal meaning and political standpoint.

Due to the historical differences of each country, the social and cultural development is also various. If the information in the original language is not explained, the translation cannot be equivalent to the targeted ones, which confuses readers. Therefore, the background and needs of readers must be fully taken into consideration in translation, and the original language should be supplemented so that readers can understand it better.

For the cultural ambiguity caused by metaphor, quoting idioms, common sayings, and ancient poems, it would be better to adopt similar sayings in English on the basis of a correct grasp of the literal meaning and political connotation. Combining with the diplomatic and overall context, the expression of Chinese characteristics certainly helps spread Chinese culture. Fuzzy language itself has excellent uncertainty and selectivity, resulting in many implicated meanings.

In addition, some fuzzy information should be deleted considering the whole content and its core meaning. Based on the analysis of specific diplomatic context, some fuzzy expressions with similar meanings that are not politically strong or repeated frequently can be discarded, and the translation workload can be reduced.

#### *5.2.3 From Fuzziness to Fuzziness*

Although humans use different languages, the core structures that determine their organization is very similar, making the two languages equivalent in meaning. Some words with equivalent meanings can be found in the target language in translation. Therefore, it is an excellent method to match these equivalent meaning words accordingly and appropriately. When fuzzy information only affects a part and is reflected in a particular word, literal translation can be used for word-to-word translation so that fuzzy information can be perfectly preserved.

Based on the Skopos Theory, the purpose of translation determines the process of translation. In order to show our politeness and avoid conflicts, translators should avoid sensitive topics and issues. Besides, sometimes it is unsuitable to tell the details or concrete plot to the other. Ellipsis and fuzzy language are the most common methods of dealing with these problems. In addition, the logic between sentences is often reflected in mood and semantics. There are many long sentences in English, and the sentence structure is very complex and rigorous. A large number of connectives reflect the logic between sentences.

The translation needs to be flexible and avoid unnecessary and redundant words so that the translation conforms to the target expression habits.

In diplomatic translation, translators must clarify their position and get rid of the troublesome dilemma. There are implied meanings behind the sentences; how to deal with them makes a significant difference in many cases. Sometimes the author wishes to preserve preliminary information, so the translator should try to preserve the characteristics of fuzzy language as faithfully as possible. Otherwise, if fuzzy information is translated clearly, it does not truly reflect the author's will but brings unnecessary trouble to communication.

## **6 Conclusions and Limitations**

In this paper, the software corpus AntConc is used to calculate the distribution of four types of hedges used in the communiqué and carry out the theory. In the translation of the official communiqué, the translators should consider the entire content and background and then leave some room to adjust and explain. The official document generally requires plain and direct. Nevertheless, in some cases, considering different readers and sometimes it is difficult to speak frankly, the utterance needs to be euphemistic and implicit. The need for confidentiality or etiquette also factors matters. In official documents, the situation analyzed, the questions raised, the experience summed up, and the appeal is all universal and complex to a certain extent. Suppose there is a lack of accurate generalization. In that case, the article is bound to be protracted, and vague language has a high degree of generalization, making up for the lack of precise words in generalization. The use of these words makes the text concise and believable. The contents reflected in the official document must be objective, and no one can express his subjective color and feelings in the official document. Therefore, fuzzy words should be used appropriately when writing articles.

Despite the hard work of this research, the study still has some limitations that further study could improve. This paper mainly focuses on the guidance of the Politeness Principle and the Skopos Theory. Due to the limited practice experience and translation knowledge, there is a large room that can be improved on the analysis of the cases. It takes a lot of effort and time to do further research. In the translation study, only the translator's strategy is studied from the perspective of the reader's acceptance level and language level, and other specific situations are not studied. Besides, they also need to have a high political acuity and translation ability of political documents. The author of this paper still cannot meet the requirements in these aspects, meaning the possibility of mistakes and errors.

Over the past decades, China has played a more critical role in international affairs and gained a better reputation worldwide. It is hoped that further studies can supplement the translation of the Chinese diplomatic and contribute more to the Chinese political propaganda, thus strengthening the communication between China and other countries.

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# The Chinese Schema and Power Direction of the Dissemination of Korean TV Dramas

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## Abstract

The dissemination of Korean drama narrative art--the exotic art form in Chinese context-- is not only a typical form of cultural output in the current social context but also the product of self-adjustment of the artistic style of Korean dramas under the foreign context. The tendency of visual aestheticism, the aesthetic text writing of daily life and the emotional appeal of universal meaning held by the Korean dramas have become the influential factors for this artistic style to enter the Chinese context and disseminate. The rising consumption consciousness in contemporary society has become the external inducement of the dissemination of Korean drama culture in China, which lays the internal driving force for spreading of this culture in China from the two dimensions of production and acceptance. Korean dramas--as a foreign cultural style of Chinese communication--not only present a unique visual landscape and mirror image of life for the development of Chinese film and television art but also provide a more diverse and more affluent world picture for Chinese film and television art atlas. But the dissemination of Korean dramas in the Chinese context also forms a specific power relationship with the aesthetic elements that stimulate audio-visual pleasure in the images or the derivative goods and fashion demands formed by Korean dramas. While laying the groundwork for their narrative style in the Chinese foreign context, Korean dramas also set up a practical strategy of intertwining art and power. The dramas aim to construct the intention of cultural identity but also provide a sample for the culture colonization. An analysis of the Chinese communication schema of this artistic style is undoubtedly of positive, enlightening significance to constructing the aesthetic orientation of the cultural subjectivity of a specific nation.

**Keywords:** Korean TV drama, visual communication, Chinese context, power, cultural identity

## 1. Introduction

As an exotic art style, Korean drama is undoubtedly the cultural form that disseminates the local culture deeply and has the most extensive influence on the local cultural structure and aesthetic consciousness of the society after the spread of western learning to the east in the 20th century. The oriental art form, which is very different from the western cultural pedigree, has changed the structural atlas of the current Chinese culture, cutting into the growing realm of modern Chinese mass culture with its unique narrative representation and expression. The art form evolved into colorful and dazzling aesthetic symbols, constructed the unique exotic landscape in the local cultural family, and triggered a pretty general convergence effect and cultural identity. Admittedly, the dissemination of Korean dramas coincides with the multi-dimensional representation of the "visual turn" in modern society. As a model of modern visual art, Korean dramas' narrative style and visual language signs not only contain the essential connotation and practical significance of modern visual texts but also extend the external schema and internal genealogy of popular culture in a sense, providing a more diversified paradigm for the modern evolution of popular culture. Here, Korean drama, a dominant art style in modern society, is focused on the aesthetic mirror of popular culture. The discussion of the dramas' unique narrative form, visual landscape, as well as the extended power structure and practical significance undoubtedly has essential reference value for the pluralistic isomorphism and meaning integration of current culture. At the same time, it will also provide practical aesthetic thinking for the narrative paradigm of modern visual text.

