The Study on Translation of Culture-loaded Words in *Aerial ChinaI-Jiangxi* from the Perspective of Semantic and Communicative Translation

Yang Jing[1] & Chen Xuebin[1]

[1] Gannan Normal University, China

Correspondence: Yang Jing, School of Foreign Languages, Gannan Normal University, Ganzhou, China. 341000.

Abstract

Aerial ChinaI- Jiangxi has been widely accepted by foreign audiences. In this documentary, there are many culture-loaded words with Jiangxi cultural characteristics. We all know that the translation of Chinese culturally-loaded words has long been a tricky problem. Take the translation of culture loaded words in *Aerial ChinaI- Jiangxi* as an example, this paper discusses how Newmark's communicative translation and semantic translation theory are applied to the translation of Chinese culture loaded words. It is considered that semantic translation and communicative translation are not completely opposite but complement each other. Good translation works are usually the perfect combination of the two. In order to help translators better translate culture loaded words and achieve the real purpose of cross-cultural communication.

Keywords: culture-loaded words, semantic translation, communicative translation

1. Introduction

Language is the carrier of culture. Translation is not only the transformation between two languages, but also the communication between two cultures. The difficulty of translation is largely due to the fact that language carries cultural information on the one hand and is subject to the culture on the other. Due to the differences of national history, social system, lifestyle and geographical environment, different nationalities have large or small cultural differences. In recent years, China's mainstream media have successively translated and introduced a series of documentaries abroad with Chinese culture as its theme，which has been highly praised by foreign audiences. *Aerial ChinaI- Jiangxi* launched by CCTV in 2017 is a successful example. By watching excellent Chinese documentaries, foreign audiences can appreciate an open, inclusive, innovative and traditional China, so as to feel China's long history and culture, prosperity and eye-catching development and changes. Therefore, Chinese Documentaries go abroad and provide a positive exploration for the "going global" of Chinese culture. *Aerial ChinaI- Jiangxi* is the fifth episode of the first season of *Aerial China.* It records Jiangxi from the perspective of aerial photography, walks through the top of famous mountains and the Bank of Jiangxi water, explores the story of ancient villages in Jiangxi, and tells the human history of Jiangxi. (Yu, 2017, p83-85) There are a large number of proper nouns or key words reflecting Jiangxi folk culture in its commentary. These words show strong local characteristics and adopt many local traditional customs, ancient literature and cultural elements to reflect the Chinese culture of all parts of China. This causes great difficulties in the translation of commentaries. This is also a headache for translators in the process of translation, which has become the key to the success of translation to a great extent. Based on Newmark's translation theory and under the guidance of semantic translation and communicative translation strategies, this paper makes an analysis of culture loaded words in *Aerial ChinaI-Jiangxi*. The following will elaborate and analyze the translation strategies of culture loaded words from two aspects: semantic translation and communicative translation.

2. Culture-Loaded Words

"A Culture-loaded word is also called a vacancy of word. It means that the cultural information carried by the original vocabulary has no corresponding language in the target language." (Bao&Bao, 2004, p. 10）Every kind of language is the product of the development of national culture. Every country and every nation have their own unique history of development, social system, ecological environment, religious beliefs, ethnic customs, etc. Therefore, each language has its own specific vocabulary, idioms and allusions. Culture-loaded words reflect these

ideas and things. Liao Qiyi(2002, p. 232) gave a definition of culture-loaded words that "culture-loaded words are words, phrases, and idioms that signify a particular thing in a culture. These vocabularies reflect the unique lifestyle in which specific ethnic groups accumulate over a long historical period and are different from other ethnic groups." In the context of the increasing cultural output of Chinese culture, the study of translation of these culture-loaded words not only promotes the exchange and development of literary works among different ethnic groups, but also disseminates the Chinese nation's externalization, splendid culture and deepens the people's understanding of Chinese culture around the world. (Zheng, 2016, p. 53-56)

3. Semantic Translation and Communicative Translation

Peter Newmark is an accomplished translation scholar as well as an experienced translator. In his work *Approaches to Translation*, Newmark proposes two types of translation: semantic translation and communicative translation. The semantic translation and communicative translation proposed by Newmark is a major breakthrough in the history of translation research in the world.

