

## DOCTORAL THESIS

### **Applying Relevance Theory and Multimodal Transcription to the Interlingual Subtitling of Politeness and Humour in the English-Chinese Language Pair Hotel Babylon as a Case Study**

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Applying Relevance Theory and Multimodal Transcription to  
the Interlingual Subtitling of Politeness and Humour in the  
English-Chinese Language Pair: *Hotel Babylon* as a Case Study

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the  
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## Abstract

With the development of technology, audiovisual programmes have become increasingly popular around the world. At the same time, with the help of subtitles, language audiovisual programmes can be watched by foreign audiences who have no understanding of the language in which the film was originally made. Developments in Audiovisual Translation have attracted attention from researchers in this field. However, this thesis focuses on areas that have not been explored in depth: the transfer of politeness and humour in interlingual subtitling, in programmes translated from English into Chinese.

Politeness and humour are two main elements which are systematically used to maintain relationships in people's conversation in everyday social settings. In audiovisual programmes, these two elements are also used for similar purposes during the conversations among characters. This research investigates the pragmatic use of politeness and humour in the subtitle translation from English to Chinese of the British television drama *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006), which has been chosen as a case study. The research uses a combination of Relevance Theory and Multimodal Transcription in the analysis of pragmatic translation of politeness and humour. In audiovisual programmes, a large number of multimodal elements are used to provide various stimuli to their audiences to enable them to infer information while they are watching these programmes. At the same time, these multimodal elements and verbal elements used during the conversation interact with and affect each other in the process of offering information in audiovisual programmes. Since the British and Chinese cultures are so different, the translation of subtitles could be seen as interlingual communication according to Relevance Theory. Multimodal Transcription can be used to represent the source language text, target language text and various multimodal elements in a systematic way. Through close and methodical examination of a large number of examples of the translation into Chinese of politeness and humour taken from all episodes of Season 1 of *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006), this thesis concludes that a solid understanding of the multimodal environment in which the dialogue takes place is essential for achieving interpretive resemblance between the source and target texts. The thesis also contends that multimodal analysis of this type should be used as much as possible in the

professional practice of subtitling especially when the cultural distance separating source and target cultures is considerable. Equipped with multimodal analysis skills, translators can unravel the complicated relationship which exists between verbal and multimodal elements in both source language text and target language text and are thus better placed to achieve the maximum contextual effect, while requiring the least processing effort from their target language audiences according to their cognitive context.

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## List of Abbreviations

CO	coding orientation
CP	camera position
CR	colours
CS	close shot
D	virtual distance of the shot distance
f	loud voice
ff	very loud voice
F	fast speaking speed
HP	horizontal angle
LS	long shot
M	median speaking speed
MCS	medium close shot
MLS	medium long shot
n	normal voice
p	soft voice
pp	very soft voice
S	slow speaking speed
VC	visual collocation
VCS	very close shot
VF	visual focus
VLS	very long shot
VP	vertical angle
VS	visual salience

# Chapter 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Introduction

In the last two decades, there has been a sharp increase in the number of foreign-language audiovisual programmes imported into China's audiovisual market thanks to the booming development of media digital technologies (Zhang and Mao 2013; Lv and Li 2015; Wang 2015; Zhou 2016; Zhang 2018; Jin and Gambier 2018; Gambier and Jin 2019; Zhang 2019). The media industry has been constructing bridges to bring the world to the eyes of Chinese audiences at home or in the cinema. In addition, through technology, audiences are able to overcome the barriers created by different languages in foreign movies or television dramas, and with the help of subtitling or dubbing, they are able to follow the narratives of these audiovisual programmes. As a consequence, Chinese audiences show an enormous interest in accessing foreign cultures through foreign audiovisual programmes, mainly English programmes from both British and American sources (Zhang and Mao 2013; Lv and Li 2015; Wang 2014; 2015, 2017; Zhou 2016; Jin and Gambier 2018). This increasing interest in foreign audiovisual programmes has prompted the Chinese market to provide a large number of blockbusters, which will be discussed in more detail in section 1.2.

Politeness and humour are two important elements of characters' communication in the dialogue of these foreign movies and television dramas. This thesis will adopt the definition of face which is proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) to assess how verbal elements and other multimodal elements interact with each other for the purpose of expressing politeness in English audiovisual programmes. In addition, whether the translated text in a similar way achieve cooperation with the existing multimodal elements to enable the target language audience to infer politeness according to their cognitive context. Goffman (1967: 5) states that face refers to "the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself". Brown and Levinson (1987) adopted the term 'face' from Goffman's work into their theory of politeness. The different kinds of face-saving strategies which are demonstrated by Brown and Levinson (1987) offer a clear view of how politeness works in people's conversation. Brown and Levinson (1987: 62) divided face into positive face and negative face. Positive face refers to people's desire to be respected by other people, while negative

face refers to people's desire not to be enforced by others. And sometimes humour can be a useful approach to adopt as a face-saving strategy (Brown and Levinson 1987: 262). From *Mr. Bean* (1990) to *Sherlock* (2010), many of the most popular foreign series shown in China in the last decade, in particular British ones, rely on humour. Moreover, their popularity thrives on a type of humour linked to im/politeness, an important feature in Chinese humour, as will be considered in section 2.5.3. This view of humour as a communication strategy intended to express politeness has a long history in British culture, from Oscar Wilde's play *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895) to Mike Newell's film *Four Weddings and a Funeral* (1994). It is still an important feature of 21st century British audiovisual programmes, and of the one that the writer intends to examine in this thesis as the case study. Using humour to construct different face-saving strategies is a recurrent communication strategy in British audiovisual products, a strategy through which characters maintain their relationship with one another in different conversation contexts. In television programmes, the stimuli which are offered by verbal elements and other multimodal elements are essential for their audiences to infer meaning through politeness and humour. However, the pragmatic uses of politeness and humour are different in different cultures. Therefore, one of the challenges of Audiovisual Translation is to make these stimuli work in equivalent ways in the translated text which is viewed with the original existing multimodal elements of the programme.

Research has been conducted into the translation of politeness and humour in Audiovisual Translation (Delabastita 1990, 1996; Zabalbeascoa 1996, 1997; Yus 1998, 2003, 2012, 2016; Vandaele 1999; Díaz-Cintas 2001; Asimakoulas 2004; Bruti 2006, 2009; Bruti and Perego 2010; He 2010; Szarkowska 2010; Chiaro 2010, 2014b; Díaz-Perez 2013, 2014; Wang 2014). However, very few researchers have explored the combined influences of verbal and multimodal elements on expressions of politeness and humour in audiovisual programmes, and whether and how this affects the translation in subtitling. In addition, little research has been done to identify different face-saving strategies which are being expressed through humour to represent the interpersonal relationship between the addresser and the addressee in audiovisual programmes. Hence, conducting research into the representation and translation of using humour to construct different face-saving strategies through

different elements is also an important aspect of this thesis. This research aims to close these gaps and identify the reciprocal influences of verbal and multimodal elements in the process of creating politeness, humour and using humour to construct face-saving strategies in British media products. Furthermore, based on the findings from source text analysis, this research intends to discover whether and how these influences affect the translation of subtitles from English to Chinese in audiovisual programmes. To reach this goal, this thesis is conceptually framed by both Relevance Theory and Multimodal Transcription. As a linguistic theory applied to translation in the study of the transfer of non-verbal elements, Relevance Theory emphasises the importance of context in the creation and transfer of meaning. It therefore provides a suitable framework for the analysis of audiovisual media products in which verbal scripts are also shaped by non-verbal elements such as body language or music. Similarly, the academic practice of Multimodal Transcription points to meaningful non-verbal elements such as gestures or voice intonation. As will be argued below, the combination of the theoretical framework of relevance with multimodal practice was selected as the most apt for investigating the translation of contemporary audiovisual programmes which involve politeness and humour.

In 1998, Ernst-August Gutt applied Relevance Theory, a communication theory, to translation studies. Still relatively new in the field of translation, only a few scholars have applied Relevance Theory to Audiovisual Translation studies (Bogucki 2004a, 2004b, 2013, 2020; He 2010; Kovacic 1994; Desilla 2012; Dicerto 2018; Yus 1998). Relevance Theory applied to translation emphasises that transfer is not only about encoding and decoding information from one language to another, but that the process of inference is also important in the process of translation. The result of inference is influenced by people's cognitive context, that is, an individual's knowledge about the world and the sum of their experiences. In other words, when people watch movies or television dramas, the expression of politeness and humour will be inferred through the combination of verbal elements and other multimodal elements. Hence, when non-English-speaking spectators watch British audiovisual programmes, it may be difficult to infer the expression of politeness and humour because they are not familiar with the relevant cognitive context which the source language audience can understand.

To express this idea in the metalanguage of Relevance Theory, without a similar cognitive context, the stimuli, both regarding informative intention and communicative intention, offered from verbal and multimodal elements in audiovisual programmes, are wholly or partially removed from the process of inference from audiences, who have to rely on translated subtitles to make sense of these audiovisual programmes. A stimulus is referred to as “any modification of the physical environment designed to be perceived” (Sperber and Wilson 1995: 29). Hence, a stimulus which is provided by verbal or other multimodal elements becomes necessary and pivotal in the process of inferring information to their audience (Gutt 1989b: 40-42). Using Relevance Theory, this research attempts to show that the process of inferring politeness and humour is based on the stimuli which are offered by verbal and multimodal elements in audiovisual programmes. Hence, it is essential for translators to consider the difference in cognitive context between source-language and target-language audiences to make sure that their target language audience can infer the meaning using the minimum necessary amount of processing effort while they watch audiovisual content.

The multimodal elements of the stimuli in audiovisual programmes are conveyed through various channels, such as body language and music, that are an integral part of such programmes (Thibault 2000; Taylor 2003, 2004, 2009, 2013, 2018, 2020; Baldry and Thibault 2006; Machin 2007; Gambier 2006; Pérez-González 2014). In other words, an audiovisual text offers greater possibilities than a solely linguistic text in the expression of specific meanings, from more than one angle, either directly or indirectly. Since Relevance Theory was not specifically developed for the purposes of research in Audiovisual Translation studies, it was not initially conceived to analyse the multimodal elements present in audiovisual texts. Hence the choice of Multimodal Transcription as a critical model for analysis in this research. As a practice, it investigates in detail the multimodality of the text and allows translators to find out which stimuli are necessary for the expression of politeness and humour in the chosen conversations. Initially, Multimodal Transcription was proposed by Baldry and Thibault (2006) for the analysis of multimodal texts such as advertisement videos. Their aim was to reveal how advertisements use various multimodal elements to highlight particular features of products, in order to attract attention from their audiences as efficiently as possible. This research, however, uses

Multimodal Transcription more broadly, in order to present a range of complex elements in an organised form. In doing so, it intends to provide translators with a clearer understanding of the connections and influences among different elements which are being used to express politeness and humour in conversations. In subtitled audiovisual media, stimuli which materialise as multimodal elements on their own (such as hand gestures) or through a combination with verbal elements might not work in the same way for the target language audience. They may even be an obstacle to their inferences.

Below is an example of the use of a hand gesture as stimulus for inference by the audience, taken from the film *Inglorious Basterds* (Tarantino 2009). In this film, one German officer becomes suspicious about a British spy who is working undercover as a German officer, because of his accent. In an effort to expose him, this German officer tries to get some information out of the British spy by talking and playing card games with him. The British spy becomes impatient and unpleasant to this uninvited German officer. Hence, the German officer orders some scotch for their table, to improve the atmosphere. The British spy uses a hand gesture to show number 'three' while he asks for three glasses from the bartender, as shown in Figure 1. This hand gesture is shown in a close-up shot as this is an important scene in which this British spy would give away his undercover status in front of the German officer. The German officer immediately gets the answer he was seeking, without any further verbal explanation. As a result, in the following scene, they try to shoot each other, since the undercover status of this British spy has been exposed by this hand gesture.



Figure 1. The scene showing the number three gesture from *Inglourious Basterds* (Tarantino 2009)

The hand gestures for showing numbers differ in Britain and Germany (Huang 2016). Moreover, as Figures 2 to 4 illustrate, the hand gestures used to show numbers in China are different again. The hand gesture used for number three in Britain involves the index, middle and ring fingers (Huang 2016), as can be seen in Figure 2. By contrast, the hand gesture used to show number three in Germany involves the thumb, index and middle fingers (Willett 2014), as shown in Figure 3. Chinese viewers who do not understand such cultural differences between Britain and Germany could be confused by this scene. Since the hand gesture for showing number three is the same in Britain and China, a Chinese audience could interpret this hand gesture as a number. However, it would be difficult for them to figure out the cause and effect between this hand gesture scene and the following gunshot scene.



Figure 2. Hand gestures for showing numbers from one to five in the UK (Huang 2016)



Figure 3. Hand gestures for showing numbers from one to five in Western Europe (Huang 2016)



Figure 4. Hand gestures for showing numbers from one to ten in China (Huang 2016)

It is one of the premises of this research that the combined use of Relevance Theory and Multimodal Transcription practice can assist translators in negotiating meaning across verbal and non-verbal elements, and that it can be particularly instrumental in transferring politeness successfully as it is expressed through humour. An understanding of the combination of Relevance Theory and Multimodal Transcription could also help translators to comprehend the relationship between verbal and multimodal elements for the purpose of expressing politeness and humour in the process of translation, specifically in the translation from English to Chinese, two very different languages morphologically and culturally.



This research is original in two main respects. Firstly, although some research into the Audiovisual Translation of politeness has been undertaken (Bruti 2006, 2009; Bruti and Perego 2010; Szarkowska 2010), no researcher has yet combined Relevance Theory and Multimodal Transcription in exploring the pragmatic use of politeness in Audiovisual Translation. This research is therefore novel in investigating whether Relevance Theory combined with Multimodal Transcription can be adopted by translators in this context. Secondly, although research has been published on the translation of politeness and humour as separate phenomena, issues relating to the translation of humour that is used for the purpose of expressing politeness have been neglected so far. To examine the role of humour as expression of politeness, a case study has been chosen: the DVD of the British television series *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006), subtitled into Chinese, about which more details will be provided in section 1.4. This television drama is set in a five-star hotel in the UK and centres on relationships between staff members, and interactions between staff members and customers. This television drama provides an excellent platform to display British culture. It also offers an ideal environment to portray relationships from a social perspective. As a top ranking hotel, Hotel Babylon reflects a wide social stratification and exemplifies social distance between characters. The series offers relevant and recurrent examples of how these two key elements of British culture are represented, in particular with respect to chosen address terms for the purpose of expressing politeness in conversation, usually challenging for translators. This range of social status and social distance between characters also offers useful examples for translators as regards the expression of humour expression in audiovisual programmes. This thesis focused on the theoretical aspects of the pragmatic translation of politeness and humour in subtitles since they have not been fully discussed and examined by other academic studies. The thesis aimed to shed some light to form and serve as a theoretical context for further studies associated with pragmatic translation in audiovisual programmes. The writer has not investigated in depth either the subtitling industry or the related practical constraints.

This chapter is divided into four parts. Section 1.2 will examine the phenomenon of foreign audiovisual programmes in 21<sup>st</sup> century China. Recent box office figures suggest that China is a relatively big market with huge potential for audiovisual programme revenues and that there is also potential for the transfer of more media

content into Chinese. It can be seen that, overall, the investment into the transfer of these programmes is paying off, even if some programmes are not successful. From the collected box office revenue figures, both international and in China (Motion Picture Association of America annual report 2011-2018), it can be seen that foreign audiovisual programmes are increasingly attractive to Chinese audiences, as will be discussed in more details in the next two sections. From the high popularity of foreign language films in China, it can be seen that Chinese viewers like to see different cultures and life in different countries to broaden their own view of the world. As a result, foreign audiovisual programmes increasingly act as a bridge between cultures, in all countries, but this is more pronounced in China, which has opened its doors to foreign media much more widely in the last decade. The development of Audiovisual Translation in China and in Europe and their different trends will also be discussed, as will the academic research which relates to it. Next, in section 1.3, the aim of this research will be outlined and the related research questions presented. In section 1.4, the research corpus of the case study used in this research will be introduced. Finally, the structure and content of this thesis will be summarised in the last part of this first chapter.

## **1.2 Audiovisual programmes and their translation in China**

### **1.2.1 Foreign-language movie box office revenue in China**

In recent years, an increasing number of audiovisual programmes have been produced and consumed globally, driven by interest from international and local audiences, and what seems to be an ever-broadening market potential (Yin 2011; Song 2018). Furthermore, subtitling and dubbing technologies make it possible for audiences to enjoy international programmes which are produced in various languages, even if they do not understand the source language. This section will discuss the context of foreign programmes in China, referring to international film box office revenues in China (Motion Picture Association of America annual report 2011-2018). Although the case study in this thesis focuses on a television drama series, this section intends to look at the film context first, which is part of the audiovisual landscape in contemporary China.