## 2. The Mass Carnival in the Image World: The Visual Representation and Aesthetic Orientation of The Narration in Korean Dramas

As a model representative of modern visual art, the dissemination of Korean dramas benefits from the rise of popular culture and the promotion of social consumption consciousness. The popular culture creates a suitable context for Korean dramas to spread in China. As a cultural form of modern society, the context of popular culture's derivation and growth accords with the pluralistic characteristics of modern society, and consumer-oriented social transformation is an essential driving force for the continuous extension of popular culture. A consumption-oriented society is not only a society with rich materials but also a society in which consumption dominates production and demand. " There is all around us today a kind of fantastic

conspicuousness of consumption and abundance, constituted by the multiplication of objects, services, and material goods, and this represents something of a fundamental mutation in the ecology of the human species" (Baudrillard, 1998). The concept of consumption constitutes a kind of ideology in the current society and has become the foundation of modern daily life. Meanwhile, consumption also changes the aesthetic consciousness of the social subject and promotes the aesthetic consciousness of the subject to understand different cultural forms actively. South Korean drama is a model cultural representative of subject aesthetic consciousness in the context of consumption.

It is no accident that Korean dramas landed on Chinese mainland. If the eastward spread of western culture at the beginning of the 20th century is a way for Chinese people to dispel the dimension of reality with the help of Western learning, Korean TV dramas at the end of the 20th century, as a form of Asian culture, represent a tributary in the wave of multiculturalism in modern society, and are the free choice of consumer society to cope with the multicultural needs of society. The cross-context communication is more imbued with cultural and even economic implications and lacks political motivation marked by the introduction of western learning to the east. In other words, it is the consumption-oriented social context that gives birth to Korean TV dramas as a foreign culture. Korean TV dramas, like Hong Kong, Taiwan and Hollywood movies, did not set off an upsurge when they landed on Chinese mainland at the early beginning, however, with the continuous integration of the narrative representation of this artistic style based on foreign context, with the technical support of modern media, and with its unique narrative techniques and aesthetic connotation, Korean TV dramas have constructed a specific "field" for the local extension of foreign culture in China, delineating and constantly expanding the admiration and worship of their followers, thus forming a different landscape and different elegant demeanor in the current Chinese cultural territory.

First of all, adhering to visual aesthetics is the formal tone of the mirror narration of most South Korean dramas. In the eyes of aesthetics, the primary mission of art is to provide the sensory pleasure to the aesthetic subject, following the direction of aestheticism. "Arts have only one highest law, which is the law of form or harmony" (Xu, 1988). The form can create everything, and without form participation, there will be no artist's creative feelings, and it will be impossible to create beautiful art. Therefore, South Korean TV dramas are the best samples of aestheticism. Superficially actors with excellent images are usually selected to act as plot roles, coupled with beautiful and appropriate costumes and character activity environment, but this is only one aspect of the plastic visual aesthetic tendency of South Korean dramas; however, the aesthetic landscape created by South Korean dramas is more reflected in a harmonious configuration of visual mirrors. The character image, language or activity environment, the visual level of picture composition, color allocation, or dynamic setting all follow a much stricter principle of identity. Hence most South Korean dramas present warm, coordinated, fresh, and tranquil visual images, which create a comfortable and leisurely acceptance effect. However, compared with pure aestheticism, Korean TV dramas do not fully uphold aestheticism. Because aestheticism, in order to mark the uniqueness and eternity of art, usually separates the close relationship between art and life. "Life always destroys the artistic theme with its reality. Life is a reflection, while art is real" (Wilde, 2020). In the theory of aestheticism, art and life are out of touch and out of tune. Korean TV dramas strictly distinguish the relationship between content and form, which is characterized by marked aestheticism in form, while the narrative theme is based on real life. They effectively integrate the beauty in form and the reality in theme into the modern mirror image. Then they organically unifies beauty with life, which is an effective correction and realistic promotion of the aesthetic concept of traditional aestheticism.

Secondly, the aesthetics of daily life is the inherent logic of the narration of most Korean dramas. The daily life is the most basic living state of human beings. It has always been regarded as a non-essential secondary field. The Chinese and Western philosophy before the 20th century were generally stranded in a metaphysical tradition, paying attention to the abstract world outside daily life. The "turn of daily life" at the philosophical level opened in the 20th century catalyzed the change in the field of aesthetics. Nowadays, the aesthetic of daily life is the mainstream of the evolution of modern society, which means the aesthetic in the modern sense has moved from the dimension of traditional art to the dimension of daily life. According to Jameson "the culture of the 19th century is also understood as elegant music, painting or opera, and culture is still a way to escape from reality. In the theory of post-modernism, culture has become completely popular, and the distance between elegant culture and popular culture, pure literature, and popular literature is disappearing. The post-modernist culture has expanded from the specific 'cultural circle' in the past into people's daily life and become consumer goods" (Jameson, 1986). Korean TV dramas adhere to the narrative logic of the aesthetic of daily life. Its presentation style includes two aspects: first, the internal narrative style of Korean TV dramas follows the mainstream characteristics of the aesthetic of daily life. The narrative theme, character shaping or plot setting of South Korean TV dramas follow the objective laws of real life. Exploring the true meaning of beauty from daily life has become the basic melody of most South Korean dramas. Korean TV dramas usually carry themes taken from the trivialities of daily life, rejecting bizarre plot descriptions and thrilling visual stimulation. Advocating the most precious spiritual value of human nature in the ordinary details of daily life, the dramas refocus the details of ordinary life and its human brilliance that are gradually forgotten because of the rapid speed and rhythm

of life in the real world in front of the audience, awakening audiences' gradually forgotten tenderness of life. Then the audiences truly realize the rich multiple aesthetic values in real life. Second, as a universal art style, South Korean TV dramas have entered into real life as a model symbol of the aesthetics of daily life. According to Featherstone, the British sociologist, one of the meanings contained in the aesthetics of daily life is the rapid flow of symbols and images that permeate the daily life of contemporary society. At this level, Korean TV dramas can become the most exemplary aesthetic representative of daily life in real life of Chinese society. The identity effect and extended economic driving force in modern Chinese society have become a cultural event with far-reaching influence. It has added strong Korean amorous feelings and a elegant cultural demeanor to modern social life.

Thirdly, the value demand for the supremacy of emotion and the tragic artistic structure is the mainstream thread of the narrative art of Korean TV dramas. So far as the prevalent themes of Korean TV dramas are concerned, the mature and customized joint creation and the motif pattern of emotion supremacy have become the established narrative framework of Korean drama art. Even though the themes of South Korean dramas are quite extensive and related to all aspects of social life, the cores of the dramas by the diversified plot framework often shared a standard color--the deep thinking of people's emotional world and the value of existence. Either the personal life experience or the philosophy of trivial daily life in South Korean TV dramas contains actual emotional demands which achieve a high degree of emotional sublimation in the seemingly ordinary and even aesthetic plot designation to meet the emotional expectations of modern people who are increasingly squeezed and gradually lost in modern society.