In his book *Approach to Translation*, Peter Newmark (1981, p. 39) states evidently about ST and CT as follows: Semantic translation attempts to accurately express the information of the original text depend on the semantic and syntactic structure of the second language meets certain conditions. This means that ST gradually emphasizes the importance of the source language and maximizes its conformity with the information and patterns of the original text. Peter Newmark believes that the author's specific writing style and expressive skills should be retained. First of all, semantic translation should be used as a means of expression for source culture and writers. If the content of source text cannot be understood simply, it can be supplemented by language. Secondly, ST has the characteristics of complexity and concreteness and entirety.

Communicative translation constantly reproduces and restores text information to provide readers with a good reading experience (Newmark, 1981, p. 39). The language in CT is mainly to provide easy-to-understand language text for target readers, with concise and fluent style. Peter Newmark (1981, p. 39) argues that CT is only suitable for readers who convert other languages into native languages, reducing the difficulty of reading as much as possible.

Although the definition is concise, it explores the differences. Firstly, ST takes the original author as the center, focusing on the faithfulness of the original text; the core of CT is the target reader, emphasizing the reader's acceptability, so that the text is more concise, smooth and concentrated. Next, ST has certain specificity, while CT is subjective and intuitive. Thirdly, in the process of ST, the translator should pay attention to the source text in order to make readers know about the main idea and use the culture of the source language to interpret the source text, which is of great significance for readers to understand the main ideas of the source text. However, in the process of communicative translation, the translator should pay more attention to the target language readers and provide readers with a good reading experience. Fourthly, semantic translation pays attention to the reproduction of the original language information. The translator can only add some explanations or illustration when the reader does not understand the meaning of the text. Compared with that, CT is universal. It focuses on the reading experience of target language readers. Strengthen the simplicity and fluency of the translation language and reduce the reading troubles.

4. Application of Semantic Translation in Culture-Loaded Words

Semantic translation attempts to maximize the style and contextual meaning of the original text in the syntactic structure of the target language. Some Chinese culture loaded words have distinct regional cultural characteristics. These features have special significance in a specific context. In order to protect the source language culture and make the target language readers enjoy the charm of the source language culture, the translator can adopt semantic translation strategies. Under the guidance of semantic translation strategies, there are specific translation methods such as transliteration, transliteration with annotation, literal translation and so on. Due to *Aerial ChinaI- Jiangxi* is a documentary with Jiangxi culture as the theme. In its commentary, there are a large number of proper nouns or key words reflecting Jiangxi folk culture. These culture loaded words are very strange to English speaking countries. Therefore, as translators, we can choose semantic translation methods according to their characteristics when translating these culture loaded words. Transliteration plus literal translation、literal Translation and transliteration with notes are all methods of semantic translation.

4.1 Transliteration plus Literal Translation

In addition to literal translation and free translation, the translation of culture loaded words requires the combination of transliteration and literal translation. Transliteration is often used with literal translation and plays an effective role in translation. Some common examples are culture loaded words that include a proper noun (such

as location name and intangible cultural heritage) and a common noun. In this case, transliteration is used to convey local characteristics, while literal translation is used to translate common nouns. The main reason for the use of this method is that transliteration itself cannot reproduce the cultural meaning of the original language in form or content.

Example 1

运下山的竹子，将用来制作一种千年不腐的连四纸。从竹子中提取竹纤维，进行晾晒，再到造出连四纸，需要数十道工序，历时近一年才能完成。

The bamboo will be used to make a special kind of paper. Fibers is extracted from it and dried. A dozens processed, and about a year later, resilient Liansi paper is produced.

"连四纸", a specialty of Qianshan County in Jiangxi Province and a traditional handicraft paper product, is a national intangible cultural heritage with a long history and unique Jiangxi characteristics. In the translation, this cultural loaded word will be translated into "Liansi paper", which adopts the combination of transliteration and literal translation, rather than literal translation into "four paper" or transliteration into "liansizhi", which will make the target language audience confused and fail to achieve the purpose of transmitting Chinese culture. We can adopt the strategy of combining transliteration with literal translation, that is, expressing cultural characteristics before Chinese Pinyin, and adding literal translation to the articles existing in both cultures. Because Liansi paper is a unique cultural word, which contains rich cultural connotation. Retaining part of the pronunciation of the original word can reflect the Chinese flavor and let foreigners know that it is a kind of paper with Chinese characteristics. It is not necessary to mechanically translate the cultural vocabulary into the target language. The most important thing is to convey relevant information, arouse the curiosity of foreign audiences and tourists and realize the purpose of cultural transmission.