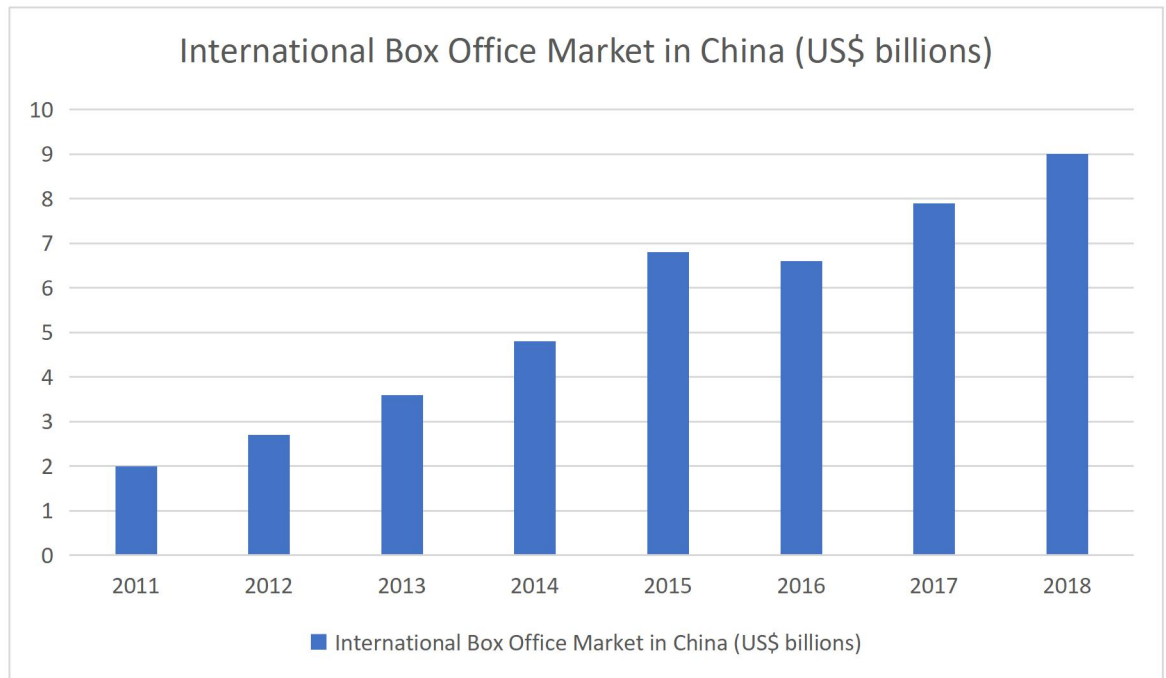


Figure 5. MPAA Report of the income of the International Box Office Market in China (2011-2018)

According to a report from the MPAA (Motion Picture Association of America 2011-2018), film box office income from China soared from 2 billion dollars in 2011 to 9 billion dollars in 2018. China's growth trend and global expansion have been much steeper than in other countries and its box office income more than quadrupled in 8 years (see Figure 5). In 2011, China's box office revenue ranked second highest on the international box office revenue list. However, after that year, China's box office income remained in first place during the next seven years, while the income of the country in second place (which varies from year to year) remained steady at around 2 billion dollars (Motion Picture Association of America 2011-2018). Without a doubt, the huge potential of the Chinese market has aroused increasing interest from blockbuster producers. As a consequence, an increasing number of blockbuster producers struggle to find a place in the Chinese market, since the number of imported films annually into China is limited by the government. This system, in place since 1994, allows a pre-set number of films to be shown in China every year. These films are almost exclusively distributed by the large Hollywood studios and their box office revenue is shared between the studio who produced the film and China. Song (2018:178) indicates that global producers of blockbusters, having become aware of China's huge market potential, have attempted to export such films under revenue-sharing agreements whereby foreign (mainly North

American) producers and Chinese distributors share box-office revenues. Walt Disney, Warner Bros, Paramount, Fox, Sony, and Universal, as Hollywood's Big Six Studios, with economic strength and a global reputation, have already started to export their blockbuster products to the Chinese market (Papish 2017). The fact that these imported movies also account for more than 33% of the box office revenue in the Chinese market (Song 2018: 178) shows how much Chinese audiences favour these foreign films. Furthermore, some imported movies earn greater box office revenues in China than at their domestic box offices. *Furious 7* (Wan 2015), for instance, earned \$390.8 million in box office revenue in China, exceeding the income in the U.S. and Canada (Verrier 2015). This movie also broke a former record for the highest box office revenue in China, which was achieved by *Transformers: The Age of Extinction* (Bay 2014), which earned \$319 million in 2014 in China.

The competition to import films into the Chinese market is fierce due to the annual import quota, which is dominated by the Film Administrative Bureau, which comes under the Ministry of Radio, Film and Television of China. There are two main approaches for importing foreign films into China, namely revenue-sharing and buy-out. Revenue-sharing means that earnings from imported foreign films are shared with local distributors. The development of revenue-sharing started in 1994. The first import quota film in China was *The Fugitive* (Davis 1993) in November 1994, which triggered Hollywood's influence in China's movie market. From 1994 to 2002, the import movie quota was ten films annually. After that, from 2002 to 2011, this number was increased to 20 films, as regulated by China's membership of the World Trade Organization. From 2012, the import quota increased again to 34, with a requirement that 14 of these imported movies had to be in either 3D or IMAX formats. This agreement, however, changed in 2017. A further increase in the number of films imported annually has been discussed, and foreign films can be expected to be imported into China in greater numbers in the future (Shaw 2018). So far, the percentage of revenue shared with the rights holders is 25%, based on the agreement signed by the MPAA and China Film Group in 2015. In the future, the rights holders' percentage is also expected to rise as a result of the new negotiations.

In addition to the revenue-sharing approach, foreign films can also be imported into China through a buy-out process, through which films are imported at a fixed

price after negotiation with the film’s producer for local rights. This usually applies to films from countries outside the U.S. The box office revenue is kept by the Chinese distribution companies, usually the China Film Group Corporation or the Huaxia Film Company (Jin and Gambier, 2018: 28). The quota for buy-out movies has some room for flexibility. For example, 33 buy-out films were imported in 2015, while 51 were imported in 2016.

### 1.2.2 Media content in translation: new ways of accessing foreign cultures

Hollywood studios, which hosts the largest players in the film industry, favours films which display cultural diversity, including films representing China (Song 2018). A good example of this is the *Kung Fu Panda* trilogy – *Kung Fu Panda* (Stevenson and Osborne 2008), *Kung Fu Panda 2* (Nelson 2011) and *Kung Fu Panda 3* (Nelson and Carloni 2016). This movie series contains two specific Chinese elements, namely Kung Fu and Panda. This is an animated movie about Po, a panda who evolves from being a nobody to become a powerful dragon warrior able to protect the inhabitants of a whole valley after overcoming many challenges.

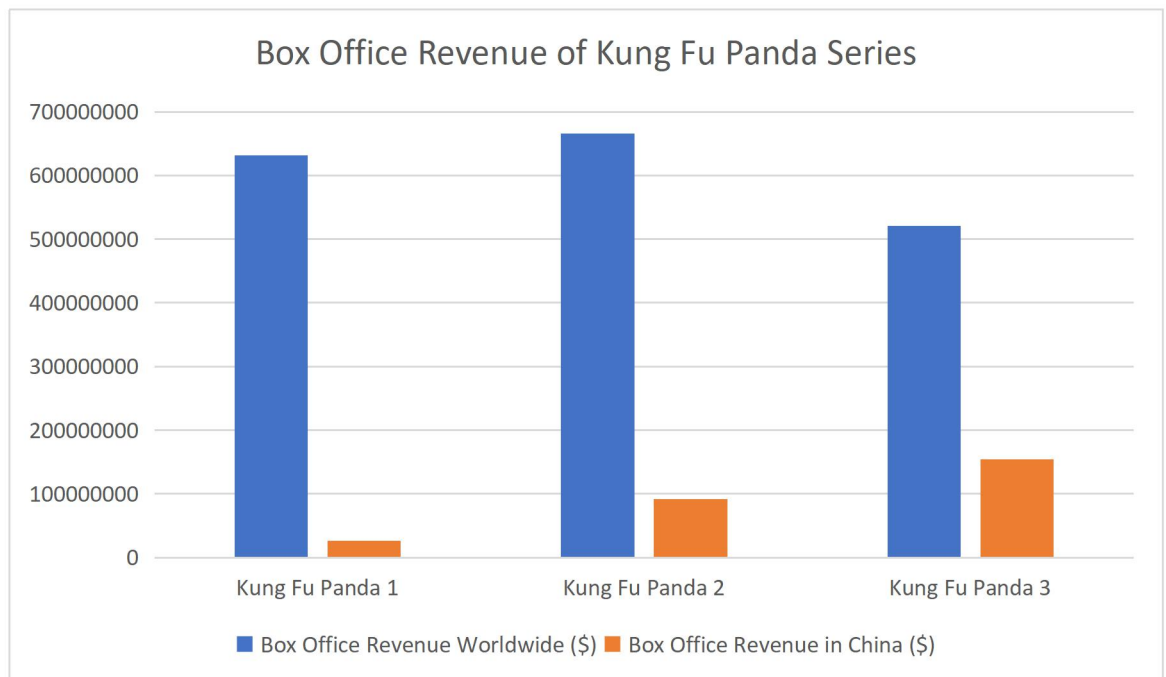


Figure 6. Comparison of Worldwide and Chinese Box Office Revenues from Kung Fu Panda 1-3 (Box Office Mojo, 2008, 2011, 2016)

As Figure 6 shows, the worldwide box office revenue increased from \$631,744,560 for *Kung Fu Panda* to \$665,692,281 for *Kung Fu Panda 2*, then decreased slightly to \$521,170,825 for *Kung Fu Panda 3*. However, the box office

revenue in China increased from \$26,024,298 for *Kung Fu Panda* to \$154,304,371 for *Kung Fu Panda 3*, a more than fivefold increase. This spectacular increase in China reflects the growing enthusiasm from audiences for this film. One of the main reasons for the success of this movie, specifically in China, is that it is a product that displays a successful combination of Chinese and Western cultures (Huang 2013; Tang 2014; Wang 2016). In an interview, John Stevenson, the film's co-director, reveals that the names of the Furious Five in the film (Tiger, Crane, Monkey, Snake and Mantis) can also be found in a series of fighting styles in the Chinese martial art Kung Fu (Douglas 2008). Stevenson also claims that the inspiration behind the villainous leopard character, Tai Lung, comes from the leopard style in Chinese martial arts, which focuses on attacking the opponent's weaknesses, based on an analysis of their style. Furthermore, there is also a realisation from the US film industry that Asian American films can be successful both domestically and internationally, as there is a growing interest in Chinese culture worldwide (Huang 2013; Wang 2016).

Moreover, DreamWorks Animation has also enhanced the visibility of Chinese cultural elements ranging from magnificent architectural monuments in *Kung Fu Panda* series such as the Jade Palace to small props such as chopsticks. Wang (2016: 420) refers to the fact that the characters' clothes are designed to reflect Chinese culture, such as the robe worn by Master Oogway, which represents Buddhism, and the one worn by Master Shifu, which represents Taoism. Tang (2014: 448-449) states that the film uses real Kung Fu styles, such as the bear style, the praying mantis, the monkey style and so on. In an interview, Mark Osborne (Xu 2016), the film's co-director, explains that the DreamWorks Animation team had watched a large number of classic Chinese martial arts movies for inspiration, such as *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (Lee 2000) and *Hero* (Zhang 2002). The incorporation of such cultural details contributed to the success of this media franchise (Huang 2013; Wang 2016).

Using a different strategy from the borrowing technique of *Kung Fu Panda*, some blockbuster producers attempted to insert Chinese elements into films in order to attract interest from Chinese audiences as well as audiences who are interested in Chinese culture (Chen *et al.*, 2017: 61). One way of doing this is to add shooting locations in China, such as in *Mission Impossible III* (Abrams 2006), which features

scenes at the Oriental Pearl Tower and Jinmao Tower in Shanghai. Another option is to use Chinese actors (Acuna 2013), as in *Iron Man 3* (Black 2013). However, this approach has been seen as controversial by some Chinese viewers. Although Chinese actors have been cast in order to create a deeper connection with Chinese audiences and lure the Chinese market, often these stars are given few, if any, lines, which makes them seem stiff and redundant, since their performances do not contribute to the narrative of these blockbusters. For instance, the performance of Chinese actress Bingbing Fan in *Iron Man 3* (Black 2013) was cut in post-production from the international versions of the film, which makes the Chinese version about three minutes longer. The fact that her performance is not seen in other countries highlights that her performances does not affect the film narrative. In other words, the appeal of these special guests is limited to specific markets.

### **1.2.3 Audiovisual programmes, Audiovisual Translation and cultural communication**

Cultural content is crucial to the meaning of audiovisual programmes. In the last three decades, a number of media producers have sought to represent cultures other than their own, often for exotic effect and to attract a more diverse audience (Tian and Xiong 2013: 872). For people who have never lived abroad or experienced a different culture, viewing these audiovisual programmes while remaining in their own country offers a good opportunity to broaden their cultural awareness. For people who are familiar with the cultures represented, it is also an interesting experience. They can come across what their culture looks like in other people's eyes (Wang 2014; 2017). Disney productions thus include many films which represent various cultures. For example, *The Lion King* (Allers and Minkoff 1994), an animation film contains African culture, is one of the most successful films ever made by Disney. The characters were given Swahili names, Swahili being an East African Bantu language. Simba, for instance, means lion and/or warrior (Cadar 2019) and is the name of the eponymous character of the film. This use of indigenous words and phrases need not be restricted to names; it can also refer to life style. For example, the famous phrase "Hakuna Matata", which is used in this movie to refer to a relaxed life philosophy, and which means "no worries", is also taken from the Swahili language and has been adopted by many viewers. The success of this original film led to the remake of *The Lion King* (Favreau 2019) in 2019.

Sometimes, English movies create their audiovisual products based on inspiration deriving originally from other foreign countries' stories. However, a large number of academic researchers have noticed the emergence of certain problems related to the representation of different cultural elements from other countries into English products. Di Giovanni (2003: 207) points out that some audiovisual programmes, which mainly are being produced in the United States, more or less reflect western stereotypes and values, even though these products are being created based on various other countries' cultures and folklore. To be more precise, these kinds of audiovisual programmes extract the original story from its own culture and situate it in a vague space and time, for the purpose of recreating the story with a Western cultural background for their audiences (Di Giovanni 2003: 208). *Mulan* (Cook and Bancroft 1998), the first animated movie made by Disney to represent an Asian ballad (Tian and Xiong 2013: 865) can be taken as an example. This movie features one of the most famous ancient heroines in China and there are several different versions of the story. A folk poem from the Northern Wei Dynasty (368-534) can be traced back as the earliest version of this legend (Tang 2008: 150). Tang (2008: 149-150) states that instead of reproducing the ancient Chinese story faithfully in English, *Mulan* (Cook and Bancroft 1998) was rewritten by Disney for the purpose of attracting interest from worldwide audiences. To increase the authenticity of this movie, a team was sent to China for two weeks specifically to learn about Chinese culture, architecture and so on (Yin 2011: 55). The hard work of the Disney team paid off as \$120,620,254 was taken in box office revenue from the domestic market in the United States (Box Office Mojo 1998). It was also a worldwide success, taking \$304,320,254 in global box office revenue (Box Office Mojo 1998). However, this movie earned only \$101,250,000 in box office revenue in China, accounting for just 1.85% of annual box office revenue in China in that year (Tang 2008: 153).