If the pursuit of emotional life experience is the eternal topic of Korean drama narration, the tragic plot settings and tragic artistic rendering have become the unique framework of Korean drama narration. The rendering and worship of tragic art in South Korean dramas are different from the emotional tone worshipped by the local culture, which make the art form more attractive and changes the established "sense of joy" foundation of the local traditional culture. Compared with western culture, the local culture belongs to the category of "sense of joy," but western culture is more "guilty". Although the essence of "guilt" permeates with the feelings of "tragedy," the respect for tragedy has not become the mainstream of western culture. The narrative style of Korean TV dramas has undoubtedly broken the inherent atlas of Chinese and Western cultures and added new seasoning to the cultural feast of the domestic audience. Wang Guowei, a modern Sinology master said: "the spirit of our people represented by operas and novels does not go without this happy day color--begins with sadness, finally joyful; begins with the separation, finally reunion; begins with the poor, and finally enjoyment" (Wang, 2021). The people who are accustomed to the "sense of joy" no longer adhere to the existing taste of traditional culture and art. Those people are eager to experience the sad feelings of exotic style in the pluralistic and open art map and then expand the aesthetic field of vision and artistic sentiment. It is worthwhile mentioning that the sad feelings rendered by South Korean dramas are pretty different from the tragedies of western culture. Most tragedies in the West should be character tragedies, such as Hamlet and Macbeth. The tragic plots designed by South Korean TV dramas are no longer based on character tragedies. To some extent, it is no longer the characters' character but the plots themselves that causes the tragic plots and endings in South Korean dramas. Both the enrichment and even perfection of the characters leading to tragic plots and endings are more in line with the aesthetic demands of the Chinese people. Therefore, it is natural to gain recognition and resonance.

### **3. Homogenization of Receptive Context: The Realistic Dimension of Aesthetic Identity of Narrative Art in Korean TV Dramas**

The internal reason that why Korean dramas can gain a local cultural identity as a foreign art form lie in the unique artistic representation of the dramas' narration, while the external reason that why Korean dramas are highly sought after and admired in the Chinese context is the agreement between the receptive context of Chinese culture and the internal value and aesthetic orientation of Korean dramas. To some extent, the compelling motivation for promoting the cross-context spread of this art form is that the value system implied in Korean TV dramas is accepted, recognized, and even infatuated in the context of Chinese culture, resulting in a certain aesthetic and value.

Admittedly, the success of Korean dramas in the Chinese cultural context benefits from the horizon and even emotional fusion produced by the cultural vision held by the creative subject of Korean drama narration and the common vision of the aesthetic subject in the cross-cultural context. The internal mechanism of constructing the horizon fusion is the cultural homogeneity of Korean context and Chinese context, because the two cultures share the foundation based on Confucian culture. In the history, the spread of Confucian culture in China and South Korea is a source and flow relationship. In the early period of Koguryo, Confucian culture has formed a comprehensive coverage and in-depth influence on this nation. The rulers of this nation practiced promoting the absorption of Confucian culture from the perspective of official administration. Therefore, Confucian culture which is a foreign culture and ideological system has also built a solid ideological foundation in traditional Korean society. Although the Confucian trend of thought have been created and changed by Korean ancestors, their inherent

ideological tone is consistent, which is the potential premise that cannot be ignored in the cross-context communication of modern Korean dramas.

Unlike the gradual decline of Confucian cultural influence in China, even in today's mainstream Korean society, adhering to and inheriting Confucian culture is still the national principle that modern Korean society has always believed in. The national concept of "loyalty to the king," "making friends with faith," and "filial piety" in interpersonal relations, "persuading good and punishing evil," and "suppressing evil and promoting good" in literature and art have always been fundamental basic norms in today's Korean society. In China, although the source and mainstream of the local culture have been continuous in the context of Confucianism, the same wind and cloud surge in history as questioning and abandonment, and this doubt and even deviation reached the peak in most of the 20th century. After the reform and opening up, the mainstream consciousness began to re-discover the historic value of Confucian culture and gradually restore the current status of this traditional culture; however, the artificial historical fracture cannot be bridged in a short period. The development of modern society witnesses the improvement of material life which promotes the social subject to have a sense of "seeking roots." But the fracture of the cultural foundation caused by the times has made the Chinese people deaf to the cultural identity, communication style and value. The western civilization introduced by reform and opening up cannot fill the gap in the spiritual level of the Chinese people because it is heterogeneous. Cultural identity crisis has become a common social phenomenon in modern society. When South Korean dramas landed in mainland China with the most authentic and straightforward source culture, Chinese people found a good medicine to heal their identity crisis from the inner spiritual system implied in Korean dramas. The ethical norms and lifestyle of Confucianism inherited by Korean dramas have formed a reasonable concept of self-identity in the interaction between themselves and others, which promotes the realization of each individual's self-identity. Confucianism carried by Korean dramas activates the cultural memory of Chinese people and awakens their pursuits for life experience and value. They gradually capture the long-forgotten spiritual relics in this art form. What Korean TV dramas bring is the form of "back-feeding" rather than the simple cultural entertainment and audio-visual pleasure. The dramas reawaken Chinese people's re-cognition of traditional culture and arouses Chinese people's search for roots. They bridge the cultural rupture of Chinese people's self-spirit in the transition between traditional and modern times and provide an ideological treasure house to awaken memory and emotion for the cultural continuation of modern Chinese people.

Nowadays, as a style of strong popular culture, Korean TV dramas bear the mission of structuring and transmitting the social values whose core is the cultural thought of Confucianism. The interpretation and admiration of Confucianism carried out by Korean dramas prompted the theory to be deeply rooted in the foreign context and continued to expand. The ethical morality, family concept and personality pursuit advocated by Confucianism have laid the foundation for the basic principles of modern Korean national culture. The scope and depth of the practice of morality advocated in Confucian culture in South Korea even far exceed the state of its mother culture. It is Korea's pursuit and worship of Confucian culture that makes the artistic form become the foundation of modern Korean culture. Based on this culture, Korean dramas convince Chinese people so that some scholars assert: "Korea today is a living fossil of ancient China" (Zhan, 2007). The Confucian culture in South Korean dramas stimulates the sense of acceptance of China's local context. It lowers the threshold for this foreign cultural and artistic form to settle in a foreign context. It promotes the recognition and acceptance of this artistic style in the Chinese context. It is undeniable that as far as the receptive groups in the Chinese context are concerned, the receptive groups familiar with the Confucian cultural ideas promoted by South Korean dramas are not unfamiliar with the Confucian cultural ideas promoted by South Korean dramas. When Chinese people find that their mother culture has taken root in a foreign country, they can derive a sense of cultural existence and cultural pride. This sense aims to promote the interaction and integration of the two national cultural contexts, which become the psychological normal for Chinese audiences to accept Korean dramas and their cultural thoughts.

From the perspective of communication, communication as a two-way behavior has never been wishful thinking. Facing the "invasion" of a foreign culture, the audiences dominate and defend in a state of stimulation. Their understanding and meaning construction of foreign cultural texts are usually obtained through "negotiation" with the text in a given cultural context, during which the audience's ability of cultural reflection and cultural criticism should not be underestimated. Their mother culture and the values determine what kind of label they put on foreign culture and how to judge it. The cultural exchanges between China and South Korea are the convergence and collision of heterogeneous cultures. The entering of Korean dramas should be regarded as a kind of communication in cross-cultural context. The degree of influence of a foreign culture in the cross-cultural communication depends on the degree of differences in the two cultural contexts. If there are more similarities between the two cultures, the result of decoding the foreign culture tends to be more consistent with the connotation given by the original information coding. "The more people have in common, the less serious setbacks or cultural misinterpretations they encounter in communication. When the cultural differences among members of different cultural groups increase, the possibility of misunderstanding is undoubtedly greater" (Guan, 1995). Confucian culture carried by Korean dramas has



bridged the gap between Chinese and Korean cultures. Due to the rendering of Confucianism, the values, lifestyle and even spiritual pursuits advocated by Korean dramas are not difficult to be understood and accepted in the eyes of Chinese audiences. The cultural identity and acceptance channels are connected and giving rise to a robust cultural convergence effect and cultural intimacy. "Perception is an important aspect of socio-cultural factors, and the similarity of perception makes it possible to share meaning within the same culture" (Samovar, 1988). It is the original homogeneity between Chinese and Korean cultures that has led to the popularity of Korean dramas in China. In spite of gaps and ridges, the dissemination of Korean culture is much smoother than that of western culture in China.