Example 2

这么一叠，便叠出了垂直落差近千米的上堡梯田。有了田地，解决了温饱问题，客家人开始想着把家安在这里。错落在现代楼房中的这些深色建筑，就是客家人的传统居所--围屋。为了躲避土匪和猛兽的侵袭，他们用坚硬的围墙，圈起一方天地，开始聚族而居。

In this way, the Shangbao Terraces were created and the vertical distance from top to bottom could reach almost a thousand metres. Having secured sufficient land and adequate food, the Hakka decided to stay. The well-laid-out coloured buildings among the more modern structures are traditional Hakka residences. They are known as roundhouses. To protects themselves from bandits and wild animals, the Hakka established enclosed areas where they lived in compact communities.

"上堡梯田" was rated as "the largest Hakka terrace" by jinis of Shanghai great world, which is one of the three wonders of terraces in China. The translation adopts the combination of transliteration and literal translation, which is translated as "Shangbao terraces". The transliteration of Shangbao is a place name to show the regional characteristics of Jiangxi, which is different from the terraces in other regions. At the same time, the cultural landscape of terraces is found all over the world, so it translates into terraces. Therefore, literal translation plus transliteration is also a good method, which not only retains the characteristics of the source language, but also closes to the target audience.

4.2 Literal Translation

Literal translation is also called word for word translation. Literal translation is the correct way to make the translation accurate and accurate when conveying the original text. literal translation is a right method to make the translated versions accurate and precise when conveying the original versions. Under the condition of language norms, the translation not only maintains the content of the Chinese original text, but also retains the form of the original text, including rhetorical devices, local colors and sentence patterns. Although there exist differences between the two cultures, people from different cultures may share similar opinions and ideas referring to the language expressions. This is because people from different cultural backgrounds may have similar feelings and emotions. Therefore, a large part of the English translation of commentaries in documentaries adopts the method of literal translation.

Example 3

今天的龙虎山景区，每天都有"悬棺表演"，人们尝试复原古人放置悬棺的过程，表演者借助滑轮和麻绳，顺利完成悬棺的安放。

In the Mount Longhu scenic area, performances are put on to demonstrate exactly how the hanging coffins are placed on the cliff. Experts believe that rollers and hemp ropes were traditionally used to lift the hanging coffins into place.

"悬棺" in the source text is one of the burial styles of ancient ethnic minorities in southern China. The translator literally translates it as "the hanging coffins", which has not been annotated or explained. Although foreign audiences may not be able to understand the traditional Chinese burial style, they can know that it is a kind of burial style by watching the documentary, because the hanging coffin is a kind of burial style different from the West. The translation retains the charm of the source text as much as possible, conveys the foreign cultural characteristics of Jiangxi, and arouses the curiosity of foreign audiences, Documentary pictures are added to make the target audience have a vivid understanding of this strange burial style. Semantic translation focuses on the author of the source text and pays attention to the faithfulness to the original text. Retain the original information in order to convey semantics to the target audience.

4.3 Transliteration with Notes

Transliteration with notes is to translate a word in Chinese Pinyin, and then express the unique cultural connotation of the word through interpretation, so as to achieve the purpose of cultural information transmission. Transliteration plus interpretation provides the necessary social and cultural background information for the target readers. In translation, the information content is self-evident to the source language readers, while the target language readers are unfamiliar. Therefore, through transliteration, the original cultural characteristics can be retained. However, due to national and cultural differences, only using transliteration cannot be understood or misunderstood by foreigners. Therefore, the translator can use transliteration plus interpretation, which can not only retain the Chinese characteristics of vocabulary, spread folk culture, but also enable the target audience to fully understand its meaning, it is conducive to cross-cultural communication. For some names with specific cultural significance, the translator can choose transliteration with notes to retain the original meaning and help readers better understand their culture.

Example 4

村民们手中的"井"字形木架，叫作打轿。在当地，打轿谐音"大发"，谁能把打轿抢回家，就意味着谁的运气会最好。

The wooden frame they're holding is known as a "dajiao". In the local dialect, it's pronounced "dafa", meaning "prosperity". It's said that whoever wins the dajiao will enjoy great good fortune.