One of the main reasons for this low box office revenue in China was that some elements of the plot in this story had been taken out of the original Chinese context and transferred into a Western context by Disney (Dong 2010: 172-173; Yin 2011: 54; Tian and Xiong 2013: 863). For example, there is a difference between the Chinese ballad and the Disney movie regarding Mulan's essential reason for joining the army in. Although in both versions, Mulan joins the army partly because she considered her father too old to endure a brutal war, in the Chinese story, Mulan



makes up her mind to replace her father in the army because of filial piety, which is a pivotal feature of Chinese culture (Wand, Han and Xu 2020: 1333). Meanwhile, in the movie, Mulan joins the army because she wants to realise her personal value (Yin 2011: 58). In that case, Mulan was also being created to comply with feminist culture in a Western country (Yin 2011; Dundes and Streiff 2016; Anjirbag 2018). In addition, Mulan sings a song named *Reflection* to express her own thoughts about searching for true personal meaning in her life. This song insinuates that Mulan is suffering and being repressed by the traditional culture of China (Yin 2011: 60). Yin (2011: 63) points out that by representing the unfair treatment of females in *Mulan* (Cook and Bancroft 1998), Disney transferred this conflict subtly from Western society to a non-Western society. Another reason for this film not meeting the expectations of Chinese audience is that some scenes are contrary to Chinese culture. For instance, there is a scene in which Mulan wins a fight against her enemies and saves the life of the emperor, where the emperor bows to her to pay a tribute. Later, Mulan hugs the emperor and her fellow soldiers excitedly. In Chinese culture, especially considering this story happened in an ancient time, people of different gender are expected to avoid body contact even if they know each other well (Tang 2008: 151). Furthermore, considering the strict hierarchical system in ancient Chinese culture, it would be impossible for the emperor to bow to Mulan (Tian and Xiong 2013: 871). These above points are not the only conflicts between the original Chinese story and Disney's *Mulan* movie (Cook and Bancroft 1998). *Mulan* (Cook and Bancroft 1998) is not the only movie that has extracted a story from its original cultural background and reproduced in a Western cultural background, *Moana* being an example drawn from Polynesian culture (Clements and Musker 2016). This phenomenon has drawn an increasing number of academic researchers to consider the negative influence of the transmission of cultural dynamics from different countries globally (Di Giovanni 2003; Dundes and Streiff 2016; Ching and Pataray-Ching 2017; Anjirbag 2018). However, it is hard to deny that with an increasing number of this kind of audiovisual programme being produced and displayed in different countries, it also provides great opportunity to attract the interest of audiences from different cultural backgrounds. From the production of English movies like *Mulan* (Cook and Bancroft 1998), it can be seen that audiovisual programmes are produced to involve different cultural elements. In that case, there is no doubt that the difficulties of translating this kind of audiovisual programme from

one language to another language will be increased due to culture differences. Regarding the pragmatic use of politeness and humour, their inference through the stimuli provided by the verbal element and related multimodal elements is being seriously affected by culture differences. This is one of the main reasons that this thesis aimed to deal with the pragmatic translation of politeness and humour in subtitles from English to Chinese in subtitles.

To represent an array of cultures is challenging for audiovisual programme producers, whether they are familiar with these cultures or need to learn about them while they are producing the programmes. Each cultural feature has unique characteristics to attract people's attention and interest. Different people might also have different understandings of a culture. This increases the difficulties that makers of audiovisual programmes face in incorporating various cultural elements into their products and representing them properly to their local audiences or even international audiences. Some audiovisual programme makers owe their success in overcoming this challenge to the positive responses received from viewers from diverse cultural backgrounds. Mendelson (2018) names *Coco* (Unkrich 2017) as a successful example of an audiovisual product which aimed to incorporate increased cultural diversity and was intended for international audiences. Compared to *The Lion King*, *Coco* provides a more direct and in-depth cultural experience for its viewers, both visually and verbally. The film *Coco* (Unkrich 2017) uses a character from an ethnic minority background, a 'Latino', as the lead character in a mainstream animation.

*Coco* (Unkrich 2017) is ambitious in its representation of cultural diversity through Mexican cultural elements. Produced by Pixar Animation Studios, it was released by Walt Disney Pictures, as a collaboration between two of the largest American studios. Ugwu (2017) mentions that the director and writer of the film, Lee Unkrich, who is not from a Latino background, went to Mexico a couple of times to observe and collected authentic cultural material for the purpose of research. He also invited a number of people of Latino background to act as consultants, asking them to provide ideas and suggestions so that this film could absorb Latino culture. In order to achieve this, Pixar broke their own rule about keeping creative information within the filmmaking crew at the early stage of the production. Pixar also invited voice talents of Latino origin to dub a large number of their main

characters and make this Mexican family story as authentic as possible (Ugwu 2017). For example, Anthony Gonzalez, who voices the character of Miguel, was a child actor born in a Mexican family living in the U.S. He can speak both Spanish and English fluently, which increases the charm of the portrayal of this young lead character. In addition, the language used in this film is a mix of English and Spanish, and the characters switch between these two languages smoothly in both speech and song. They can use, for instance, *abuelita* instead of Grandma, *hola* instead of hello, or *gracias* instead of thank you. Robinson (2018) points out that although code-switching takes place frequently across English and Spanish in this film, it is not challenging for a non-native Spanish speaker to understand the film. This easy code-switching is facilitated by context and visual stimuli as supplements for the Spanish verbal expression so that viewers who do not speak Spanish can follow the plot of the film. *Coco's* (Unkrich 2017) narrative strongly relates to the Mexican celebration of the *Día de los Muertos*, known in English as Day of the Dead. On this day, family members gather to pray and remember their family members who have died. Instead of being sad, Mexicans celebrate this holiday with happiness, feeling a sense of communion with the dead who still share their lives. In this film, Miguel, a 12 year old boy, is accidentally transported to the Land of the Dead when he tries to borrow a guitar to take part in a music competition. There, he meets his great-great-grandfather and with his help and help from friends he met in the Land of the Dead, he successfully gets back to the real world. He reveals truths unknown to his family, thereby clearing the name of his great-great grandfather and achieving reconciliation within the family. The themes of *Coco* (Unkrich 2017) relate to family, dreams and the cycle of life and death.

According to worldwide box office data (The Numbers, 2017), *Coco* (Unkrich 2017) ranks eleventh out of 308 movies released in 2017. The box office receipts of this film worldwide grossed \$807,082,196 in 2017 (Box Office Mojo, 2017). Surprisingly perhaps, the box office receipts in China reached \$189,226,296, which is about one quarter of the total income. By contrast, the box office receipts of this movie in its domestic market (US and Canada) were \$209,726,015, which is comparable to China's box office takings. Although this film only took \$1,900,000 in China on the opening Friday, its eventual box office takings were quite impressive (Mendelson 2017). The figures for this film's opening night highlight the concerns

and doubts of Chinese audiences concerning *Coco*'s (Unkrich 2017) themes (ibid.). Booth (2017) points out that ghosts of dead ancestors are ubiquitous in *Coco* (Unkrich 2017). Since the film's main audience group is children, parents would be concerned about their children's reaction to these ghosts, traditionally scary figures for children. In addition, the translation of the film title shares some responsibility for this poor box office return. Firstly, the title of the film was translated as 寻梦环游记 in Chinese (back translation: Chasing dream global journey notes) (Pinyin: Xunmeng Huanyouji), which reflects only one theme of the film, the dream aspect. Secondly, part of the Chinese title “环游记” (global journey notes) had already been used in many translated audiovisual programme titles (ChinaFilmInsider 2017). As a result, this title did not attract viewers, because it was felt that the programme was not new. This anecdote stresses the importance of translation to attract an audience. Nevertheless, Chinese viewers' initial concerns were dismissed the very next day, and the box office takings rocketed to \$7,100,000 (ChinaFilmInsider 2017). Fuster (2017) also states that in the first four weeks of its run in China, *Coco* grossed \$154,000,000 at the box office, which was even higher than the domestic market box office return of \$150,700,000. *Coco* (Unkrich 2017) achieved China's second highest box office receipts of all time for an animated film, following *Zootopia* (Cain 2017). Feng (2017) also writes that *Coco* set a new box office record for its producer Pixar. *Coco* (Unkrich 2017) topped China's last most successful animated film *Finding Dory* (Stanton 2016), also produced by Pixar, which earned a total of \$38,000,000 at the box office in China. The box office receipts for *Coco* (Unkrich 2017) created an outstanding record for Pixar in China, since they surpassed the total for all the other 12 animated products which were produced by Pixar (Cain 2017). Tartaglione (2018) points out that the success of *Coco* (Unkrich 2017) was instrumental in allowing Pixar to gain some leverage in the competition over animated films with other studios in the Chinese market. Mendelson (2018) also states that *Coco* (Unkrich 2017), a film which introduced Mexican culture to many Chinese to whom it was unfamiliar, proved that cultural diversity can be as attractive to the Chinese market as it is to other markets. The success of *Coco* (Unkrich 2017) was a surprise to both Pixar and Disney. Beyond its financial achievements, there was also surprise that *Coco* (Unkrich 2017) was not banned by the strict censorship system in place for imported films in China. Cain (2017) emphasises that films

including ghosts are usually subjected to strict censorship, as it is stated in the censorship guidelines of the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television that before a film can be displayed in Chinese theatres scenes including “contents of murder, violence, terror, ghosts and the supernatural must be altered or deleted” (China Hollywood Society, no date). Because of these strict censorship guidelines, Cain (2017) mentions that Disney, as the distributor of *Coco* (Unkrich 2017), thought that it was not worth submitting *Coco* (Unkrich 2017) for censorship before asking for distribution approval. However, Booth (2017) relates that when the censorship board saw *Coco* (Unkrich 2017), they were touched by the young boy’s solution of the family misunderstanding relating to his great-great-grandfather and by the final family reconciliation. As a result, the censorship board did not require a single change to be made to the film. According to Fuster (2017), *Coco*’s (Unkrich 2017) run was even permitted to continue beyond the date originally planned.

One of the main reasons for *Coco*’s (Unkrich 2017) great success in China relates to the notion of respect for ancestors in their culture (Mendelson 2018). Honouring the memory of ancestors on one specific day is common to both the Mexican and Chinese culture. The Mexican traditional holiday of the Day of the Dead which is celebrated in this film is reminiscent of the Qingming Festival, a Chinese traditional holiday, also known as Tomb Sweeping Day. In both cases, people show their respect and cherish the memory of their ancestors. Specifically, Mexican people put food and drinks on their ancestors’ tombs, along with marigolds, a special flower for Mexicans. In their culture, this flower can create a path to their ancestors, which they can follow to go back home and reunite with their family members (Smith 2018). Similarly, during the Qingming Festival, Chinese people go to their ancestor’s tomb to clean the tomb and place flowers on it (although avoiding colourful flowers), burn joss sticks and paper to make sure their ancestors have enough necessary supplies in their afterlife, leave presents food, fruit and alcohol for their ancestor to enjoy and to pray to their ancestor for good health and success (Ma 2019). Another commonality is that on a special day to remember their ancestors, both in Mexico and China, living members of the family all gather around to remember their loved ones together. Of course, differences do exist in the celebration of these two festivals between Mexico and China. A major difference is that Mexican people regard it as a

happy festival, since their ancestors are going to come back to visit them and join the celebration with them. Therefore, people dress up colourfully and paint their faces to represent skulls, play music and dance. On the other hand, the Qingming Festival is seen as a serious occasion for Chinese people to show solemn respect to their ancestors. Hence, when Chinese people go to their ancestors' tombs, they normally sombrely dress in black or white to show their respect. Despite these differences between the celebrations in Mexico and China, the commonalities between these two festivals created a useful bridge to arouse deeply touching emotion in Chinese audiences toward this film (Mendelson 2018). These commonalities between countries can engender acceptance of other countries' cultures and their cultural traditions. When audiovisual products contain such commonalities, as is the case in *Coco* (Unkrich 2017), they encourage the acceptance of other cultures. Audiovisual programmes, whatever their dissemination platform, offer a convenient international platform for people to learn from different cultures and different countries.

In the case of *Coco* (Unkrich 2017), since humour and social hierarchies were not prominent themes, in some respects, choosing it as an illustration of how narratives can be meaningful across countries and cultures was controversial, as this thesis primarily considers the transfer of humour and language relating to social hierarchies. Nevertheless, it was selected as an excellent example of a film reliant on culture-specific themes which, through translation, can be meaningful to members of a very different culture. In this regard, it is relevant to my study. In addition, the success story of *Coco* (Unkrich 2017) in China illustrates recent changes in cross-cultural attitudes and a desire to explore familiar experiences in an unfamiliar, foreign context which has largely emerged due to the growth of translated audiovisual programmes (Feng 2017). Besides, just like family loyalty and respect for ancestors, humour and the representation of social hierarchies are common to many creative products across countries and cultures. For the philosopher Henri Bergson (1900/1914), laughing at ourselves and at each other was a feature common to all humans. Humour, of course, takes many guises, and can be very culturally specific, as we all realise when we do not understand a joke in a different culture, but it is found in all creative forms of expression. The expression of politeness and humour is key to many audiovisual programmes. When they are expressed verbally and through multimodal elements, viewers of foreign audiovisual programmes from different

countries need to rely both on the translated text and interpretation of multimodal elements related to the dialogue in order to infer and acquire the necessary understanding of unfamiliar representations.

#### **1.2.4 Audiovisual Translation in China and Europe**

In the last two decades, as the number of imported audiovisual programmes into the Chinese market has increased, Chinese audiences' exposure to media content has become more diversified. English-language movies and television programmes represent a large percentage of the Chinese audiovisual landscape, as do products from non-English speaking countries, such as Italian movies. One of the reasons for this is that the younger generations in China are learning English on an unprecedented scale. Some viewers will watch English-speaking audiovisual programmes with a specific purpose in mind, such as to improve the pronunciation of their English, be it with an American or a British accent, develop their language skills or their cultural understanding of English-speaking countries (Tang 2008: 156). Zhang (2019: 220) states that in the last two decades, with the gradual development of online streaming services in China, a large number of foreign programmes and television dramas have been available legally on licensed online streaming websites, in spite of the rigid government policy and censorship laws in Mainland China. The large number of clicks and view times of these foreign programmes make these services profitable for the online streaming platforms. Competition among these online streaming platforms is therefore fierce in Mainland China. To ensure a substantial income, these platforms endeavour to expand their range of exclusive audiovisual programmes, and cooperate with other companies in order to do so. For example, Youku, one of the biggest online streaming companies, owned by Alibaba, has made a deal with the UK broadcaster BBC Studios to extend the licensing of one of their popular television dramas, *Sherlock* (from season one to season four), on their online streaming platform (Shackleton 2020). In addition, Youku has signed up for 80 hours of shows with BBC Studios (ibid.). In recent years, high-quality British audiovisual products have generated attention and heated discussions from Chinese audiences (Zhou 2016). Representations of British culture, key to British movies such as *Love Actually* (Curtis 2003), *Paddington* (King 2014), *Paddington 2* (King 2017), The *Harry Potter* eight films series, *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* (Yates 2016), and *Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald* (Yates 2018),

have become popular with Chinese viewers. British television dramas, such as *Downton Abbey* (ITV 2010) and *Sherlock* (BBC One 2010), have also been very successful in China (Taylor 2014; Bennett 2019).

Before 1949, cinemas were only available to people in a limited number of large cities and there was no television in China (Qian 2009). In the early 1940s, as Gambier and Jin (2019: 212) point out, ‘Miss Earphones’ live interpreters offering the simultaneous interpreting of foreign films through individual headphones, worked in a limited number of large cinemas in China. The first film relayed through simultaneous interpreting, *Return of the Cisco Kid* (Leeds 1939), was screened at the Grand Theatre in Shanghai on November 4 1939 (ibid.: 212). Three female university graduates who were just film fans interpreted this movie. They interpreted all the film’s dialogues, conveying the original tone in their performances in order to provide the audiences listening through the earphones with as deep connection as possible to the film and its characters. Furthermore, they provided additional information, such as a synopsis and a description of the characters. Although potentially distracting, this interpretation offered access to foreign films for viewers who did not know English since English did not become a compulsory subject in China until 1978. However, audiences had to pay an extra fee to use earphones, even though the quality of the live interpretation could not be guaranteed (Qian 2009). Since this approach was neither reliable nor very enjoyable, most people preferred subtitles (Yu 2013). Gambier and Jin (2019: 211) specify that Chinese subtitles first appeared in films screened in cinemas in the early 1930s. Later, Chinese subtitles were shown on a neighbouring screen (ibid.). However, this was distracting for audiences since they had to watch two screens simultaneously.

The first dubbed film was *An Ordinary Soldier* (director unknown, year unknown), which was imported from the former Soviet Union and dubbed by The Changchun Film Studio in China in 1949 (Yu 2013). Most foreign movies imported before the 1980s came from the Soviet Union, the most dominant country culturally in China at that time, as established by Zhang (2018: 59). It was in the 1980s that the dubbing industry in China began to grow on a larger scale. Yu (2013: 58) indicates that one of the main reasons for dubbing becoming the dominant mode of translation was the high rates of illiteracy among Chinese audiences in the 1980s. Moreover, ethnic minorities, who represent around 8% of the Chinese population (UNC University



Libraries, no date), have difficulty reading Mandarin subtitles since they use their own languages more often in their daily lives, as has been documented (Qian 2009: 15). Reading subtitles also distracts audiences when they are watching audiovisual programmes (ibid.). Therefore, as in other countries, dubbing was a favourite mode of transfer for children. Zhang (2004: 183) suggests that for some children who have only just started to learn to read and write, dubbing could enable them to watch foreign audiovisual media, such as animated movies and become acquainted with foreign cultures, since their reading ability will not be well developed at this early age. Dubbing hence was seen as an efficient approach because it could be used by the majority of the population (Gambier and Jin 2018: 33) and it played an important role in making foreign films available.