#### **4. The Power Structure behind the Light and Shadow: The Power Writing of The Narrative Art of Korean TV Dramas**

As a foreign art style, the popularity of Korean dramas in the Chinese context undoubtedly meets the internal needs of many social elements, thus building a grand landscape of cross-context communication. The dissemination of Korean dramas behind "watching" is a process of exerting power. Korean dramas also transfer and inculcate power to the audience by conveying happiness. The dramas achieve the operation of power by following the development of happy elements in the text and stimulating the happy emotions of the audience.

As far as South Korean TV dramas are concerned, the pursuit and production of audio-visual pleasure is an inexhaustible driving force for the popularity of Korean TV dramas. Pleasure production in Korean TV dramas is realized under a certain degree of power, or it can be said that power as the core force of visual art is also the core of South Korean TV dramas. In order to exert power over the audience and control the majority of the audience, the pleasure element of the Korean drama itself is critical. Korean dramas capture the audience and stimulate the audience's interest only by showing pleasure. Under the temptation and cooperation of pleasure, the Korean drama text controls the text power and realizes its cultural influence. So far as the receiver is concerned, the recipient's understanding of the Korean drama text is no longer flat or even subversive but internalized into the life experience of the performance picture, plot details, and character modality in the text to achieve a sufficient perception of the happiness of the text. Power has been internalized into the viewer's heart. It creates the viewing subjects who need the joy of the text. Korean dramas undoubtedly can produce pleasure, whose inexhaustible source is provided by the detailed description of the plot, the careful design of the aestheticism picture, and the comprehensive presentation of life details. Those unique text features shorten the distance between the text and the audience and let the audience feel the happiness created by the text in the process of watching. Particularly, the famous theme of real life, especially the life of ordinary people in South Korean TV dramas, bridges the gap between the inner perception of the audience in the real world and the artistic text. The production of happy meaning has become common in the process of Korean dramas dissemination. In the discourse power field dominated by elite discourse, although the film and television texts describing elite discourse may also arouse the audience's happiness, the realistic gap between elite discourse and ordinary audience exists objectively. However, the degree of its influence is limited, at least in such text dissemination, the audience's direct understanding is difficult to occur, so visual legitimacy is often questioned. The majority of viewers often drift away from this influence, so the scope and extent of which text-dominated happiness is being accepted are significantly reduced.

South Korean drama texts, through creating happy elements, stimulate the audience's interest in watching and form a temptation mechanism through which obtains the ultimate operation of power. Like other visual texts, the Korean drama texts give full play to the charm of temptation in expression and transform the temptation of the text into an lasting performance of the desire. The temptation of desire does not lie in what it can express but in the continuous expression of desire itself. This continuous expression delays the goal of desire indefinitely, abstracts desire and becomes a form of desire that represents characters. The power to realize temptation in South Korean TV dramas is quite hidden, which can still bring audience groups into their symbolic violence. This is a symbolic law - which is, moreover, not a law but an unavoidable rule. We adhere to it without grounds, as something arbitrary yet obvious, and not in accord with some transcendent principle (Baudrillard, 1990). The symbolic rule of this temptation is not the logic and rules of life followed in real life, and it belongs to the rules of symbolic temptation itself. The audience controlled by this set of rules in watching becomes the slave of the temptation phenomenon gradually. Under the disguise of this temptation rule the Korean drama texts have a profound influence on the audience, and the Korean TV drama texts have become the object worshiped by the viewers so that the viewers lose themselves in front of the symbol of temptation and give up their dominance.

Admittedly, behind the popularity of any cultural text style, there is a deep ideological drive. As Frederick Jameson said, "At the most basic level, every text is a political fantasy" (Jameson, 2004). An interactive relationship exists between the film and television script, which is also the carrier of media information and ideology, that is power. In the process of dissemination, media information not only reflects the pattern of benefit distribution formed by the media information itself and the firmly established power but also "is organized in a way to fundamentally represent a unique view of world construction. This information is usually processed in dominant or consultative codes. Furthermore, it is shared by most people as a form of

common sense” (Baldwin et al., 2007). Power usually manipulates visual discourse in micro form to achieve the purpose of controlling the audience in Korean dramas narration. The micro form can be interpreted in the following aspects, such as the operation of the lens, the editing of the visual pictures, the technical processing of the plays, and the choice of the narrative mode of the play. Employing the microcosmic operation, power is digested into every detail of Korean drama narration: lens, editor, color, language, action and scene. The characteristic portray of the details in Korean dramas lays the foundation for the unique representation of Korean drama. The portray also exerts the implied power weight to the extreme.

According to Bourdieu, power usually works in a power field. The possession of these powers also means the control of the special profits of this field (Bourdieu, 1997). Power constructs a workplace with the help of artistic texts. Power permeates the micro details of artistic texts and drives the audience's aesthetic taste, life habits, emotional representation, and even the reconstruction of the audience's self-identity. The popularity of Korean TV dramas has undoubtedly built a solid cultural field, which also has a built-in mechanism of power operation. Influence by this power, the aesthetic taste of the audience gradually converges, their life habits are gradually assimilated by the plot, and their evaluation criteria of visual discourse and lifestyle that are commonly used in the field are circulated. The visual discourse and the life mode often break through the barriers between the artistic world and real life. The visual discourse gradually evolves into a fashion in the real world. Power is a way to prevent people from having the slightest grievance by shaping people's ideas, perceptions, and preferences and making them accept their place in the existing order (Baldwin et al., 2007). Through the unified allocation of style, interest, and sentiment, Korean dramas have built a tremendous visual landscape and interest order, which is gradually presented in a fashionable style. The social individuals are classified by the fashion in the form of field whose external embodiment is unique language styles, dress styles, or behavioral characteristics. Those unfamiliar with and do not accept this fashion form are often excluded from the established field. Fashion shows a special charm in the restriction, which has the charm of the beginning and the end simultaneously, novelty and instant charm (Simmel, 2001). Almost every polar Korean drama has set off a fashion trend in the Chinese context, from beer and fried chicken to popular clothing and even Korean-flavored famous words, without exception, triggered a wave of convergence of the pursuit effect.

Definitely, as a foreign art form, the hidden power operation of Korean TV series directly promotes its inheritance and acceptance in the foreign context and constantly expands its acceptance field. Superficially, what it presents is only a foreign spread of cultural and artistic style, which is nothing more than a successful case without suspicion in the modern society with increasingly close globalization. But the role of this power cannot be underestimated in terms of its influence. Culture promotion is often based on the premise of occupying, weakening, and even destroying the existing field of other cultures. The continuous dissemination of Korean dramas brings not only the exotic amorous feelings of the visual senses but also a collision and intersection of the two cultural forms. A culture carries the values and world outlook of a nation. One foreign cultural form encroaching on the existing field of the local culture will undoubtedly tamper with the national identity and value orientation behind the established culture. The result is that the original local cultural map is weakened, forgotten, or even questioned, and the national character of the cultural foundation is challenged, let alone the material fields such as the economic level behind the culture. Those economic benefits produced by the Korean dramas are the direct testaments. Each successful Korean drama is the extraordinary driver of economic effects.