"打轿" is an ancient custom unique to Bailu village, Ganxian county. The translation adopts the method of transliteration "Dajiao" with notes, which can retain cultural information to the greatest extent. Of course, in order to help foreign audiences correctly understand this traditional custom, it can also be properly explained before and after transliteration, and the translation method of transliteration and interpretation can be adopted. On the one hand, it can create a strong exotic atmosphere and retain the Chinese characteristics of vocabulary. On the other hand, it also takes care of the readers' understanding needs and fills the readers' cultural cognitive gap (Fan, 2010, p. 83). To a large extent, it makes up for the poor information transmission of transliteration method, enhances the intuition of expression, and enables foreign audiences to better understand Jiangxi characteristic culture. Create the best contextual effect for foreign audiences, convey Jiangxi folk culture, and meet the psychological expectations of the target audience.

5. Application of Communicative Translation of Culture-Loaded Words

According to Newmark, communicative translation intends to serve for the target readers who expect to receive the kind of information, which is easier to be comprehended and closer to their local culture. To some extent, this is a kind of translation for communication with the target reader (Newmark, 1981, p. 56). The strategy of communicative translation is target language-oriented or reader-oriented. According to communicative point of view, communication that functions in a certain way in one culture may not work with the same degree of success in another culture. In translation, we cannot guarantee that the translation will have the same or similar effect on readers of the target language culture as the original may have had on readers of the source language culture even if we translate every word in the original by an "equivalent" word because the concepts expressed in a translation can only be meaningful in the context of the target language readers' culture. Foreignization can be used for culture loaded words with exactly the same culture and the same part of culture. Its advantage is to adapt or replace the culture words of the source language. Communicative translation methods include free translation and omission.

5.1 Free Translation

Free translation means to translate the source text according to its general meanings. This method sustains the contents not the form of source text. In terms of some words with strong culture meaning, they are hard to understand through the way of literal translation, and it tends to impose the culture of target text on that of source text through the way of substitution, so free translation is the best and most suitable choice at this time. Free translation refers to use the words with less cultural meaning of SL to translate the message of TL. Peter Newmark gives the definition of free translation, "Free translation reproduces the matter without the matter, or the content without the form of the original. Usually it is a paraphrase much longer than the original, a so-called 'intralingual translation', often prolix and pretentious, and not translation at all." (Newmark, 2001, p. 46-47). The trait of free translation is consistent with that of communicative translation, so it can be considered as the application of communicative translation.

Example 5

当地流传着一句俗语，一面鼓，一面锣，爆竹一响就跳傩。

As a local saying goes, Beat the gongs, sound the drums, set off firecrackers and dance he exorcism dance.

"傩舞"in the original text is also commonly known as "跳傩", which follows the ancient ceremony of expelling ghosts and epidemic diseases. It was originally an ancient blessing and disaster praying ceremony with strong superstitious color. After long years of reform and innovation, it has gradually evolved into a folk dance."傩舞"is an activity with ancient folk characteristics, which is missing in the culture of British and American countries. In translation, we should not only correctly convey the information of the original text, but also consider the acceptance ability and thinking method of the target language readers. Therefore, the translator uses the method of free translation to interpret "傩舞" as "exorcism dance", which clearly shows its exorcism function . there are exorcism activities in foreign countries. In this way, the translation should not only correctly convey the information of the original text, but also consider the acceptance ability and thinking methods of the target language audience. However, there are still many folk dances with the same function of expelling ghosts and epidemic diseases in the Han culture, such as Putian lantern dance, Quanzhou chest beating dance and so on. This translation obviously pays more attention to the reader effect, which also wants to attract foreign audiences and achieves the effect of promoting the international dissemination of Jiangxi's regional image

Example 6

鸬鹚捕鱼的传统，据说持续了数千年。竹竿击水，口令一出，鸬鹚心领神会，潜入水中。不一会，它们便带着战利品出现。

Fishing with the help of cormorants is an ancient tradition. When the fisherman strikes the water with his bamboo pole, he's giving order for the cormorant to dive for fish.

"鸬鹚捕鱼"is an ancient fishing technique inherited for thousands of years. This skill is also handed down from generation to generation among fishermen in Longhu Mountain, a famous scenic spot in Jiangxi Province. The translator translates the meaning of this Jiangxi culture loaded word as "fishing with the help of cormorants". If it is literally translated as "cormorant fishing", it may make foreign audiences think that cormorants go fishing by themselves. The kind of translation is likely to hide the cultural meaning of the source language and hinder cultural exchange and dissemination. According to Newmark's communicative translation theory, communicative translation pays more attention to the target language, emphasizing the integration of the source language culture into the target language culture. In order to achieve the purpose of communication, it is not necessary to stick to the source language form. With literal translation, the target language audience may not understand this cultural word with local characteristics, thus affecting the transmission of the original information. On the contrary, free translation meets the needs of communicative translation and effectively conveys the source language information, that is, "fishermen fish with the help of cormorants".