In the three decades after 1949, the Chinese film translation industry gradually developed, mainly through its import of Soviet media products. However, in the 1980s, China began to carry out reforms and apply its opening up policy to foreign media imports. Importing foreign films into China became a stepping stone to embracing and acquiring knowledge of international cultures from other countries, particularly Western ones, through foreign audiovisual media. Zhang (2018: 59-60) indicates that with the steady increase of foreign movies from the 1980s, particularly British ones, into Mainland China, and in spite of the popularity of dubbing, subtitling became more popular. In the 1990s, interest in subtitled films continued to grow, especially among young generations; one of the main reasons being that an increasing number of people could now read Mandarin fluently due to the consistent teaching of Mandarin in schools. In other words, subtitling has become more accessible and convenient for audiences. In addition, due to the concurrent rapid development of technologies such as the Internet, the spread and access of these audiovisual programmes has become easier and faster. Compared with dubbing, which is time-consuming and expensive, subtitling offers a more economical and efficient means of affording access for audiences. From the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, fans of foreign audiovisual programmes formed subtitling groups on the Internet to provide translated subtitles for their favorite foreign audiovisual programmes, mainly for language study and communication purposes. Jing (2018: 198) states that fansubbing groups have spread their influence across an increasing number of viewers because their fansubs are quickly available following the

broadcasting of international television programmes, sometimes even less than a day after the initial broadcast.

As far as mainstream media is concerned, nowadays, two translated versions of imported movies are normally provided when films are screened in China's cinemas (Jin 2018: 198), one with subtitles and the other dubbed. Normally, the cinemas provide these two versions in different halls, so the audiences have different options for watching the same movie. Gambier and Jin (2018: 33) indicate that subtitling is the most popular translation mode, according to trends in ticket sales for the same film with either subtitles or dubbing. However, dubbing shows a slight advantage in terms of animated films, because children are their main audience. Additionally, foreign films and television dramas broadcast on television channels are mostly dubbed, because these channels aim to reach a wide audience, ranging from children to elderly people.

Online streaming platforms, a new approach to offering audiovisual programmes on the Internet, have been developing since the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Gambier and Jin 2018). There are four main online video platforms in China, namely Youku, Sohu, Tencent and Iqiyi. Gambier and Jin (2018: 29) point out that subtitling work on the foreign-language audiovisual media is normally subcontracted to private translation or post-production companies. At the same time, in recent years, some fansubbing groups have sought to expand their cooperation with these online platforms, and fansubs are now provided on some imported television dramas which can be seen in subtitled audiovisual products on the abovementioned four platforms. This recent cooperation can be seen as a new opening for fansubbing, and an attempt by fansubbers to resolve legal issues regarding copyrights which have been a source of contention for a long time (Meng and Wu 2013).

Regarding the attitude of U.S. film producers to the international film market, O'Sullivan and Cornu (2018: 20) point out that since the introduction of synchronised sound into films, American studios have sought to maintain market dominance worldwide. In 1928, the first all-talking film *Lights of New York* (Foy 1928) was produced by Warner Bros. Pictures. It received highly positive responses from audiences and Gambier and Jin (2019: 208) state that the success of this movie led Hollywood to prioritise the production of talking films. As a result, Hollywood

took a dominant role in the production of on audiovisual media for worldwide audiences. Hollywood used subtitles as a useful and convenient supplement to enable their products to be exported to predominantly European areas (O'Sullivan and Cornu 2018). Research has indicated that countries which have a stronger film industry and economic means to provide more support, such as Germany, prefer dubbed foreign audiovisual products, while others prefer subtitles (Bogucki 2004: 71; O'Sullivan and Cornu 2018: 21). O'Sullivan and Cornu (2018: 23) also state that in some countries, like France, both subtitling and dubbing are important. The mode of transfer depends on audiences' preferences and distributors' marketing strategy. Large North American blockbusters, which generate the most money, tend to be dubbed, while smaller productions are subtitled. Since European countries have had more opportunity and practice in relation to Audiovisual Translation among different language pairs, the developing audiovisual programmes translation industry in China could learn valuable lessons from their experience.

#### **1.2.5 Academic research in Audiovisual Translation in China and Europe**

The development of academic research in Audiovisual Translation in China started later than in Europe, in the late 1990s. Pioneering researchers such as Shaochang Qian and Chunbai Zhang published articles that started to attract scholars' attention and discussed Audiovisual Translation in relation to their practical experience in the Audiovisual Translation sector. Zhang (2018: 60) indicates that Audiovisual Translation principles and strategies are two main areas on which Chinese scholars focused during the initial stages of their research into Audiovisual Translation. Zhang (1998) summarises the temporal and spatial constraints inherent to the process of Audiovisual Translation; additionally, the same author (*ibid.*: 53) points out that at that time Audiovisual Translation theory and translation strategies in relation to dubbing were relatively undeveloped (2004). As another pioneer in Audiovisual Translation research, Qian (2000) introduces a short history of the development of screen translation in China, including five features of movie language and seven experiences of Audiovisual Translation in practice. Based on this paper, Qian calls on other scholars to acknowledge the increasing importance of Audiovisual Translation and to raise the status of Audiovisual Translation in academic research. Qian (2009) also illustrates further details of the development of screen translation in China and briefly discusses the ratings system for imported

foreign audiovisual products. Since research into Audiovisual Translation started relatively late in China compared with Europe, there is still a large development space in which researchers can make their mark. According to CNKI (no date), which is an academic research online data base covering different academic research areas, up to 2005, less than ten articles research article related to Audiovisual Translation had been published, including journal articles and university degree research papers. However, this number increased rapidly in 2007, and about 60 related research articles have been published every year since then. This means that Audiovisual Translation is a booming research area that is attracting more and more interest from Chinese scholars.

To accompany this increased interest in Audiovisual Translation research, the Audiovisual Translation and Dissemination Council, China (AVTD China) was founded in 2017 by the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television and the China Alliance of Radio, Film and Television. This association is devoted to drawing attention to Audiovisual Translation and protecting the rights of audiovisual translators (Gambier and Jin 2018).

The development of Audiovisual Translation as an academic discipline has in Europe been a complex process. This unstable evolution is reflected in the terminology and metalanguage of Audiovisual Translation, which can change as different alternatives are proposed and as conditions or practices evolve. The advent of ‘talkies’ in the late 1920s led to the two main modes of transfer discussed earlier, dubbing and subtitling, which were referred to by early translation scholars in their research as ‘film dubbing’ and ‘film translation’ (Pérez-González (2009: 13). Later, when television emerged as a new mass communication platform, television productions were increasingly promoted and the television networks also offered a new approach for transmitting both local and international films. Pérez-González (2009: 13) points out that the term ‘film and TV translation’ (Delabastita 1989) began to appear more frequently in research publications in the late 1980s. As one of the pioneers of Audiovisual Translation scholarship, Delabastita (1989) published an article, *Translation and mass-communication: Film and T.V. translation as evidence of cultural dynamics*, calling for greater attention to be paid to research in Audiovisual Translation. Delabastita (1989: 196) was one of the first to emphasise the characteristics of audiovisual media as being multi-channel as well as multi-coda,

which means that information is offered by various elements instead of only one element. Referring to the specific features of Audiovisual Translation, Díaz-Cintas (2008: 5) also led the way in asking researchers in Audiovisual Translation studies to move beyond the limitations of research into printed text, and to explore the many other aspects of this new area of research. Since audiovisual texts are different from literary texts, on which translation scholars had thus far focused, research in this area would require a different approach (Delabastita 1989). Such calls from pioneering scholars in Audiovisual Translation studies have attracted increasing attention from other scholars in the past three decades. Following Delabastita's work, other leading scholars, such as Gambier, Gottlieb, Ivarsson, Díaz-Cintas and Pérez-González expanded research into Audiovisual Translation, striving to promote it as a specific branch of translation studies. In addition, in Europe, translation research associations were formed to offer communication platforms for professionals and academics in this area. The European Association for Studies in Screen Translation (ESIST) was founded in 1995 in the UK, followed by others, such as Subtle, the British Subtitlers' Association, and the Association des Traducteurs/Adaptateurs de l'Audiovisuel in France, both in 2006. These associations called for collaboration between the industry and the academic sector on development of research in Audiovisual Translation and the protection of the rights of audiovisual translators.

### **1.3 Aims of this thesis and research questions**

As mentioned in section 1.1, this thesis aims to investigate the translation of elements related to politeness and humour in audiovisual media subtitled from English into Chinese. In audiovisual media, politeness and humour are not only expressed by verbal elements in characters' conversations, they are also represented by other multimodal elements. The verbal elements and other multimodal elements can affect each other in the process of expressing politeness and humour. In this research, the corpus chosen to investigate this process is the subtitled Chinese version of the British television drama *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006), as featured on DVD (Carnival Film & Television for British Broadcasting Corporation 2006). As will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4, in this British television drama, verbal elements are frequently used to express indirect information during conversation. As we have seen in section 1.1, the stimuli which are provided by multimodal elements could affect the inference by target audiences of politeness and humour during the

conversation in terms of their cognitive context. Hence, investigating the relationships and influences among verbal and multimodal elements in the process of expressing politeness or humour becomes essential in the process of Audiovisual Translation. The research aims in this thesis are as follows:

1. To investigate why and how a new framework based on Relevance Theory and Multimodal Transcription can be used to explore the pragmatic use of politeness and humour in the interlingual subtitling of audiovisual programmes.
2. To explore how address terms are used as pragmatic elements in audiovisual programmes for the purpose of expressing politeness and indicating social distance and difference in social status; and to examine how multimodal elements affect the relevant inferences differently for English-speaking and Chinese-speaking audiences.
3. To investigate how different face-saving strategies are deployed through the pragmatic use of address terms in audiovisual programmes and how multimodal elements may affect the inference of these face-saving strategies in the Chinese subtitled target text.
4. To investigate the pragmatic use of humour in audiovisual programmes, and how multimodal elements may affect the inferences associated with the use of humour in the Chinese subtitled target text.
5. Specifically, to investigate the pragmatic use of humour for the purpose of being polite in audiovisual texts, and how multimodal elements may affect audience's inferences related to humour for the purpose of being polite in the Chinese subtitled target text.

#### **1.4 The corpus of the case study**

In this research, conversations featuring politeness and humour are selected from the first season of the British television drama *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006), which contains eight episodes. Each episode is around 60 minutes. This television drama is based on the book of the same name, which was written by Imogen Edwards-Jones (Edwards-Jones 2005). This television drama was translated into Chinese and distributed in 2007 on DVD by the Liaoning Culture & Art Audiovisual Publishing House, which is under the jurisdiction of the Liaoning Culture Department. The publishing house, established in 1991, is devoted to providing high quality

audiovisual products, which is also one of the main reasons this translated DVD product was chosen as a research corpus. These DVDs are intended for educated Chinese viewers who have an interest in European, and more specifically British culture (Zhou 2016; Shackleton 2020). Each episode of *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006) tells an independent story of what happens between hotel guests and hotel staff members. Since this hotel is a five-star hotel, the staff are always expected to provide high quality service for their guests, deal with unique or bizarre requests, or tactfully reduce conflicts. As a result, this television drama offers a good quality corpus for the selection of relevant examples related to the expression of politeness and humour. Politeness in this series is induced by the social class contrasts between the working staff and the socially privileged clients. It also pertains to the power relationships between customer and client. Humour, on the other hand, is an excellent coping strategy for the resolution of conflicts and for dealing with issues relating to social superiority/inferiority. Therefore, 37 examples which relate to the expression of politeness and 14 examples which relate to the expression of humour have been identified, which will be analysed and discussed in Chapter 4. These examples have been analysed using a Multimodal Transcription framework, and will be provided in the Appendix of this thesis. Some examples will be included in the relevant analysis for illustrative purposes, and in the discussion in Chapter 4, when necessary.

### **1.5 The structure and content of this thesis**

This thesis contains five chapters. In Chapter 2, the main concepts underlying this research which relate to politeness, humour, Relevance Theory and subtitling will be introduced. This research focuses on the translation of subtitles in relation to two main pragmatic uses of language, namely politeness and humour. Therefore, the relative research about politeness and humour will be introduced in this chapter. In addition, using humour for the purpose of being polite is also an effective way for people to maintain their relationship with each other during conversations. As a result, the relationship between humour and politeness will also be explored. The application of Relevance Theory to translation studies was pioneered by Gutt in 1989 in his Ph.D thesis *Translation and Relevance*, which was later published as a book in 1991. Some researchers have used Relevance Theory to analyse politeness and humour in people's daily communication (Christie 2007; Curco 1995; Curco 1996a; Curco 1998; Esandell-Vidal 1996; Yus 2003), though few have explored the

translation of politeness and humour in audiovisual programmes. Since politeness and humour also play major roles in characters' conversation in audiovisual programmes, this research attempts to fill this gap, adopting Relevance Theory as a framework to consider the translation of politeness and humour in audiovisual programmes from English into Chinese.

In Chapter 3, the methodologies used in this thesis will be discussed. This chapter is divided into three main sections. In section 3.2, the various multimodal elements which relate to audiovisual media are explored in the following four main areas, namely sound, music, image and language. These specific features have been examined critically by researchers investigating the interplay between various multimodal and verbal elements. In section 3.3, the one existing critical framework for multimodal analysis, namely Multimodal Transcription, proposed by Baldry and Thibault (2006) on the basis of Multimodal theory, will be applied. Baldry and Thibault make a specific and detailed investigation into multimodal elements and classify them in the following eight main areas in audiovisual media: camera position, perspective, distance and visual effect and visual collocation, visual salience, visual focus or gaze of participants, kinesic action and soundtrack. By adopting Multimodal Transcription, this research seeks to explore the potential of the related channels which can be used to offer stimuli for inference of the expression of politeness and humour in audiovisual media. Although the large number of multimodal elements set out by Baldry and Thibault may appear to some to be a disadvantage of this research method, I believe that Multimodal Transcription offers an opportunity to investigate the connection between verbal elements and other multimodal elements based on the specific characteristics of the audiovisual programme itself. Therefore, in the next section 3.4, the modified Multimodal Transcription framework adopted in this research will be outlined. The multimodal elements most relevant to the expression of politeness and humour in audiovisual media will be adopted in the Multimodal Transcription framework for the purpose of highlighting the stimuli offered by multimodal elements. Also, the source language and translated texts, as well as the back translation, will be presented and contextualised.

Chapter 4 will present the analysis of the chosen examples related to the translation of politeness and humour. In some examples, the Multimodal



Transcription table will be inserted to provide more detailed information from the related examples. In section 4.2, the importance of context in the process of inference will be emphasised. The differences in the English and Chinese cultural contexts will be highlighted. In section 4.3, the analysis will focus on the translation of address terms as essential elements for expressing politeness in conversation. This section will be divided into four subsections, namely equal non-intimate dyads in address terms, unequal intimate dyads in address terms (superordinate to subordinate), unequal intimate dyads in address terms (subordinate to superordinate), and equal intimate dyads in address terms. This subdivision could help to identify how differences in social distance and social status among characters in the original conversations could affect the choice of address terms used against a different cultural background in audiovisual programmes. The corpus of chosen conversations, which will be transcribed and annotated in the appendix in full, will be analysed within these four subsections based on the differences of power and social distance between the speaker and hearer in *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006). The classification of these four sections will enable comparison of the influence of the differences in power and social distance in relation to the use of address terms. Each of these four subsections will be divided into three main parts. In the first part, the multimodal elements which influence the inference of politeness during the conversation will be analysed and discussed according to their prevalence, starting with the most frequent. In this part, the research will identify how discrete elements in the conversation can infer politeness. Next, the translation strategies in the chosen corpus will be summarised and categorised. Lastly, the interplay between the chosen address terms and other multimodal elements in the source text will be explored. Also, the translated texts will be compared with the originals to consider whether or not the influences brought by the multimodal elements still work in the same way in the translated text.

In section 4.4, the analysis will be developed by looking at examples of conversational humour and of its translation in subtitles. The classification of examples, which is shown in the Appendix, uses the same four categories relating to the address terms mentioned earlier. This section involves six sub-sections. In section 4.4.1, the analysis will be focused on stimuli which are offered by single multimodal elements from the chosen examples according to their calculated

frequency. Next, in section 4.4.2, attention will turn to the stimuli which are offered by images and body language for the purpose of creating humour in the examples. Instances where objects or body language specifically connect with verbal elements and the interplay of these multimodal and verbal elements in the process of creating humour in the source text will be scrutinised, as well as the influences of these multimodal and verbal elements on one another in the translated text. Section 4.4.3 will then consider examples related to the use of puns to express humour. The connections between the various meanings which are created by puns and other related multimodal elements in the source text will be explored, in addition to the influence of these original existing multimodal elements on the translated text. Section 4.4.4 will examine the use of cultural references to create humour in examples from the source and target texts. Then, section 4.4.5 will concentrate on the manipulation of implicit or explicit information to create humour in examples from the source and target texts. In section 4.4.6, the discussion will focus on the use of taboo words in examples from the source and translated texts.