### **5. Aesthetic Disenchantment after Carnival: Cultural Enlightenment and Rational Reflection on the Narrative Art of Korean Dramas**

As a flashing exotic symbol in the cultural field in modern transformation of Chinese society, the occupation of the Chinese market by Korean drama art and the capture of the audience in the context of Chinese communication are successful. The extended cultural influence, the resulting economic, and even political forces cannot be ignored. Those who benefited from the dissemination of Western learning to the east in the 20th century may not take the wave of Korean dramas in China for granted, and the dominant events located in the pure cultural boundary seem to be challenging to explain the impact of this cultural phenomenon. The right way to treat the surging of Korean drama art in a foreign context and even the charismatic performance of this art form is not to echo and imitate others. What we should do is to make a calm and objective analysis and judgment, putting aside the layers of fog scattered by the art of Korean dramas. We can see the real mirror image constructed by this art form through this enchanting figure.

As an outstanding feature of the period in social transformation, the binary opposition trend at the cultural level is becoming increasingly evident. The increasing resolution of traditional ideas and the continuous emergence of cultural thoughts of the times are intertwined. It seems that deconstruction has become the most fashionable subject word in social development. The re-establishment of the new value system and the choice of the traditional deconstructed ideas coexist with deconstruction. A mutual connection and relay of the two value systems often lead to the swing and loss of the cultural acceptance groups, which provides a space for the “other” to enter the culture. Especially those who lack the basic cognition and scale of discriminating

and screening cultural codes are easier to become the trend of foreign cultures. An in-depth acceptance and spiritual infatuation of foreign culture are usually based on forgetting the mother culture, especially when the old and new cultures are at the barrier of transformation, which constitutes the evaluation symbol of social fashion. They are likely to lead to the absolute negative consciousness of the mother culture and the values it carries. We can assert that any nation that ignores, forgets, or even abandons its cultural traditions and values is terrible. If the forgetfulness and abandonment become a collective unconsciousness of the society, the hidden crisis is even more self-evident. Korean drama is a foreign cultural form whose opportunity to enter the Chinese context is that China is at the joint orifice of its social transformation, including cultural transformation. The traditional cultural concept has been questioned, and the new cultural form has not been established yet, which provides a port for Korean TV dramas to cut in. The Chinese complex held by Korean TV dramas themselves has undoubtedly paved a broad road for this cultural form to go straight forward. In China, however, the values carried by Korean dramas are, after all different from the local culture, and their molded social life is also very different from the Chinese life. If the Chinese audiences are infatuated with the life patterns and values in the mirror for a long time, there may be social problems and even mental confusion in real daily life probably.

Definitely, as a scientific attitude, we do not need to label the local popularity of South Korean TV dramas as cultural imperialism or cultural colonization, nor do we need to be too anxious about the tide of "Ha-Han" caused by South Korean dramas. Unlike economic and political exchanges and interaction, a majority of cultural exchanges are mental activities. The essential elements of their inherent cultural concept and artistic representation are the reason why the art of Korean dramas has been popular in foreign contexts for a long time. Compared with South Korean TV dramas, the domestic film and television production, and even cultural creation in recent years are lack of high-quality works but with higher expansion of profit-oriented consciousness. The production concept of "short and fast" affects the subjectivity of the producers. The criticism for domestic film and television production, and even the cultural field is the lack of in-depth excavation of traditional cultural ideas, ignoring the aesthetic of daily life and details under the guidance of quick success and quick profit. The leading factor of film and television art cannot be separated from entertainment, but "while attaching importance to the function of entertainment, we cannot ignore the educational function of mass culture" (Zeng, 2007). The practical strategies to deal with the exotic culture occupying its own living space should be endowing culture with profound connotation, promoting the educational attribute of culture and art, overcoming the superficial, planarization carnival, and demagogic representation of modern culture, and genuinely improving the connotation construction of culture itself.

As a result, the art of Korean dramas caused a wave of visual "shock" in the Chinese context under its glamorous shadows and costumes. They smashed the memory bunkers of Chinese people and constructed a mythological palace of commodity fetishism, thus creating a virtual world in an intoxicating real space. Korean dramas plasticize the subject consciousness of foreign space, guide the aesthetic subject to realize the generation of subject consciousness by glancing back, and present it in the form of a "perfect landscape" in an atmosphere of "self-romance." As the collective symbol of youthful fetishism, the charm of Korean TV dramas in the Chinese context lies in that it is good at applying diverse and rich characters and stories to show a high degree of homogeneity of spiritual hardship. They spare no effort to cut the "beauty" in real life into sporadic, impulsive moments to realize the recognition of the meaning of life. The vast differences from real life that constructed a kind and distant, utopian world.

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## A Comparative Analysis of Chinese Versions of *On the Road* based on Retranslation

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### Abstract

Translation practice is closely related to language development and social advances. The change in all aspects of society will promote translation activity. In addition, some translation texts need to be renewed especially in literary translation, due to social progress, and readers' demands. Therefore, many scholars around the world turn to retranslation and its hypothesis and give their definitions or express their views. The book, *On the Road*, written by Jack Kerouac and published in 1957, is one of the representative works of America in the 1950s, primarily reflecting the condition of the Beat Generation. After its publication, three Chinese versions of the early period in China emerged and the translators are: Chu'an Wen (Wen's version, 1998), Yongnian Wang (Wang's version, 2006), and Yueqing Tao and Xiaoli He (1990 version). In 2020, the works of Jack Kerouac entered into the public domain. Therefore, a couple of translation versions emerged, such as Xianghui Yao's version, Ang Wu's version and Wei Yang's version. This paper analyzes the four Chinese versions (respectively Tao and He's version, Yao's and Wu's and Yang's versions) from different dimensions in order to examine certain scholars' opinions on the phenomenon of retranslation.

**Keywords:** Translation activity, retranslation, comparative analysis, *On the Road*, literary translation

### 1. Introduction

*On the Road* was written by Jack Kerouac and published in 1957 by Viking Press. It was primarily autobiographical, originating from Jack Kerouac's experience of traversing the continental United States. This book describes the two main protagonists' behaviors on the road to Mexico, showing their spirits of taking adventure and seeking freedom, also reflecting spiritual emptiness of American youngsters after World War II. Their lifestyle exerted considerable influence on American youngsters in 1960s. Arguably, among Jack Kerouac's books, *On the Road* is the most representative work, which is recognized by *Les cent livres du siècle*. It is regarded as a classic by hippie movement around 1960s, albeit this book enjoys mixed reviews after its publication. In addition to the different evaluations, this novel is not compact in structure and is partly characterized by a stream of consciousness. Moreover, behind the social influence it brought and the recognition from the public, it went through an arduous process of publication. Kong's essay (2020) shows the turn of acceptance of mainstream culture at that time, which explains that *On the Road* takes six years from its draft to final publication. Kong expresses that this novel realizes the metamorphosis from folk literature to classic literature due to the active engagement of each party, involving academic study, and the press, among other things.