5.2 Omission

Due to the noticeable disparities between the two cultures, it is almost impossible to represent every detail of the source text in translation. Omitting the minor information can lessen the target readers' processing effort. However, the deleted information should have little influence on the overall relevance.

Zhang Peiji stated that "omission refers to the fact that some words in the original text are not translated in the translation, because the meaning of the words in the translation is self-evident, even though there are no words in the translation. In other words, omission is to delete some words that are not necessary, or that contrary to the

language habits in the target language. But omission is not to delete some of the original contents of the original text" (Zhang, 2009, p. 88).

Example 7

这种四周由高墙围起的建筑，最早的主人，大多是徽商，高高矗立的马头墙，隔断了邻里间的视野。对于低调的徽商而言，安全和隐私得到了有效的保障。马头墙还是名副其实的防火墙，徽派建筑常常连成一片，一旦发生火灾，马头墙可以阻止火势蔓延。

Most of them were originally built by wealthy merchant from Huizhou. The merchant valued their privacy. The tall walls protected them from prying eyes. The walls also served to prevent the spread of fire. This was important as the Hui-style buildings were often grouped close together.

"马头墙" is an important feature of Gan style architecture and Hui style architecture. It is called "a saddle firewall" because its shape is similar to horse head. Its main function is fire prevention, so it has been translated into "fire and wind proof walls" or "fire preventing walls", but this translation has been questioned by other translators, who believe that both practical functions and cultural meaning should be retained in translation, so it is translated into "a saddle firewall". In the translation, a saddle firewall is directly translated into "the walls". Because of the constraints of time and space, the number of words in each sentence in the commentary is limited, which is an important feature of subtitle translation different from other text translation. In order to make it easier for foreign audiences to understand and accept, the translator omits the translation of "saddle", just translates it into "the walls", ensuring successful cultural transference. In order to achieve the purpose of communication, some words can be omitted without translation.

6. Conclusion

Based on semantic translation and communicative translation theory, the author analyzes the culture loaded words in *Aerial ChinaI- Jiangxi*, and finds that in order to better retain the language style and cultural characteristics of the source text, some place names and proper nouns are translated by means of literal translation, transliteration plus literal translation and transliteration with notes under the guidance of semantic translation; When encountering complex Chinese idioms and long difficult sentences containing some special cultural meaning, the translator will consider the cultural differences between the two languages, and then choose the free translation and omission in communicative translation strategies for translation. Semantic translation and communicative translation are not two opposite translation methods. Under certain conditions, they can be combined and used together. The study of translation of culture loaded words from the perspective of Newmark's translation theory can not only deepen the study of translation theory, but also provide some references for cross-cultural English translation. As an important channel to spread the Chinese voice to the world, the translation of culture loaded words must clarify the translation purpose, reasonably and effectively use semantic translation strategy and communicative translation strategy according to the specific situation, and combine the two strategies when necessary.

References

Bao, H. N., & Bao, A. (2004). *Chinese Culture and Chinese-English Translation*. Beijing: Foreign Language Press.

Fan, Y. (2010). On the Strategies by New York Times in Rendering Chinese Cultural Words in China-Related Reports. *Journal of PLA University of Foreign Languages, 33*(05), 82-87+128.

Liao, Q. Y. (2002). *Exploration of contemporary western theories*. Nanjing: Yilin Press.

Newmark, P. (1981). *Approaches to Translation*. Beijing: China Translation and Publishing Corporation.

Newmark, P. (2001). *Approaches to Translation*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

Yu, C. Y. (2017). National image and cultural consciousness of documentary -Taking China From Above and Aerial China as examples. Movie Review, (17), 83-85. http://dx.chinadoi.cn/10.3969/j.issn.1002-6916.2017.17.025

Zhang, P. J. (2009). *A Course in English-Chinese Translation*. Shanghai:Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

Zheng, D. H. (2016) Chinese culture going out and the translation of culture loaded words. Shanghai Journal of Translators, (02), 53-56. http://dx.chinadoi.cn/10.3969/j.issn.1672-9358.2016.02.010

Copyrights