Finally, Chapter 5 will present conclusions to this research. This chapter will first summarise the major findings of this research, then outline the contributions and limitations of the study, and finally make suggestions for further studies.

## Chapter 2. Literature Review: Building a model from existing sources

### 2.1 Introduction

This research aims to examine issues relating to the translation of politeness and humour, focusing specifically on how humour are being used to construct different face-saving strategies. The transfer of British English into Mandarin Chinese in contemporary dialogue from audiovisual programmes is at its core. The recent drama series, *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006), was chosen as a case study material to this effect. The interactions of members of staff working at a five-star hotel in London with their customers were conducive to a wide range of exchanges between people of contrasting social backgrounds. My aim is to study contemporary cross-cultural communication which brings politeness, humour and various face-saving strategies to the fore, and the series *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006), which was published in DVD in China in 2007, fitted this criterion, as will be discussed in the methodology and analysis chapters. The examination of politeness in the contemporary conversational dialogue of this series exposed two important features. First of all, humour was frequently used to express politeness. Second, as the original text was taken from a television series, its translation, available as subtitles, needed to be considered within an Audiovisual Translation framework. For these reasons, this literature review does not solely offer a critical overview of existing research on the topic of the translation of politeness and humour. It also relates to the expression of humour mediated through subtitles, with particular consideration given to the English into Chinese language pair. Unlike themes such as family loyalty or respect for ancestors that were discussed in *Coco* (Unkrich 2017) in the previous chapter, humour is not just a theme but also an imaginative approach to life, an ability to look at reality with a certain distance. Showing politeness by using humour can make a conversation friendly as well as entertaining. In relation to politeness, humour is a strategy of communication which, when adopted in conversation, can make it possible to enhance or challenge politeness.

This chapter will examine the secondary literature that has impacted on the thinking of this project and on the model elaborated for the analysis of the material provided as the case study. As this chapter will show, an increasing number of researchers are showing interest in the research of Audiovisual Translation in

politeness, humour, as well as in the ways that humour expresses politeness. Yet the two notions are quite seldom studied in conjunction with each other, particularly in the context of interlinguistic and intercultural transfer. The literature relating to the transfer of audiovisual texts which has been useful to this research will be discussed in this chapter. In section 2.2, the existing research on politeness in both Western and Chinese cultures will be discussed and compared. A survey of studies published on politeness in Audiovisual Translation studies will also be presented. Next, in section 2.3, existing research on humour both in general and in Audiovisual Translation will be considered. After that, in section 2.4, research on the relationship between humour and politeness will be examined. As previously mentioned, humour can be a strategy for expressing or defying politeness. Some Audiovisual Translation scholars have explored the challenges of its transfer in audiovisual texts (Zabalbeascoa 1996, 1997, 2005; Díaz-Cintas, 2001; Asimakoulas 2004; Chiaro 2006, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2014a, 2014b). I will examine how their work is relevant to the mediation of politeness, in a doubly challenging context: that of translation performed between very different cultures, and that of constrained translation inherent in subtitling. Moving on to section 2.5, literature on Relevance Theory and its applications in translation studies will be introduced. Relevance Theory, as a linguistics theory applied to translation, primarily considers translation as a process of communication among a source language audience, a translator and a target language audience. As illustrated by Relevance Theory, cognitive context is one of the essential elements that affects communication, particularly communication that favours pragmatic content. A few scholars, such as Bogucki (2004a, 2004b, 2013, 2020), Desilla (2012) and Yus (1998, 2003, 2012, 2016), have adopted Relevance Theory as a framework for their research on subtitling. Others have applied Relevance Theory to other translation genres, such as drama translation (Wolf 2011). However, no specific research has applied Relevance Theory to the translation of politeness, especially when expressed through humour in subtitling. Applying this theory to the analysis of subtitled texts in the strongly culture specific areas of humour and politeness will lead to formulation of a model intended to solve recurrent comprehension challenges in interlinguistic and intercultural transfers.

Chapter 2 will focus on the application of Relevance Theory in Audiovisual Translation. In addition, research relating specifically to the Audiovisual Translation

mode of subtitling will be discussed. The specific features of subtitling will be considered in relation to the main themes of my research and in the context of English into Chinese translation. Finally, conclusions will be drawn to sum up the research gaps that have emerged as a result of the literature review. The research will then focus on filling in these research gaps, which will lead to the original contribution of this research.

## **2.2 Politeness Theory**

Politeness is usually understood as a form of social behaviour governed by rules and expectations and intended to maintain balance in people's relationships. Three main strands of research have been developed to consider the pragmatic use of politeness. The first is expressed in the Politeness Principle, proposed by Geoffrey Leech (1983), which contains six maxims for politeness. The second is Face Theory, proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). It is specifically divided into considerations regarding positive face and negative face and argues that to maintain different purposes of the requirements of face, positive politeness and negative politeness are needed separately. The third is Rapport Management, proposed by Spencer-Oatey (2008), which refers to the verbal and non-verbal strategies that people adopt to handle interactional goals, face sensitivities and sociality rights and obligations. Based on these three politeness theories, some Chinese researchers have carried out practical and theoretical research to see whether these three politeness theories can be applied to Chinese. This section will discuss these politeness research theories in relation to their application to the Chinese context and their relevance to the particular requirements of this thesis.

### **2.2.1 Leech's Politeness Principle and Gu's Chinese Politeness Principle**

Leech (1983) developed the Politeness Principle on the basis of the Cooperative Principle proposed by Grice (1991) which contains the following four maxims: Quantity, Quality, Relation and Manner.

Quantity: Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purpose of the exchange). Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

Quality: Do not say what you believe to be false. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

Relation: Be relevant.

Manner: Avoid obscurity of expression. Avoid ambiguity. Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity). Be orderly. (Grice 1991: 28)

However, Leech (1983: 80) points out that people sometimes violate the Quality Maxim, as proposed by Grice, in their conversation to respond indirectly to other people's questions, such as when telling a white lie. In such cases, he suggests that people's intention is to show politeness to each other for the purpose of continuing their communication with each other. He (1983: 132) proposes six maxims of the Politeness Principle, namely the tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim and sympathy maxim. Based on Leech's Politeness Principle, Gu (1990), a Chinese scholar, puts forward a Chinese Politeness Principle based on Chinese culture. Gu (1990) indicates that four maxims exist in Chinese: the self-denigration maxim, address maxim, tact maxim and generosity maxim. Gu (1990: 240) stresses that the concept of politeness in Chinese culture is constrained by moral standards which are formed according to Chinese social standards. The violation of moral standards will incur social sanctions. He emphasises (1990: 242) that instead of being an instrument in people's interaction, politeness should be considered through its normative function in Chinese society. He further suggests (1990: 246) that self-denigration is a specific feature used for the purpose of being polite in Chinese culture, which differs from its use in Western culture. To be more precise, denigrating oneself and elevating others is an important means of showing respect and modesty to one another in Chinese society. Moreover, he also shows that address systems differ in Chinese and English. For example, the pronoun 'you' in Chinese can be expressed in four different ways, namely '*ni*', '*nimen*', '*nin*' and '*ninmen*'. Normally, people of the same social status use '*ni*' (single term) and/or '*nimen*' (plural term) to address their interlocutor. The use of '*nin*' (single term being polite) and/or '*ninmen*' (plural term being polite) implies more respect, being specifically used to address an interlocutor who has a relatively higher social status.

Leech's theory intends to explain people's interactions through various facets. However, it has the major disadvantage that the number of maxims cannot be constrained (Thomas 1995; Yuan 2012). For example, Leech (1983: 147) introduces the Pollyanna Principle as one of the maxims, which means that participants try to maintain positivity during their conversation. According to this principle, if they have to convey some negative information, they will try to minimise the negative

side, such as by using the words ‘a bit’ or ‘a little’ to reduce the negative effects of their communication. In other words, any number of new maxims can be produced to indicate variations of language use (Thomas 1995: 167). Since Gu (1990) established his Chinese Politeness Theory on the basis of Leech's Politeness Principles, this problem also exists in Gu's Chinese Politeness Theory. The unlimited number of maxims might have caused uncertainty when dividing the corpus into different groups for analysis in this thesis, which could have increased uncertainty for the author in finding commonalities in details during the analysis. Hence, it will not be adopted in this thesis.

### **2.2.2 Brown and Levinson's face theory and Mao's Chinese face**

Brown and Levinson proposed their concept of face on the basis of Goffman's theory (1967: 5), which relates to the positive public image that is pursued by people in the process of their social interactions. They (1987: 61) illustrate that face is “the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself”. They suggest that there are two different face requirements in people's daily interaction. Brown and Levinson (1987: 62) indicate that positive face represents people's requirement to be accepted and respected by others. By contrast, negative face expresses people's requirement to be given freedom instead of being forced by others. According to these two different requirements of face, positive politeness and negative politeness are needed separately to save each other's face as well as reducing the threat to each other's face. Brown and Levinson (1987: 91-94) indicate that there are five strategies for politeness according to the degree of the threat to other people's face, ranging from high to low, namely bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, off record, and not using a face threatening act. Regarding bald on record, it is used when the speaker uses a maximum degree of face threatening to the hearer's face in some circumstance (Brown and Levinson 1987: 94-101). At the same time, off record means that the language used by the speaker is indirect, which allows the hearer to do the inference by themselves to get the information from the speaker (Brown and Levinson 1987: 211). After Brown and Levinson published their book *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*, in 1987, other researchers raised numerous criticisms regarding whether their politeness theory can in fact be applied universally, especially when culture differences exist from one language to another. That being the case, some researchers have attempted to apply Brown and Levinson's

face theory into their own culture to see how well it would work. Mao (1994) is one researcher who attempted to discover whether face theory could be applied in Chinese society. Mao (1994: 460) points out that compared to Brown and Levinson's (1987) face theory, which considers the individual's needs of face, Chinese face needs to be accepted by the individual's living group and even throughout the whole society. This is also a common phenomenon in other Asian countries, such as Japan (Matsumoto 1988). These investigations indicate that face theory needs to be considered in combination with specific socio-cultural contexts. In addition, some researchers point out that the examples given by Brown and Levinson in their book have no interactional context (Yuan 2012: 12). Therefore, utterances such as certain jokes between friends may seem offensive to a stranger if there is no consideration of the interactional context.

### **2.2.3 Spencer-Oatey's Rapport Management theory**

Spencer-Oatey (2008: 13) indicates that the language chosen by people in their conversation is not only used to maintain people's social relationships but also for management of sociality rights and interactional goals. She further suggests (2008: 14) that face is related to the individual's identity and social quality. Although this theory attempts to give individuals opportunity to choose a strategy to protect face according to their specific social context, different social contexts could produce different effects, even when people select the same strategy (Yuan 2012: 23). Yuan (2012) constructs a composite model to combine Brown and Levinson's face theory and Spencer-Oatey's theory to make it suitable to be used in different cultures.

In conclusion, this section contends politeness theories and their implementation in the Chinese context can illuminate the various aspects of politeness use in the dialogues that will serve as source text in the present thesis. Diverse as they are, because these theories illustrate the existing culture differences between English and Chinese, they will be useful in understanding and assessing the translation strategies employed by audiovisual translators in order to render polite expressions into Chinese. This thesis will adopt Brown and Levinson's face theory in conjunction with Relevance Theory. We will explore face theory in the light of Relevance Theory and show how these combined theories allow a fruitful analysis of politeness in the context of different cultures (Esandell-Vidal 1996, 1998; Christie 2007). This will be discussed in more detail in the later section 2.5.2.



### **2.3 Address terms in English and Chinese**

This section will focus on introducing some related information about address terms. This is necessary mainly because in a later part of this thesis, namely Chapter 4, the analysis and discussion of the chosen examples of expression and translation of politeness will concentrate on the use of address terms to express politeness. This section will be divided into three parts. In section 2.3.1, the importance of address terms in audiovisual programmes will be introduced. This research focuses on subtitling of politeness in audiovisual programmes from English to Chinese. Using address terms in specific conversation contexts is an important means for expressing politeness in people's conversations. In addition, in audiovisual programmes, the inference of politeness is not only affected by the chosen address terms, but also by other, multimodal elements. Hence, it seems necessary to take a closer look on how address terms offer stimuli in characters' conversation and how address terms work together with multimodal elements to express politeness in audiovisual programmes. Next, in section 2.3.2, information about the use of address terms in English will be represented. It is useful to see how address terms are used in English in source language contexts. Lastly, section 2.3.3 compares the differences in the usage of address terms in English and Chinese. This will allow emphasis of the different stimuli which are offered by address terms in different language and culture groups, thereby enabling the translator to focus more attention during the translation process on considering their influence on the inference of information by their target language audience.

#### **2.3.1 The importance of address terms in audiovisual programmes**

Address terms are an essential part of people's communication, and essential to expression of politeness between the speaker and hearer. Yule (1996: 20) indicates that the form of address term used by the addresser can inference the pragmatic relationship between the addressee and the addresser, such as between friends or people who are meeting each other for the first time. Furthermore, Holmes (2013: 285) states that the choice of different kinds of formality in address terms is an essential way to make the communication purpose clear. Address terms provide certain stimuli in original conversations in audiovisual programmes, and are also used as an essential tool for the purpose of being polite. The adoption of particular address terms in conversation can enable the audience to get a general idea about issues such as interlocutors' relative social status, social distance and so on.

Sometimes the chosen address terms and other multimodal elements affect each other, so different information can be inferred by the audience. Even though the same characters are talking to each other, the address terms might also change, depending on the particular situation. Moreover, even when the same address terms are used to address the same person, a different relationship among the speakers might be indicated in combination with the specific situation. Here is an example from *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006) Season1 Episode3 between two same characters though in different occasions:

1. Charlie: **Natasha**...surely...

Natasha: **Miss Balanovsky** to you.

Now get out of my room

And **Charlie**.

Take those plates with you

2. Charlie: Goodbye **Miss Balanovsky**.

Natasha: Goodbye **Mr Edwards**.

In this episode, Natasha Balanovsky is a long-term regular guest at Hotel Babylon. Therefore, she has over time established a good relationship with the staff. On this occasion, she asks Charlie to find her a fake husband to fool her father so that she can carry on living in London. Charlie and Tony agree to help her and choose Alexis, one of their hotel staff members, to pretend to be her fiancé. They also persuade her to hold her wedding in their hotel. But they have not told her that they are going to earn a large amount of money from this wedding reception. The first conversation above happens after Alexis has told Natasha that Charlie's motive is to make money from her wedding reception and he is not just offering friendly help. The reason for Alexis saying this to Natasha is that he wants Natasha to be angry with Charlie, so that he can just slip away with the huge amount of money being given by Natasha's father, while the others are busy arguing with each other. So, when Charlie comes to warn her that Alexis seems to have made a secret deal with her father, Natasha shows her anger and disappointment that Charlie is only helping her for financial gain. Although they have previously called each other by their first names, having become good friends, her face looks stern and she requests that Charlie calls her Miss Balanovsky, using curt intonation. The use of this address term increases the distance between herself and Charlie, making them customer and staff member

instead of friends. In this conversation, the change in address terms represents the increase in tension in the relationship between the speaker and the hearer, thus providing a stimulus within this conversation.

At the end of this episode, Natasha is forgiven by her father, thanks to Charlie and Tony's intervention. Since Charlie has helped Natasha to solve the problem created by Alexis, Natasha also relaxes her attitude towards Charlie and feels thankful to him. Therefore, at the end of this episode, she uses 'Mr. Edwards' to address Charlie in a formal way. It is also an effective way to show that Natasha has forgiven Charlie for what he did before. Although this time Charlie still addresses Natasha using the formal 'Miss Balanovsky', there is no longer any tension between these two characters, with Charlie expressing gratitude to Natasha for forgiving him. Finally, these two characters are seen to respect and be thankful to each other.

This example illustrates how the flow of address terms and related multimodal elements can be important stimuli in people's conversation. Furthermore, politeness is also affected by cultural elements. Therefore, it is essential to examine the translation problems that can arise in audiovisual programmes from the use of address terms in translation, in the search for interpretive resemblance from English into Chinese.