With its growing influence, the first Chinese version of cover-to-cover translation was published by Lijiang Publishing Limited in 1990, with Tao and He as its translators. And then, Wen's translated version was published in 1998. Wang's version, published in 2006 by Shanghai Translation Publishing House, had dominated the whole market for more than ten years. However, the year 2020 witnessed many new translated versions. Among those, Jie Chen's version, published by Hunan Literature and Art Publishing House, received much attention. There are other versions: Yao's version published by Phoenix Publishing & Media Group, Yingyi He's version published by Hunan Literature and Art Publishing House, as well as Wu's version, Yang's version. The translated versions spring up like mushrooms, but here a research focus will place on just four versions.

### 2. Retranslation

#### 2.1 Previous studies of Retranslation Outside China

According to Shuttleworth and Cowie (2014), the term "retranslation" is another name for "indirect translation", which means the translation process is conducted through intermediate translation relying on another language rather than the source language.

In Susam-Sarajeva's opinion (2006), there are some points about retranslation: not only the literary and canonical ones but also many other types of texts can be retranslated; the action of retranslation is not necessarily caused by the outdated translation versions or different times; retranslation will emerge when the current translations are flawed, assimilative, literal, or when the readers of target language shift their thoughts, or when a struggle for a local discourse that contains those

translation versions is conducted; retranslation consider more on the demands and views of the receiving system than the intrinsic characteristics of the source text.

Arguably, Susam-Sarajeva provides a fuller explanation for the retranslation phenomenon, introducing the retranslation of other texts into people's horizons and bringing further consideration for its reasons.

### 2.2 Previous studies of retranslation in China

As for the studies in China, many scholars discuss the difficulty of retranslation and discuss the relationship between the first translated version and the subsequent versions, and explore a way for the new translated versions to reach a higher level based on the existing achievement earned by the first version or the old ones. The following scholars primarily explore retranslation from the theoretical perspective and generalize the important issues in this field. Their conclusions provide the theoretical basis for the subsequent studies, including this paper. In contrast, this paper places emphasis on the research of specific cases and test some scholars' studies to some degree.

Luo (1995) points out that retranslation is a phenomenon with the development of translation practice and is indispensable for promoting the translation field to some extent. Luo thinks retranslation is inevitable, and the purpose is to seek better translation versions while respecting the old translations.

Luo (1991) refers to the first translation and the retranslated versions: the retranslated versions need to avoid repeated expressions of the first translation. Otherwise, the retranslations will suffer the suspicion of plagiarizing.

Xu (1996) concludes that retranslation have two meanings: one is that someone retranslates the works he or she has already translated. Another is that someone retranslates the works other scholars or translators has already translated. Xu also thinks that literary translation, especially literary retranslation, should utilize the advantages of the target language and adopt the best expressions in receiving system.

Gu (2003) puts forward retranslation on filtered translational accumulation, which means that the translated versions should reasonably employ all the old translations, absorb the quintessence, and infuse new better expressions. In this way, a translation version that is the closest to the original text will be produced.

Above Studies refer to the attitude to the first translated version or the past versions: respecting and absorbing their quintessence. Some studies continue to refine the concept of retranslation, and others, like Gu's research, contribute to its theoretical innovation.

### 2.3 Summarization

The studies of retranslation outside China explore the definition of retranslation and the texts it involves as well as its reasons. In contrast, the studies in China focus more on the retranslation process and its outcomes—different translated versions. Both of them contribute to flourishing retranslation.

## 3. Relevant studies about On the Road

### 3.1 Previous studies of On the Road outside China

The following studies primarily analyze *On the Road* from the perspectives of culture and literature. Little attention is drawn to its translation or retranslation. Under this circumstance, this paper intends to fill that gap.

*Dougherty* (2008) uses an ecological perspective to read this novel under the context of the increase of automobiles and more reliance on fuel in America and discusses the vision of driving on the road from the protagonist Sal's view. Ireland (2009) studied the relationship between the works of road genre and American history and culture. *On the Road* is one of the cases to be analyzed. *Salles et al.* (2018) explore the existential curiosity in the face of unexpected events and scenes based on phenomenology.

Savio (2019) analyzes how the authors embody their experience of World War II in their works and takes the two novels Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* and J. D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* as the examples and explores the determinant forming the novels. Morrison (2020) explores *The Canterbury Tales* and *On the Road* from the perspective of Pilgrimage Ecopoetics and points out that Geoffrey Chaucer's *Tales* exert influence on Jack Kerouac's writing of this novel.

To sum up, *Dougherty*' research is a unique perspective for the study of *On the Road*, for this book itself has literary solid color. While Savio and Morrison explore this novel with another work employing one typical character or research perspective and understand the links between works or the works with American society. *Salles et al.* notice the novel's content, while Ireland regards it as one subject together with other similar subjects to analyze his research topic. From the

analysis of Savio and Morrison, respectively, in 2019 and 2020, a research trend of *On the Road* may combine it with another novel or other works to discuss common problems.

### 3.2 Previous Studies of *On the Road* in China

The following studies involve the literary perspective and the perspective of translation. However, they lack the analysis from the perspective of retranslation. Furthermore, this paper provides two dimensions: synchronic analysis and diachronic analysis, and introduces new translated versions into study, which enriches the research of this novel.

He (2003) explores the writing style of *Tropic of Cancer* and *On the Road* and points out three characters: the first-person narrative approach to describe the life and ideas of “the lost generation” and “the beat generation”, the expression of anti-traditional culture and the shape of anti-hero character, spontaneous motivation and creative method. Jiang and Yu (2010) discuss the impact of wars on American people, in particular their mental world, through the analysis of Hemingway’s *The Sun Also Rises* and Jack Kerouac’s *On the Road* and find that there are something similar between “the lost generation” and “the beat generation”: traumatized by the wars and seeking for new values. Jin (2012) analyzes the marginal people in *On the Road*, *Rabbit Run*, and *The Catcher in the Rye*. It shows those people’s inability to integrate themselves into the society at that time and their rebellion. Su (2013) discusses the significance of Route 66 for American culture and people, combines the context of the novel *On the Road* and further reflects the spirits of the westward process through Route 66. Li (2015) explores the translator’s subjectivity through Wen’s version and Wang’s version and discusses the nuances of the two versions caused by translators’ different opinions. Han (2016) analyzes the different Chinese versions from three phases: in 1980s and 1990s, at the turn of the century, in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, and shows the main characters of various translated versions. Han (2017) uses the two novels of Jack Kerouac to explore the betweenness of the author himself. He shows the contradictions between seeking freedom and stability in *On the Road*, and between the breakthroughs and conservatism in *The Dharma Bums*. Jin (2018), based on Gadamer’s prejudices theory, analyzes the two translated versions of *On the Road*, respectively Yushi Huang and Xianrong Shi’s 1962 version and Wang’s 2006 version, from the perspective of language, cultural context, and economic climate.

To sum up, many scholars in China make a comparison or find similar characters between this novel and other works, no matter what perspectives they explore. In addition, some analyze the translated versions of this novel, mainly two versions to compare.