### **2.3.2 Address terms in English**

As could be seen above, address terms can be instrumental in devising a strategy for showing politeness. Linguists have investigated this aspect of language in depth, particularly in the context of the English language. Wood and Kroger (1991: 145) indicate that as one of the essential elements of polite language, different kinds of address forms can be adopted in various ways for the purpose of being polite. Brown and Ford (1961: 375) further state that terms of address can be constructed to indicate the relationships among people in society. Moreover, the specific pragmatic functions of address terms in people's communication should also be acknowledged. Address terms are used as an important tool to begin and maintain an interaction between the speaker and the hearer. Application of different kinds of address terms enables basic information to be received regarding such as the relative power and distance among the interlocutors (Holmes 2013: 285). The use of different address terms can, in addition, represent an attitude or purpose among the communicators, such as maintaining solidarity. Wood and Kroger (1991: 145) argue that address

terms can be applied for the aim of protecting positive face and negative face respectively. They (1991: 146) state that if there is a considerable social status gap between the speaker and the hearer due to the existence of vertical distance, people who are of relatively lower status will adopt address terms which show deference, such as 'Your Majesty', for the purpose of protecting their own negative face. Among people who are of relatively equal status, the address terms adopted need to show mutual deference according to their horizontal distance. Wood and Kroger (1991: 147) also show that for the purpose of protecting positive face, some address terms are adopted to show common status, such as using first name to show their equal and close relationship with each other. Brown and Levinson (1987: 107) take this argument further and suggest that when using address terms to express in-group membership, the addresser indirectly attempts to highlight the common ground shared with the addressee within one group. For example, 'sister' is a form of address which is sometimes adopted among female interlocutors to show they share a common identity.

The following diagram, designed by Laver (1981: 297), illustrates the available choice of address terms in British English for the purpose of being polite.



equals in the social hierarchy. However, if an addresser who is of a relatively higher status allows it, then the first name can be used as a term of address in the communication by the person of lower social ranking. In such interactions, the communicators might be looking to consolidate solidarity in their relationship or to maintain a harmonious environment during their conversation and beyond. To the contrary, if people of higher status choose not to make such a dispensation, lower status people need to use a title with the last name when addressing them. Brown and Ford (1961: 384) further indicate that the application of address terms is a dynamic process, since people might adjust address terms according to the specific purpose of their conversation. To be more precise, people who are of a higher status are normally the pacesetters in taking the initiative to reduce the distance and promote intimacy between them and their hearer. Therefore, they usually generate a new flow of patterns in the use of address terms. Brown and Ford (*ibid.*: 384) also point out that in many languages, conventional greetings may be different from those used in English. However, it should be noticed that the strict rules on the chosen address terms in people's conversations have changed to become a little looser compared to previously. Currently, in the UK, in most social situations, people tend to use first names to address each other to minimise the difference of social status or the power relationships between the interlocutors. This is, however, not the case in every culture. In the next section, a more detailed comparison will be made of the use of address terms in English and Chinese.

### **2.3.3 The differences in address terms between English and Chinese**

Braun (1988: 7) indicates that address terms are used by the speaker to refer to his/her collocutor. Terms of address can be chosen by the speaker for a specific purpose in relation to the hearer, such as expressing politeness. Sometimes, information will be offered through the use of address terms in people's conversation, which might, for example, highlight the level of their social distance. However, because of differences in socio-cultural backgrounds and due to the presence of multimodal elements, new information might be inferred by a speaker from a country which is different from the hearer's and not be understood by the hearer. In that case, some information, such as information leading to the adjustment of the social distance, might not be inferred in the same way by the source language audience and the target language audience. Information will also be affected through

the combination of the use of address terms and other multimodal elements. For example, staff who are close to each other may use informal address terms to address each other to decrease the distance between them by introducing a particular tone. Since English and Chinese use address terms very differently, the stimuli which are offered in these address terms could affect the inference of their audience in understanding the information from the character's conversation. More specifically, the range of address terms used in audiovisual programmes provide various stimuli used in combination with other multimodal elements in the source language text, thereby enabling source language audiences to infer information when they are watching audiovisual programmes. Translators should notice these differences in the use of address terms in English and Chinese. They should also notice how address terms are used in combination with other multimodal elements in the source text and how this can be transferred meaningfully into the target text. This section will consider the main differences in use of address terms which exist in English and Chinese, which will later be related to the use of address terms in the chosen excerpts in Chapter 4. These differences can cause difficulties for translators in the subtitling of audiovisual programmes. The main differences in English and Chinese which relate to address terms are listed below and most of these will be covered in the later analysis of the research corpus in section 4.1.

First, the order of proper names is different between English and Chinese. Gu (1990: 249) indicates that the order of Chinese names is surname + (middle name) + given name. Since middle names are rarely used in Chinese these days, if someone has a middle name, it must be used with the given name to form an address term. However, in English, the order of names is the opposite. For example, if an English person addressed herself by her full name as Rebecca Mitchell to a Chinese person, that Chinese person would think Rebecca was the surname. Hence, translators need to notice this difference and adjust the sequence of surname and given name in the process of translation.

Second, there are differences in the use of first names between English and Chinese. Gu (1990: 250) points out that the first name is used as a familiar address term in Chinese to show the close relationship between the addresser and the addressee. Therefore, the first name is normally used among family members. Within a family, the older generation can use the 'middle name + first name' to

address the younger generation, but this does not apply the other way round. Younger people are only allowed to use kinship terms to address elders, such as grandpa, as will be discussed in more detail later. If this rule is not respected, it will be perceived as rude, improper and as an offence to the older generation. In addition, the first name can be used within the same generation between members who have a friendly relationship. For example, in China, while students in school normally address each other in the formal way, which is 'surname + first name', if they are good friends, they will address each other only by their first names. By contrast, in UK schools, students normally address each other by their first names. Therefore, it is hard to recognise the nature of the relationship among them compared to Chinese students. In addition, with regard to a work context, the use of the first name is also different between English and Chinese. This can be mainly seen from the selected examples in 4.1.2 and 4.1.3 in Chapter 4. In the British working context, superordinates and subordinates use first names to address each other. However, in the Chinese context, when subordinates address superordinates, they normally use the form "title + Surname". Moreover, members of staff who are in similar positions normally address each other by their full names. Although, in the last two decades, people might have used the first name to address each other in order to reduce distance and to create a more friendly working environment.

Third, kinship terms are more complicated in Chinese than in English, as is suggested by a number of research publications. Blum (1997: 360), considering the linguistic context of English, shows that kinship terms are used for the purpose of solidarity. Chen and Shryock (1932: 623), on the other hand, indicate that the Chinese abide strictly by these relationship terms as they are governed by heritage according to their long history. In Chinese culture, the family is seen as the foundation of the whole society, hence the importance given to terms of address among family members. As a consequence, referring to kinship in terms of address is more complex in Chinese than in English. A large number of scholars have pursued research into how Chinese family members address each other (Chen and Shryock 1932, Kroeber 1933, Chao 1956, Blum 1997). For example, there are two different ways to express 'grandfather/grandpa' in Chinese, namely *yeye* and *laoye*. *Yeye* is used to refer to the paternal grandfather, while *laoye* is used for the maternal grandfather. Furthermore, the application of kinship terms is asymmetrical (Gu 1990:



251). Normally, the younger generation uses kinship address terms to address the older generation, such as a younger brother calling his older brother *gege* (older brother) to show respect from the younger generation toward the older generation. However, in English, unless they add a predicate to give more information, the speaker can only refer to 'brother' when addressing other people, such as in a written text. It is difficult for the audience to infer their age, especially when this information is given without other detail. Hence, some other information should be considered as a supplement when the audience need to infer whether the speaker means 'older brother' or 'younger brother'. However, the older generation do not use kinship terms to address the younger generation; instead, they will normally use the first name or full name to address a younger person.

Another point that should be made is that kinship terms are not only used among family members, they are also in general use in Chinese (Gu 1990: 250). Kadar and Pan (2011: 136) indicate that applying kinship terms to non-kin usage represents an attempt from the speaker to decrease the distance and show deference to the hearer. This is because it is essential to show a warm attitude and respect in the Chinese address terms system (Gu 1990: 248). By contrast, kinship terms cannot be used in a similar way in English. For example, in Chinese, 'uncle' can be used as a term of respect by the younger generation to address a neighbour who is of a similar age to their own uncle or father. It contributes to maintaining a relationship of solidarity and increases the closeness between the young person's family and their neighbour (Pan and Kadar 2011: 1534). On the same topic, Methven (2006:5) points out that although sometimes 'uncle' can be used to refer to non-family members in English, this person needs to be a very close friend of the family.

Sometimes, one form of kinship in English can be translated in several ways in Chinese. When this happens, the Chinese address terms are offering various stimuli which can be partly expressed by the combination of English address terms and other multimodal elements in the source text. In examples from Chapter 4 (section 4.1.1), three different Chinese expressions are used in the translation of the address term 'daughter' into English, namely in example 2 ('千金'(precious daughter)), example 8('令媛' (your precious daughter)) and example 3('小女'(little daughter)). The first two address terms are used to address the hearer's daughter, while the last one is

used to address the speaker's own daughter. These Chinese address terms provide some stimuli on their own. In translation, the target language also needs to infer some information on its own, such as the social status difference between the speaker and the hearer. These three examples will be analysed in detail in section 4.1. Apart from the above three main expressions, there are other colloquial expressions that can be used to refer to the speaker's daughter or the hearer's daughter in Chinese, such as '闺女' (girl in the house), '丫头' (girl) and '姑娘' (girl). These colloquial expressions are used in people's casual talk.

Fourth, self-denigration is one of the characteristic and important features of the Chinese address system. Gu (1990: 246) illustrates that there are two important aspects of the Self-denigration Maxim, which are 'denigrate self' and 'elevate other'. It is applied for the purpose of showing respect and humility, which are essential elements in Chinese politeness. Here is an example given by Gu (1990) as a normal, formal way for two adults who are meeting for the first time to introduce each other in a polite way. In this example, M represents a Mainland Chinese and S represents a Singapore Chinese:

M: 您贵姓?

S: 小弟姓李。您尊姓?

M: 贱姓章。

Back translation: M: Your precious surname?

S: Little brother's surname is Li. Your respectable surname?

M: My worthless surname is Zhang. (Gu 1990: 246)

In this conversation, M elevates the hearer by using 'precious' to ask S's surname. S then elevates M by using 'respectable' to ask M's surname. However, both M and S denigrate themselves when they introduce their surnames. S uses 'little' to denigrate himself, while M uses 'worthless' to introduce his own surname. We can see that both of them attempt to denigrate themselves to show their humble attitude and elevate the other to show their respect to each other. However, people will not use this kind of approach when they introduce themselves in English.

Fifth, in Chinese, second person pronouns can be used as honorific pronouns. When people want to use a second person pronoun to refer to someone, they can choose *ni* or *nin* to refer to that person according to the specific situation, such as in

example 15 of 4.1.1, which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4. If the speaker and the hearer are of a similar age, working in a similar position, they can use *ni*. If there is a big difference between these two people, such as in age or social status, then people who are of a lower age or in a relatively lower position (such as a team leader to the head manager) should use *nin* to address their interlocutor to show respect and politeness. However, there is no such difference in English. Fang and Heng give a brief summary of the application of *ni* and *nin* in Chinese:

*Ni*

1. Familiarity: e.g., Classmates, fellow students, fellow workers, colleagues, intimate friends, etc.
2. Lower rank: e.g., clerks, servants, workmen, peasants, soldiers, etc.
3. Equals of the family and kin: e.g., husband and wife, brothers and sisters, cousin, etc.

*Nin*

1. Special status: e.g., chief of state
2. Higher rank: e.g., officials, judges, gentry, landlords, rich businessmen, etc.
3. Celebrities: e.g., famous scholars, professors, famous writers, etc.
4. Ascending generation: e.g., grandparents, parents, parents-in-law, uncles and aunts, elders in the community, etc.
5. Strangers. (Fang and Heng 1983: 502)

English is unusual within European languages in not showing any differentiation between a polite second pronoun form and a familiar form of address. This difference could pose a challenge to translators in attempting to express such implicit politeness between English and Chinese.

Next, occupational titles are widely used to address people in Chinese, such as ‘teacher + Surname’, which is again different from English (He and Ren 2016). Kadar and Pan (2011: 136) indicate that professional terms of address are normally combined with the surname of the addressee. Furthermore, Qin (2008: 410) indicates that titles are used more often in Chinese to address superiors. For example, in Chinese schools, students address their teacher as ‘teacher’ or ‘surname (of the teacher) + teacher’, which is a formal approach to address their teacher in a polite way. This could cause difficulties to translators when they translate this kind of Chinese address term into English in terms of also conveying the implicit meaning of showing politeness from the speaker to the hearer.

Finally, in the process of choosing address terms, age is considered as an important element among Chinese speakers (Qin 2008: 411). Pan and Kadar (2011: 1533) indicate that seniors are respected as having higher status by younger people in the hierarchical structure used in communication. Therefore, using the form ‘*lao* (old) + surname’ is a common way to address people who are in a relatively older age group. In addition, old age is assumed to represent wisdom in Chinese. Fang and Heng (1983: 500) state that, normally, in higher government organisations and academic circles, people use the ‘surname + *lao* (old)’ to show respect to people who have made important contributions or accomplished important achievements in their area.

To sum up, the differences in address terms between English and Chinese cause a range of difficulties for translators. Moreover, because address terms are not static, but dynamic and contextualised, translators also need to consider the specific situation in the process of translation. In the following part of this section some specific examples will be given of analysis relevant to address terms in translations from English to Chinese in the television series *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006). Kroger, Wood, and Kim (1984: 280) proposed the use of six interpersonal categories, based on the range of hierarchical relationships between speakers, to compare the use of address terms among Chinese, Greek and Korean: (a) unequal intimate dyads: self superordinate; (b) unequal intimate dyads: self subordinate; (c) unequal non-intimate dyads: self superordinate; (d) unequal non-intimate dyads: self subordinate; (e) equal intimate dyads; (f) equal non-intimate dyads. In the examples used for analysis in Chapter 4, the address terms used in the English conversations rarely include the use of a self superordinate or self subordinate. Therefore, this categorisation will be modified based on the main characteristics of the use of address terms from the research corpus. That being the case, the standard use of address terms in English will be considered in terms of the four following categories: equal non-intimate dyads, unequal intimate dyads (superordinate to subordinate), unequal intimate dyads (subordinate to superordinate) and equal intimate dyads. This modified categorisation will be used to address how differences of social distance and social status are taken into consideration when people are choosing different address terms to address each other in English. This modified categorisation will additionally be used to show the differences in choices of address terms in different cultures in

otherwise identical situations. This could help translators to notice the different effectors in the chosen address terms in the target culture during their translation both of explicit and implicit meaning from one language into another language.

#### **2.4 The relationship between politeness and humour**

Some research into politeness also emphasises the importance of the role of humour in maintaining polite interactions (Lakoff 1973; Leech 1983; Brown and Levinson 1987). Humour has different functions in communication, linked to the different purposes of language use. In discussing the verbal use of humour in human communication, Norrick (2003: 1338) divides humour into the following four forms: jokes, anecdotes, wordplay and irony. However, he further argues (2003: 1338) that it is difficult to make a clear classification of humour since these forms fade into each other naturally in people's interactions. Whilst participants often use humour to entertain each other in the process of an interaction, it also can be used in instances such as a verbal attack, or as a strategy to threaten other people's face indirectly. In addition, Ruch (1998: 6-7) indicates that development of the understanding of humour can be traced from a narrow interpretation, which only includes the comic, to a broad interpretation, in which humour is a neutral term that covers fun, wit, nonsense, and the ways with which people entertain each other. Importantly, humour is not limited to positive meaning, but can also be aggressive. Brown and Levinson (1987: 102) view joking as a kind of positive politeness strategy. It is used to claim common ground in people's interactions, such as points of view, opinions, attitudes, knowledge, as well as empathy. They (1987: 124) indicate that making a joke is the expression of a politeness strategy that has the positive effect of attenuating the potential threat to the face of the hearer in the process of conversation. They point out that such jokes need to be based on common background knowledge.

On the other hand, Brown and Levinson (1987: 221) view irony as a kind of negative politeness strategy. In the use of irony, the intended meaning of the utterance can be interpreted indirectly. Leech (1983: 82) states that irony is a useful interpersonal rhetoric approach to reduce conflict in an indirect and implied way when it is impossible to avoid offence to other people through a direct approach. Brown and Levinson (1987: 263) additionally argue that although using irony will cause threat to other people's face, it is an off-record form of face threatening action. It is an effective strategy for reducing the direct face threat as compared to on-record

face threatening action. In addition, Dews, Kaplan and Winner (1995: 364-5) suggest that irony can be applied for the purpose of saving face when using criticism, such as criticising a performance or offensive behaviour. They (1995: 364) state that using irony as criticism may reduce the level of criticism as compared to a literal criticism, for the purpose of saving the face of addressee. In addition, when speakers use irony to make a criticism, they save their own face, because they appear less angry and seem to have their temper under better control compared to if the literal words had been used. Similarly, Barbe (1995: 89) indicates that irony provides the opportunity for speakers to express aggressive information in a seemingly unaggressive way. When speakers use irony, they cover up the internal conflict to make the aggression less obvious. Since the speaker adopts irony as cover for the offensive, it is an effective approach for saving face both for speaker and hearer. By contrast, Attardo (2001: 121) argues that even when people use irony for the purpose of being polite, the language is still aggressive, especially when the speaker intends to criticise. However, he agrees that ironic criticism is more polite than direct criticism. Irony hence uses positive language to reduce the detrimental effects of politeness for the purpose of expressing negative information (Matthew, Hancock and Dunham 2006: 5).

Holmes (2000: 159) also indicates that, in the context of work interactions, humour which is used by colleagues in the same working group could be hardly understood by others who do not work in the same group, since they do not share the same common social working background. Additionally, jokes can be used to reinforce common feelings and attitudes, as another effective way to maintain addressers' and addressees' positive face (Zajdman 1995: 327). Importantly, *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006) provides both types of interaction: within the same work group (staff of the hotel) and outside the group (between staff and clients of the hotel), for analysis of the use of humour for being polite. In addition, Brown and Levinson (1987: 228-9) propose that humour might be constructed through insults in people's conversations, which might threaten the hearer's face directly. However, the degree of threat can be decreased if there is a close relationship between the speaker and the hearer. The closer the relationship between the speakers, the less direct the face threat between them. Various face-saving strategies in daily interactions can help

people foster and maintain good relationships with the people they mix with in their social lives.

Nevertheless, some studies have criticised the viewpoint that jokes can only be considered as positive politeness, arguing that they also can present threats to people's face. Zajdman (1995: 325) indicates that although sometimes humour is used for a positive politeness purpose, some kinds of jokes are used for the purpose of threatening the speakers' or hearers' face. Zajdman (1995: 326) further points out that some people are quite comfortable with using humour to threaten other people's face, or do not even mind other people threatening their face through humour, since to them, getting someone to laugh is more important. Holmes (2000: 159) believes that humour can be used not only as a positive strategy in interaction, but also a negative strategy. Therefore, according to its different functions, Holmes (2000) divides humour into two categories: humour as positive politeness and humour as negative politeness.

1. Humour as positive politeness

- 1.1 Humour can address the hearer's/ addressee's positive face needs by expressing solidarity or collegiality.

- 1.2 Humour can be used to protect the speaker's positive face needs by expressing self-deprecatory meanings or apologetic sentiments.

2. Humour as negative politeness

- 2.1 Humour can be used to attenuate the threat to the hearer's/ addressee's negative face by downtoning or hedging an FTA, such as through a directive.

- 2.2 Humour can be used to attenuate the threat to the hearer's/ addressee's positive face by downtoning or hedging a Face Attack Act (Austin 1990) such as a criticism or insult. (Holmes 2000: 167)

These categories of humour will be discussed further in the following part of this chapter.

#### **2.4.1 Humour as positive politeness strategy**

##### *2.4.1.1 Addressee's positive face needs: solidarity or collegiality*

Holmes (2000: 167) suggests that through conveying positive politeness, humour can satisfy the hearer's positive face by expressing solidarity and collegiality if it refers to common background and knowledge between hearers and speakers. Since addresser and addressee have the same idea about what is humorous, they can use humour as a useful approach to state and exchange their opinions and arrive at a similar view at the end of discussion, in a relaxed environment. Satisfying the

hearers' positive face is an effective way for speakers to show politeness. This kind of humour can contribute greatly to social cohesion (Holmes 2000: 168).

#### *2.4.1.2 Speaker's positive face needs: self-deprecation*

Holmes (2000: 169) indicates that for the sake of satisfying the positive face needs of the speaker, humour also can be used to express self-deprecation or an apology. Sometimes, when the words or the expression content threaten the speakers themselves, it is used by the speakers to reduce the threat to their own positive face. In such cases, it shows that the speaker is leading the conversation and taking charge of controlling the situation (Zajdman 1995: 338). In so doing, the speaker is showing courage in that he or she is not afraid to show their weaknesses to other people, with the hearer sometimes sharing the same weakness (Zajdman 1995: 337). Zajdman (1995: 338) argues that instead of shortening the psychological distance between the speaker and the hearer, using self-deprecation sets boundaries, since it is hard to know the real response from the hearer.

### **2.4.2 Humour as a negative politeness strategy**

#### *2.4.2.1 Addressee's negative face needs: hedging face threaten acts*

Holmes (2000: 171) states that humour can be used to reduce the threats to the hearer and/or speaker's negative face through attenuating or hiding the acts which could threaten the hearer and/or speaker's face, such as in the situation of allocating a work task to other people. For example, in some situations, to give an order or criticise someone could present a threat to the addressee's negative face. In this kind of situation, if speakers make their directive or judgement in a humorous way, this can be an effective way to reduce the threats to their listeners' negative face and relieve the tension between speakers and hearers. Moreover, in this kind of situation, humour could be an effective way for speakers to show their respect to hearers' negative face (Holmes 2000: 171). This can help people to conduct their conversation in a much friendlier environment.

#### *2.4.2.2 Addressee's positive face needs: attenuating face attack acts*

Holmes (2000: 172) points out that besides conveying politeness, humour can also be used to protect the positive face of the hearer and reduce threats to the hearer's positive face that are posed through such as insult and criticism, as was also



discussed by Brown and Levinson (1987). Insult and criticism can invade a hearer's positive face intensely during people's conversation. In this situation, applying an ironic form of humour as a form of criticism is an effective approach to reduce the threat to the hearer's negative face compared to using literal criticism (Matthews, Hancock and Dunham 2006: 5). Therefore, using humour to deal with insult and criticism can make such threats less direct and reduce the sharpness of the injury to the hearer's positive face.

Although Holmes' proposal of humour being used as politeness is only based on analysis of the working environment, and therefore might not be applicable to every single interaction environment, the contribution of this research is based on the idea of an imbalanced power environment between the leader at the top and the employees who are working in subordinate positions. Mullany (2004: 18) also states that the working environment is an environment about imbalance of power and Holmes (2000), who conducted this research in a real working environment, suggested that the analysis results relate more closely to people's daily interactions.

In conclusion, research on humour places it as one of the main strategies which people adopt in their conversation to maintain a positive environment with each other, particularly in a working environment. However, culture differences could cause problems for people in understanding politeness and humour from one language to another. Although research on the relationship between humour and politeness is still ongoing, it provides a foundation of knowledge for people to begin to understand the relationship between these two elements and become aware of the application of these two elements in people's communication. For the purpose of this research project, though, it is important not only to consider how humour and politeness can be transferred across cultures, but the challenges of doing so in the context of audiovisual programmes. The following section will therefore provide a summary of the existing research instrumental for the current study, in particular, for analysis of conversations which use humour to be polite in relation to the translation of politeness which is expressed through humour in subtitles.

## **2.5 Translating politeness and humour in audiovisual contexts**

### **2.5.1 Relevance Theory and translation**

Relevance Theory is proposed on the assumption that the human cognitive system tends to explore the stimuli of transferred information as much as possible to make relevant assumptions in the process of communication. In verbal communication, references can be ambiguous and a message may be inferred. Inferences may be misinterpreted, but they are generally understood in the right context. For instance, if a person winks while uttering a sentence, it may suggest that the truth of the sentence should be put into question. The principle of relevance consists of two parts, namely cognitive and communicative components. Wilson and Sperber (2004: 610) refer to the related capacity to infer the correct message as the Cognitive Principle of Relevance. They describe this principle as follows: “Human cognition tends to be geared to the maximization of relevance.”

In the process of an interaction, the addressee makes an inference according to the addresser's ostensive stimulus, which is an inferential message that communicates clearly the intention of an addresser to an addressee when there is a semantic gap or ambiguity in the message. For instance, an addresser may ostentatiously be pointing to an empty glass in order for the addressee to refill it. In other words, the addresser guides the addressee to receive the intended information through the ostensive stimulus given by the former. To explain the ostensive-inferential communication process, Sperber and Wilson (2004: 612) propose the Communicative Principle of Relevance to explore an inference model of people's communication, according to which “Every ostensive stimulus conveys a presumption of its own optimal relevance.” Gutt (2000: 31-32) claims that optimal relevance refers to an expectation from the hearer that he/she could receive adequate contextual effects through minimal processing efforts during the process of interpretation. According to Gutt (1998: 43), two conditions are necessary for the purpose of reaching optimal relevance in communication.

An utterance is optimally relevant (a) when it enables the audience to find without unnecessary effort the meaning intended by the communicator and (b) when that intended meaning is worth the audience's effort, that is, when it provides adequate benefits to the audience. (Gutt 1998: 43)

To be more precise, Gutt (1998: 43-44) suggests that under the constraint and guidance of optimal relevance, from the point of view of the speaker, they need to

make sure that the context which is offered to the hearer is suitably accessible in order that the hearer may correctly interpret the utterance. From the point of view of the hearer, the adequate information will be interpreted after they have invested the necessary effort and if the utterance is appropriate in relation to the context offered by the speaker, according to the assumptions of the hearer. Consequently, a successful interpretation relies on two conditions: the hearer not expending unnecessary effort, and the existence of the relevant context.

Sperber and Wilson (1986: 54) state that Relevance Theory can only be applied in relation to ostensive communication, which is also called ostensive-inferential communication, referring to the informative intention of the speaker that is manifested to the hearer during the communication. Wilson and Sperber (2004: 609) suggest that instead of being an absolute notion, relevance can range in degree from zero to the highest level. During the process of dealing with input information from the speaker, the degree of relevance relates to the degree of the positive cognitive effects received. Wilson and Sperber (2004) believe that relevance is evaluated by cognitive effects and process effort:

- a. Other things being equal, the greater the positive cognitive effects achieved by processing an input, the greater the relevance of the input to the individual at that time.
- b. Other things being equal, the greater the process effort expended, the lower the relevance of the input to the individual at that time. (Wilson and Sperber 2004: 609)

As a student of Sperber and Wilson, Gutt was undertaking translation studies research based on their theory in the 1990s. In his research, he suggests that Relevance Theory itself can be used to explain translation adequately. Gutt (2000: 205) states that translation, as an interlingual form of communication, can be approached through communicative competence rather than communicative behaviour:

Relevance Theory approaches communication from the point of view of competence rather than behaviour: it tries to give an explicit account of how the information-processing faculties of our mind enable us to communicate with one another. Its domain is therefore mental faculties rather than texts or processes of text production, and it is the aim of this study to explore the possibility of accounting for translation in terms of the communicative competence assumed to be part of our minds. (Gutt 2000: 21)

Gutt (1998: 41) stresses the essential role of inference when people are encoding, transferring and decoding the information during communication. Moreover, Gutt (1998: 42) argues that context provides an important foundation for making

inferences. More specifically, different meanings can be inferred from the same utterance when received in different contexts and the same utterance can be used to infer different meaning when put in a different context. For this purpose, Sperber and Wilson (1995: 15) define context as “the set of premises used in interpreting an utterance”, and point out that the context of an utterance, which is used by the hearer to make an interpretation of the utterance, is a psychological construct:

A context is a psychological construct, a subset of the hearer’s assumptions about the world. It is these assumptions, of course, rather than the actual state of the world, that affect the interpretation of an utterance. A context in this sense is not limited to information about the immediate physical environment or the immediately preceding utterances: expectations about the future, scientific hypotheses or religious beliefs, anecdotal memories, general cultural assumptions, beliefs about the mental state of the speaker, may all play a role in interpretation. (Sperber and Wilson 1995: 15)

As can be seen from the above definition of context, it is constructed by accessing specific contextual information and will differ from person to person due to their different assumptions about the world, based on their personal life experience. Hence, when engaged in a writing task, as Gutt (1998: 49) states, authors will keep the context in their mind during the creation process, so that their source language readers can make inferences to understand the meaning or information from the author, since the context is related closely to the cultural background of a community. From a translational point of view, it should be emphasised, therefore, that there are differences in context between the source language reader and the target language reader. In other words, the context which is assumed by the original author of the source text might cause a problem for translators because of cultural background differences. Applying this to Audiovisual Translation, Desilla (2012: 34) further points out that the cognitive context is not only affected by the audience’s own cultural background, it is also affected by the stimuli which are offered, both by verbal elements and non-verbal elements, to the audience. In other words, successful communication is promoted by the hearer and speaker sharing a similar context (Sang 2006: 44). Gutt (1998: 52) applies this principle to translation, stating that translation should give an adequately accessible context in the target text for the inference process to be undertaken by the target language reader according to Relevance Theory.

Bogucki (2004a: 51), applying this framework to Audiovisual Translation, further claims that Relevance Theory concentrates on intentional communication. To be more precise, the speaker intends to convey a specific message and provides stimuli and information to enable the hearer to grasp it. That being so, according to Relevance Theory, reaching interpretive resemblance between the translation and the original is important for a successful translation, which requires that both explicature and implicature be interpreted similarly from one language to another (Gutt 1998: 44). Sperber and Wilson (1988: 138) define interpretive resemblance as follows: “Two propositional forms, P and Q, interpretatively resemble one another in a context C to the extent that they share their analytic and contextual implications in the context C”. Explicatures refer to those analytic implications which the communicator intends to convey, while implicatures refer to the contextual assumptions which he or she intends to convey (Gutt 2000: 40). The greater the sharing of explicatures and/or implicatures between the two utterances, the higher the degree of interpretive resemblance. As a result, as an interlingual interpretive use of language, Gutt (2000: 105) indicates that it is essential in translation to determine the interpretive resemblance between the original language and the target language. That being the case, in order to establish interpretive resemblance, translators need to look for the optimal relevance from one language to another. Furthermore, considering such relevance, Gutt (2000: 31) identifies two essential related elements, namely processing efforts and contextual effects. In addition, Gutt (2000: 29) describes three approaches to reaching the required contextual effects. It can be deduced by the deduction of contextual implications, or be confirmed based on existing assumptions, by abolishing assumptions because of conflicting information. Gutt (2000) suggests that Relevance Theory provides both constraints and guidelines for translators:

They determine in what respects the translation should resemble the original – only in those respects that can be expected to make it adequately relevant to the receptor language audience. They determine also that the translation should be clear and natural in expression in the sense that it should not be unnecessarily difficult to understand. (Gutt 2000: 107)

When considering the various aspects which need to be noticed in translation, translators need to identify the stimuli which exist in the original communication and then to transfer these into the translated text. Sperber and Wilson (1995: 29) indicate that a stimulus is a term which refers to “any modification of the physical

environment designed to be perceived.” Sperber and Wilson (1995: 29) further state that stimuli can be found in people’s communication from two divisions, namely informative intention and communicative intention. Informative intention means “to inform the audience of something”, while communicative intention means “to inform the audience of one’s informative intention” (ibid.). Existing stimuli can influence the interpretation of utterances, since people infer meaning based on them. This is because, due to the manifest differences between the two languages, it is hardly possible to entirely preserve the stimuli which exist in the original language when transferring them into the target language in audiovisual programmes translation. Gutt (1989: 86) states that although the concrete properties of two languages may differ, they still can be interpreted to have resemblance with each other according to the stimuli which are offered. Gutt (2000: 24) also points out that not only verbal elements but also non-verbal elements can be used to offer stimuli in people’s communication. Considering translation, the stimulus which is provided by the translated subtitle can be affected by other existing multimodal elements used by their target language audience to infer the meaning. It is important to note that an audiovisual text is an integration of multimodal elements in a single text, in which stimuli can be offered both from verbal elements and non-verbal elements to their audiences (Yus 1998: 298). In other words, as a multimodal text, both verbal and non-verbal elements make their own contribution, either on their own or in interplay with each other, to the creation of meaning in audiovisual programmes (Taylor 2009: 214-215).