Studies about this novel both at abroad and home may contain literary elements, such as highway culture, the characters’ analysis, value seeking, and dimension of translation, such as the comparison between two versions, and its translation and communication in China. Furthermore, many studies utilize comparisons between translated versions or different works.

Through the review of this novel, the author finds there is no research on retranslation about this novel. Moreover, less attention to the new translated versions after 2020 is paid. Therefore, the author decides to study Chinese versions from the perspective of retranslation and discusses the value of retranslation in this novel.

## 4. Comparative Analysis of the Chinese Versions

### 4.1 The Comparison among three versions published in 2020

#### 4.1.1 Basic Introduction of the three versions

The author chooses Wu’s version, Yao’s version, and Yang’s version, all of which were published in 2020. They are distributed by CITIC Press Group, Jiangsu Phoenix Literature and Art Publishing House, Yunnan People’s Publishing House separately.

#### 4.1.2 Specific analysis in diction

Arguably, “Diction” refers to an activity that when people want to express something or translate one language into another, people will choose an appropriate expression under corresponding context.

The author extracts some examples from the translated versions. All of examples use various expression on words of the source text, showcasing translators’ consideration on diction.

#### Translation Example 1.

Source text: I first met Dean not long after my wife and I split up. I had just gotten over a serious illness that I won’t bother to talk about, except that it had something to do with the miserably weary split-up.....

Target text by Yao: 我和妻子分手不久后，第一次见到了迪恩。那会儿我刚从重病中恢复过来，至于生病我懒得多说什么，总之和我们令人疲惫的可悲的分手有关…… (wǒ hé qī zǐ fēn shǒu bù jiǔ hòu, dì yī cì

jiàn dào le dí ēn. nà huì ér wǒ gāng cóng zhòng bìng zhōng huī fù guò lái, zhì yú shēng bìng wǒ lǎn de duō shuō shēn me, zǒng zhī hé wǒ men líng rén pí bèi de kě bēi de fēn shǒu yǒu guān.....)

Target text by Wu: 我头回遇到迪安是在我和我老婆散伙之后不久，那时我病了一场，但这场病我也不想再提及了，生病确实与那场悲催、令人疲倦的离婚有关……(wǒ tóu huí yù dào dí ān shì zài wǒ hé wǒ lǎo pò s àn huǒ zhī hòu bù jiǔ, n àsh íwǒ bìng le yī chǎng, d àn zh èchǎng b ìng wǒ yě bù xiǎng zài tí jí le, shēng bìng qu èsh íyǔ n àchǎng bēi cuī, líng rén pí bèi de lí hūn yǒu guān.....)

Target text by Yang: 第一次遇到迪恩，是我和妻子离婚后不久。我刚经历了一场大病，具体情况也懒得多说了，反正肯定跟那场叫人心力交瘁的分手和我的情绪脱不了关系……(dì yī cì yù dào dí ēn, shì wǒ hé qī zǐ lí hūn hòu bù jiǔ. wǒ gāng jīng lì le yī chǎng dà bìng, jù tǐ qíng kuàng yě lǎn de duō shuō le, fǎn zhèng kěn dìng gēn nà chǎng jiào rén xīn lì jiāo cuī de fēn shǒu h éwǒ de qíng xù tuō bù liǎo guān xi.....)

“Split up” is translated as “fēn shǒu/分手”, which means “break up” in Yao’s text, “lí hūn/离婚” which means “get divorced” in Yang’s text, “sàn huǒ/散伙” which means “end a relationship” in Wu’s text. However, when “split-up” appears for the second time, only Yao handles it with the first expression “fēn shǒu”, while Yang changes it from “lí hūn” to “fēn shǒu”, Wu adjusts it from “sàn huǒ” to “lí hūn”. Considering the original text, “I first met Dean not long after my wife and I split up”, the word “wife” in Chinese means a title for a woman who gets married, so for Chinese readers, the words “split up” means that the marriage between “I” and “my wife” is dissolved. The three translations introduce three different words to express that situation.

#### Translation Example 2.

Source text: One day I was hanging around the campus and Chad and Tim Gray told me Dean was staying in a cold-water pad in East Harlem, the Spanish Harlem.

Target text by Yao: 一天我在校园里闲逛，查德和蒂姆·格雷告诉我迪恩住进了东哈莱姆区——一套只供应冷水的廉价公寓。(yī tiān wǒ zài xiào yuán lǐ xián guàng, chā dé hé tí mǔ · gē léi gào sù wǒ shuō dí ēn zhù jìn le dōng hā lái mǔ qū--yī tào zhǐ gōng yìng lěng shuǐ de lián jià gōng yù.)

Target text by Wu: 有一天，我正在校园里闲逛，查德和蒂姆·格雷跟我说迪安住在东哈莱姆的一所冬天不带暖气的破公寓里，西班牙语区的哈莱姆。(yǒu yī tiān, wǒ zhèng zài xiào yuán lǐ xián guàng, chā dé hé tí mǔ · gē léi gào sù wǒ shuō dí ān zhù zài dōng hā lái mǔ de yī suǒ dōng tiān bù dài nuǎn qì de pò gōng yù lǐ, xī bān yá yǔ qū de hā lái mǔ.)

Target text by Yang: 一天，我正在学校里晃悠，查德和蒂姆·格雷告诉我，狄恩就在东哈莱姆区，也就是所谓西班牙哈莱姆区的一片贫民窟里。(yī tiān, wǒ zhèng zài xué xiào lǐ huàng yōu, chā dé hé tí mǔ · gē léi gào sù wǒ, dí ēn jiù zài dōng hā lái mǔ qū, yě jiù shì suǒ wèi xī bān yá hā lái mǔ qū de yī piàn pín mín kū lǐ.)

“Cold-water pad” is translated as “lěng shuǐ gōng yù/冷水公寓”, indicating that “the pad only supplies cold water” in Yao’s version, and as “dōng tiān bù dài nuǎn qì de pò gōng yù/冬天不带暖气的破公寓”, meaning that “the pad lacks the heating facilities” in Wu’s version. In comparison, Yang renders it as the meaning of “slum”, in Chinese “pín mín kū/贫民窟”.

Yao’s version is arguably literal translation. Throughout the context, it is unnecessary to emphasize the supply of water in the pad, and there are no relevant plots revolving around “cold water” or “hot water”. Wu’s version mentioned above belongs to liberal translation to some degree. It strips the literal meaning off, changes the meaning into an acceptable expression and presents a pad with poor facilities. This will not cause distortion of the main idea of this novel. Likewise, Yang utilizes free translation. “Cold-water pad” is translated into three versions.

#### Translation Example 3.

Source text: And this was really the way that my whole road experience began, and the things that were to come are too fantastic not to tell.

Target text by Yao: 我的整个路上生涯也确实就是这么开始的，即将发生的事情神奇得难以描述。(wǒ de zhěng gè lù shàng shēng yá yě què shí jiù shì zhè me kāi shǐ de, jí jiāng fā shēng de shì qíng shén qí de nán yǐ miáo shù.)



Target text by Wu: 我后来整个“在路上”的生涯就是这么开始的，之后发生的一切简直匪夷所思。(wǒ hòu lái zhěng gè ‘zài lù shàng’ de shēng yá jiù shì zhè me kāi shǐ de, zhī hòu fā shēng de yī qiè jiǎn zhí fēi yí suǒ sī.)

Target text by Yang: 这条路后来真的成了我整个“在路上”历程的开端，之后发生的事奇妙到不可思议，简直无法言说。(zhè tiáo lù hòu lái zhēn de chéng le wǒ zhěng gè ‘zài lù shàng’ lì chéng de kāi duān, zhī hòu fā shēng de shì qí miào dào bù kě sī yì, jiǎn zhī wú fǎ yán shuō.)

“Too fantastic not to tell” is translated by Yao and Yang through literal translation based on the English structure, with different Chinese characters. Wu deals with this situation by utilizing the Chinese four-character words “fēi yí suǒ sī /匪夷所思”, which means that “someone’s behaviors or something is too abnormal and weird to imagine by other ordinary people”. “Too fantastic not to tell” in the source text is to describe the subsequent experiences of the protagonists. Furthermore, the characters in the novel are on behalf of the Beat generation. The attitudes of challenging traditional values, contempt for social orders, and seeking for absolute freedom fill their minds. Under this circumstance, the three translations capture the original meaning and adopt various dictions to express the source text.

Above cases of study showcase various dictions regarding the original will be applied in diverse translations to avoid repetition.

#### 4.1.3 Specific analysis in comprehension

“Berthoud Pass” emerges four times in the original text. Through the verification of Wikipedia, this word refers to mountains rather than a person. Therefore, the explanation of Yao’s version for “...reached clear to the top of Berthoud Pass...” is not appropriate because it is described as Ferdinand Berthoud, a French horologist. Yao misunderstands the context here. As for Yang and Wu, both provide the proper meaning of “Berthoud Pass”.

This shows that retranslations, even emerging at the same period, will correct or prevent misunderstanding of the source text and avoid flawed versions with the pursuit of adequate and better renderings.

#### 4.2 Yueqing Tao and Xiaoli He’s version and ang Wu’s version

##### 4.2.1 Basic introduction of the two versions

The publishing time of the selected two versions spans 30 years. Tao and He’s version (hereinafter referred to as Tao’s version), the first formal Chinese version, was published in 1990. Wu’s version with other new versions springs up in 2020.

##### 4.2.2 Analysis of the language from lexical terms

This paper discusses the development of language from lexical terms. For example, regarding the appellation in the novel without particular signified, Tao’s version almost deals with them totally by the word “huǒ jì/伙计”, which refers to a term of endearment between males in some regions of Northern China. Through counting, “huǒ jì” appears 136 times in Tao’s translated version, and 7 times in Wu’s text. It proves that “huǒ jì” in China’s language development presents a declining tendency, though this word is not old-fashioned enough to be sifted out. Instead, Wu adopts “gē men/哥们”, which enjoys a similar function as “huǒ jì”, totaling 153 times. And this word “gē men” is a daily expression nowadays, following the current language usage.

##### 4.2.3 Analysis on diction

This part is related to discussion on exact wording. The word “Blackie” in “Hey, Blackie” is translated as “zá zhǒng/杂种” in Tao’s version and into “lǎo hēi/老黑” in Wu’s version. In Chinese, “zá zhǒng” is foul language when connected with people. Nevertheless, the original text here includes no hostility, disparagement, or contempt, but a relaxed tone, a salutation. In this circumstance, “zá zhǒng” with its negative effect is unsuitable and may be misleading. Based on the attitude to black people from the whole text, no expression about black people is accompanied by distain. Therefore, Wu tackles “Blackie” in a simple manner to ensure a familiar oral expression in target language.

##### 4.2.4 Analysis of Translation Errors

Translation errors may include the following types: obvious mistakes such as wrong translation of common sense, mistakes caused by misunderstanding, mistakes made due to limited recognition.

The following examples, to some extent, reflect the types of translation errors above. Some basic mistakes can be corrected immediately, others can be revised with meticulous consideration of the context. And some mistakes caused by limited recognition will be corrected with the development of recognition and the passage of time.

#### Translation Example 4

Source text: Missouri Pacific

Target text by Tao: 密苏里的大西洋 (mì sū lǐ de dà xī yáng)

Target text by Wu: 密苏里太平洋 (mì sū lǐ tǎi pínghǎi)

Tao's version mixes up "Pacific" and "Atlantic" and changes the Chinese expression of "Pacific" as that of "Atlantic". In terms of this point, Wu provides the proper translation.

Translation Example 5.

Source text: "When you borrowed that nickel to make up the check for the chicken-fried steaks"

"No, man, the chili! Remember, the Texas Star?"

Target text by Tao: "当你借上几个子儿去买油煎鸡排。" ("dāng nǐ jǐ èr shàng jǐ gè zǐ er qù mǎi yóu jiān jī pái.")

"不，老兄，真见鬼！你还记得《得克萨斯星报》吗？" ("bù, lǎo xiōng, zhēn jiàn guǐ! nǐ hái jì de dé kè sà sī xīng bào ma?")

Target text by Wu: "那回你找我借了5美分，好凑够买炸鸡排的钱。" ("nà huí nǐ zhǎo wǒ jiè le 5 měi fēn, hǎo cù gòu mǎi zhà jī pái de qián.")

"不，哥们，是辣子鸡！你记得吗？在得克萨斯之星。" ("bù, gē men, shì là zǐ jī! nǐ jì de ma? zài dé kè sà sī zhī xīng.")

"Texas Star" is understood as a newspaper in Yao's text and as a restaurant in Wu's version during the translation process. According to the context, with "chicken-fried steaks" and "chili" as reference information, Wu's understanding is more accurate, while Tao offers a not coherent version of those sentence expressions.

There are some other examples like "Columbus, so long". Tao's version does not understand the meaning in the original text, thereby giving an irrelevant translated text. However, Wu realizes a perfect link with the previous information: the two high-school boys who say "Columbus, so long" are from Columbus, Ohio, and plan to hitch around the United States in the summer. Above information fathoms out what the source wants to express: two boys have stayed Columbus for a long time and say goodbye to this place to start their journey. Under this circumstance, Wu's version presents a flawless one.

"Chevy" is another name for "Chevrolet". Cars of the brand "Chevrolet" were introduced into China's market in 2005. Due to the early publication in 1990, "Chevy" may be a new word or a specific translation about it was not determined. Tao's version does not translate it as "xuě fú lán/雪佛兰" in Chinese, while Wu revises this point.

In short, from the perspectives of language development, diction, errors correction, Wu's version provides better expressions than Tao's.

## 5. Conclusion

The comparison among the three versions shows that the translated versions published in a same period would choose various vocabularies and adopt different translation methods to accomplish the target text without many similarities while ensuring a relatively excellent translation. Through the analysis, all translated versions show evident signs to avoid repetition. The comparison between the old version and the new version demonstrates that 30 years is not enough to witness significant differences in language, especially in literary expression and that the new translation truly makes strides and seeks a better translation. Based on the discussion of the above cases, this paper proves that 1) retractions indeed avoid repetition with existing translations, 2) the reason of retranslation include that the previous versions are flawed and there is a need to seek better ones.

Certainly, there exist some limits to this paper. Five new translation versions were produced and published in 2020. Due to limited time, the author only chooses three of them. Some new examples or research perspectives may exist in other versions, which may be discussed in future papers. Meanwhile, other scholars may explore the other texts from the comparative analysis or just a single one.

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