To construct a successful translation from source language text to target language text, He (2010: 85) indicates that it is important for the target language reader to achieve inferential recognition of the original language writer’s intention. Therefore, according to Relevance Theory, translators should make sure that this communication intention in the original text can also be inferred by the target language reader, instead of simply maintaining the linguistic codes in translation. This in turn requires translators to determine the information that is optimally relevant when they attempt to translate from one language and culture to another. In terms of translation, this entails communication from the original author to the translator and then to the target readers. Translators are not the end reader of the original language text. In other words, the context which is assumed by the original

author might not work for the target language readers. In this respect, Gutt (1998: 49) indicates that since the original writer and the target reader have different cultural backgrounds, this causes difficulties for translators. Under this circumstance, translators need to consider a proper solution which might work for the target language readers according to their cultural background. As a consequence, the context which is considered appropriate for the target audience might be different from the original writer's assumed context. Gutt refers to this circumstance as a 'secondary communication situation'. Gutt (1998: 42) demonstrates that context refers to a psychological construct, which, in contrast to assertions by previous translation research, amounts to more than the words written before and after. In Relevance Theory, context refers to the hearer's assumption related to his/her knowledge of the world, which can also be called the cognitive environment. Bogucki (2004a: 52) says that the hearer is able to filter the necessary information as governed by the context because of his or her cognitive ability. Therefore, Gutt (2000: 190) claims that it is the responsibility of the translator to make sure that the informative intention which is transferred through the translated text can be grasped by the target language readers through inference.

This thesis will adopt Relevance Theory in the research of the pragmatic translation of politeness and humour in subtitling from English to Chinese. The implication here is that translators should keep in mind the differences in cognitive context between source language audience and target language audience while they are dealing with subtitles translation. In addition, in the case of audiovisual programmes, conversation is not the only way to provide stimuli to their audiences, since the existence of multimodal elements in audiovisual programmes offers additional ways to provide stimuli. That being the case, translators need to identify how these multimodal elements could affect the inference of implicit and explicit meaning to their audiences while they are watching these audiovisual programmes with subtitles. If translators simply translate the semantic meaning, their subtitles could cause misunderstanding or confusion among their target language audiences. However, Relevance Theory could help translators to build up a communication that would enable their target language audiences to infer the pragmatic use of politeness and humour in audiovisual programmes from their translated subtitles.

#### *2.5.1.1 Interpretive resemblance and Equivalence*

Equivalence is a central, if controversial concept in translation studies and has been discussed at length by translation scholars, particularly since the end of the 20th century (Baker 1992; Panou 2013; Pym 2014; Krein-Kühle 2014, Munday 2016). However, as He (2010: 83) points out, while an abstract definition of equivalence can be given, it is more challenging to achieve consensus on a working definition to be used as a comparative tool for source and target texts in all contexts. This thesis applies interpretive resemblance from a new angle to investigate the relationship between the original language text and the target language text. To be more precise, it proposes that during the translation process translators need to consider the balance between the contextual effect and processing effort required by their target language readers when they are inferring explicit and implicit meaning based on the translated text, rather than considering only the semantic meaning. Relevance Theory, rooted in cognitive science and pragmatic theory, treats translation as a form of interlingual communication, which, to be successful, seeks optimal relevance between the speaker and the hearer. Consequently, the highest degree of interpretive resemblance needs to be pursued by the translator for the purpose of achieving optimal relevance. During the application of Relevance Theory in the pragmatic translation of politeness and humour, translators need to notice whether or not the stimuli provided by existing multimodal elements could be inferring a similar meaning to their target language audience. Translators will then need to make modifications to ensure that their translated text will work with the existing multimodal elements to offer similar information based on their target language audience's cognitive context while they are watching these audiovisual programmes.

Moreover, interpretive resemblance stresses optimal relevance, both in explicit and implicit information, between the source and the target language texts rather than merely linguistic equivalence. Relevance Theory emphasises that translation is a process that involves three parties, namely the original writer, translator and the target language reader. The translator, although a reader of the original language text, is not the eventual target language reader, hence the different cognitive contexts between the original writer and the target language reader need to be considered cautiously in translation. As previously explained, the cognitive contexts of the original language writer and the target language reader will not be the same. As a



result, the same text can be interpreted differently from one cognitive context to another.

### *2.5.1.2 Descriptive and interpretive use of language: applications to translation*

Gutt (1998) identifies two psychological modes for using language, namely descriptive use and interpretive use. He defines these two uses of language as follows:

A language utterance is said to be used descriptively when it is intended to be taken as true of a state of affairs in some possible world.

An utterance is said to be used interpretively when it is intended to represent what someone said or thought. (Gutt 1998: 44)

Hence, translations can also be classified as descriptive or interpretive. These terms can be defined as follows:

Descriptive translation: a translation intended to survive on its own without the receiver ever being aware there was an original.

Interpretive translation: a translation intended to relate in some way to an original. (Hatim 2010: 99)

Gutt (1998: 46), influenced by Relevance Theory, considers translation as an interlingual interpretive use of language. He states that translation is the interpretation from one language into another language with the purpose of ensuring that the translated text performs the same function as the original text. Mateo Martinez (1998: 172) also claims that, as translation is an act of communication, it is essential to use a communication model to comprehend the act of translation. Following the thinking of Gutt (1998; 2000), Mateo Martinez (1998: 172) also illustrates that according to the relevance approach, based on cognitive processes, translation should not only transfer the meaning from source language to target language but also the intention of the original text. Mateo Martinez (1998: 178) further indicates that although different linguistic, semantic as well as cultural information might be required as compared to the descriptive approach, this is an effective approach to keep the inference process similar in the source text and the target text, and to achieve as much resemblance as possible between the cognitive nature of the two. An interpretive translation can also retain as much linguistic similarity as possible from the source text into the target text.

Interpretive use of language can be further divided into direct translation and indirect translation:

Direct translation, where the translator has to stick to the explicit content of the original.

Indirect translation, where the translator is free to elaborate or summarise. (Hatim 2010: 99)

Shuttleworth and Cowie (1997: 41) indicate that direct translation attempts to avoid change to any information in the source text in the process of translation. Instead, it relies on devices such as additional notes or glossaries to provide supplementary information necessary for understanding by their target language readers. In this way, it tries to retain the context, stimuli and interpretation and to transfer these three elements from the source text into the target text without any change. Normally, this approach requires target language readers to have some basic knowledge of the original, so that the translated text can meet their presupposed expectations. On the other hand, Shuttleworth and Cowie (1997: 76-7) state that indirect translation is needed when the interpretation efforts made by the translator cannot provide their target language readers with an exact equivalent of the original meaning of the source text. In such cases, indirect translation is needed for the purpose of promoting clear communication from source text to the translator and then to the target language readers. In this situation, the implicit information which can be acquired and is retrievable by the source language audience in the source text can also be acquired in the translated text by the readers who have to rely exclusively on the translated text. This approach is normally applied when a large culture gap exists between source text and target text.

### *2.5.1.3 Criticisms of Relevance Theory*

To portray the complete landscape on Relevance Theory, some critical publications must also be included. In particular, two disadvantages of Relevance Theory have been widely discussed. First, the standards for justifying the degree of relevance have been criticised for being vague. In terms of Relevance Theory, optimal relevance is the key factor in gathering information, in order that the least effort is required to understand it. Although there is no precise rule to justify the relevance of information in the process of translation, Bogucki (2004a: 56) argues that since the proposition of Relevance Theory is based on the human cognitive system, humans' automatic acquisition of the information depends on the maximisation of relevance. Therefore, it is important to provide a similar context for people to make assumptions and inferences in subtitling. That being the case, the effort required for the target language audience to make assumptions and inferences

needs to resemble that expended by the source language audience. Second, Bogucki (2004b: 74) points out that the proposition of Relevance Theory derived from Sperber and Wilson is used in research concerning primary communication between speakers and hearers. However, translation is an instance of secondary communication. In the process of pragmatic translation, although translators need to infer the intended information from the source text, they are not the direct hearers of the text (Hatim and Mason 1990: 91-92). After the inference, translators have to recreate the intention from the source text and then transfer the intended information to the target text readers according to the target language culture. To address this problem, Gutt (2000: 101-102) indicates that the ultimate purpose of translation is to reach interpretive resemblance between source text and target text. He states that the translated text should provide enough relevant information for target language readers for them to gain an understanding resembling that of source language readers, without unnecessary effort.

In spite of these weak points of the theory, Relevance Theory has two particular advantages which will now be discussed. First, it provides a new angle to look into politeness, humour, and use of humour to express politeness in communication, instead of regarding it only as decoding and encoding information during people's interactions (Bogucki 2004a; 2004b). It marks the first attempt to pay attention to inferences in people's communication by focusing on their application as ostensive-inferential communication. Second, as Bogucki (2004b: 75) points out, making assumptions and inferences accessible, as supported by Relevance Theory, are two necessary elements when people are watching audiovisual programmes. Audiences make inferences while following the development of plots in films or television programmes. Stimuli which are offered by verbal elements and other multimodal elements could affect the construction of the inference process by their audiences (Dicerto 2018: 41). Audiences who do not know the source language have to rely on translated subtitles as well as other visual and non-visual codes that exist in these programmes in order to understand these programmes. That is to say, translated subtitles should help the target language readers/viewers to make the same inferences through the translated subtitles as those made by the original language audience when they watch the original language audiovisual programmes.

Since this research focuses on the translation of politeness, humour and using humour to construct different face-saving strategies, an appropriate translation of

politeness, humour and use of humour to express politeness in subtitles is the primary consideration. According to the main features of Relevance Theory, it is essential for translators to be guided by what elements are necessary in the process of translation and to what extent. Moreover, Bogucki (2004b: 75) suggests that according to temporal, spatial and other restrictions in subtitling, Relevance Theory can be applied as effective guidance to delete or modify elements which are different because of culture differences between source text and target text.

### **2.5.2 Relevance Theory and politeness**

This thesis will use Relevance Theory as a supplementary theory to support Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Theory to explain the expression of politeness between English and Chinese in audiovisual programmes. The main reason to combine Relevance Theory and Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory is because the pragmatic use of politeness can be inferred differently due to differences in culture background. As we have discussed in section 2.2.2 above, it can be seen that a large number of objections have been raised regarding whether the Politeness Theory as proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) can be universally applied. To be more precise, some researchers argue that although Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Theory makes a significant contribution in explaining politeness in people's interactions, it still needs to be considered specifically according to different cultural backgrounds (Esandell-Vidal 1996: 630; Esandell-Vidal 1998: 47; Jary 1998a, 1998b; Christie 2007: 269). Sperber and Wilson (1997: 148) indicate that verbal communication not only expresses the decoding of linguistics, but also represents social relationships between addresser and addressee. Additionally, Watts (1992: 50) points out that in the process of communication, interlocutors deal with the linguistics by combining socio-cultural elements to ensure equilibrium between speaker and hearer. Here is an example which is given by Esandell-Vidal (1996: 631). In the request *Can you pass the salt?*, the expression 'Can you...' is a conventional polite request in English, French and Spanish. However, it is a strange request to hearers from Poland or Russia. This is because they would assume that some existing evidence is being asked for regarding their ability to pass the salt when they are asked to do so. It would be impossible for them to infer the polite intention through this request according to their culture background. Meanwhile, to a hearer from Thailand, this request would be considered

as an overt and impolite expression of doubt about whether they have the ability to pass the salt or not. As a result, it can be seen that differences in cultural background have a great effect on utterance interpretation.

As I mentioned in section 2.5.1, Relevance Theory has been proposed to stress the importance of cognitive context in the process of inferring meaning in people's communication. In completing the process of inference, people need to integrate the context into the process of their communication. This context is a comprehensive dynamic construct. It consists of any element that could influence the output and input of the meaning in the process of inference. Esandell-Vidal (1996: 640) incorporates three aspects into this context: the linguistic context of the interaction, the physical context, and the knowledge that people have already acquired, such as their general knowledge of the world or their cultural knowledge. Esandell-Vidal (ibid.) suggests that these three contexts could influence the process of producing and interpreting information for both the speaker and the hearer. She believes that the knowledge that people have already acquired could be different since it is informed by different cultural environments (Esandell-Vidal 1996: 643). When considering interpretation of the expression of politeness in different cultures, Esandell-Vidal (1996: 633) suggests that Relevance Theory can be used to offer relatively abstract generalisations for utterance interpretation. Christie (2007: 285) also indicates that adopting Relevance Theory can help people to interpret politeness through the relevant stimuli which are being offered during people's conversation, which includes social factors.

Using Relevance Theory as a supplement to Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory allows provision of an adequate descriptive account to infer both explicit and implicit meaning from an utterance (Christie 2007: 277). Watt (2003: 203) points out that according to Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory, the utterances which are being used need to avoid ambiguity in order to achieve communicative cooperation between the interlocutors. However, sometimes the utterance needs to be inferred in the cognitive context, so the implicit meaning can be interpreted during their conversation. Here is a relevant example given by Watt (2003: 206-211). By saying *Sorry, I don't know*, Watt (ibid: 211) shows that two meanings can be inferred from the word 'sorry'. On the one hand, the word 'sorry' can be used as an expression to show sincere regret. On the other hand, the word 'sorry' can be used simply for a

stalling purpose. With the application of Relevance Theory, Wilson and Sperber (2002: 265) suggest that a speaker conveys relevant information by expressing an ostensive stimulus according to the purpose of his or her communication. This process conveys the stimulus to the hearers so that they can receive the information through inference in the process of the communication. In consequence, the hearer needs to do the inference according to the specific communication circumstances to interpret the meaning of the word 'sorry' from the speaker. Christie (2007: 277) believes that with the supplement of Relevance Theory, the importance of inference of explicit and implicit meaning can be acknowledged in the process of utterance interpretation.

To sum up, Relevance Theory can be employed to complement Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory in different cultural backgrounds. In addition, using Relevance Theory can stress the inference of explicit and implicit information in the process of the representation of the pragmatic use of politeness. That being the case, this thesis will adopt Relevance Theory to support the explanation of the pragmatic use of politeness in audiovisual programmes.

### **2.5.3 The Translation of Humour**

#### *2.5.3.1 Humour in East and West*

This section will introduce research on humour carried out in Western countries and China. In this project, research from Western countries refers to studies which have majorly been done in British or other European countries, which share considerable commonality in their culture backgrounds.

##### *2.5.3.1.1 Humour in the West*

A large number of scholars have attempted to define humour. Critchley (2002: 2) introduces three main theories of humour: the superiority theory, the relief theory and the incongruity theory. The superiority theory of humour, primarily represented by Plato (1975) and Aristotle (1984), claims that people laugh when they feel superiority over others. The relief theory of humour, represented by Freud (1928), views laughter as a kind of energy which is used to relieve nerves and provide pleasure. Finally, the incongruity theory of humour, emphasised by Henri Bergson (1900), Russell Lowell (1893) and Arthur Koestler (1964), states that humour is produced based on the existence of incongruity between what people already know

or expect according to their own knowledge, and what is produced in humour. In relation to verbal humour translation, superiority and incongruity are frequently discussed (Attardo 1994; Curco 1995, 1996a, 1996b, 1998; Díaz-Cintas and Remael 2007; Vandaele 1999, 2002, 2011). Laughter can be seen as the effect of humour (Vandaele 2002: 156). Vandaele (2002: 159) further points out that in some circumstances neither superiority nor incongruity is sufficient to explain humour. Therefore, he suggests that superiority can be combined with incongruity to explain humour in research about humour. Although these two features cannot be used to represent an ultimate definition of humour or to explain how humour works, they are still essential features of humorous expression (Vandaele 2002: 167).

As an interdisciplinary research field, the translation of humour has attracted much scholarly attention recently (Raphaelson-West 1989; Delabastita 1996, Zabalbeascoa 1996, 1997, 2005; Vandaele 1999, 2002, 2011; Díaz-Cintas, 2001; Attardo 2002; Asimakoulas 2004; Arnaiz 2006; Díaz-Cintas and Remael 2007; Chiaro 2006, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2014a, 2014b; Yus 2003, 2012, 2016; Dore 2020). Since the research in the translation of humour conducted by Zabalbeascoa, Chiaro and Asimakoulas focuses on the translation of humour in audiovisual programmes, it is of particular interest to the current study. Research on the translation of humour follows two trends, one of which is based on the General Theory of Verbal Humour proposed by Attardo and Raskin (1991), which Attardo (2002) later considered within the context of humour in translation. The General Theory of Verbal Humour is a revised version of the Semantic Script Theory of Humour proposed by Raskin (1985). The main hypothesis of this theory is as follows:

A text can be characterized as a single-joke-carrying-text if both of the following conditions are satisfied:

- (i) The text is compatible, fully or in part, with two different scripts
- (ii) The two scripts with which the text is compatible are opposite...

The two scripts with which some text is compatible are said to overlap fully or in part in this text (Raskin 1985: 99).

Following the proposal of the General Theory of Verbal Humour, Attardo (2002), Asimakoulas (2004) and Zabalbeascoa (2005) attempted to apply this theory to humour translation. The research of the latter two scholars is primarily focused on Audiovisual Translation, which is particularly relevant to this project. The second theory influential in research on the translation of humour is Relevance Theory, as

applied to the expression of humour. The following sections introduce how these two theories have been shaping the thinking of research on humour in translation.

#### 2.5.3.1.2 *Humour in China*

The word ‘humour’ was first introduced and translated by Yutang Lin into Chinese as the loan word *youmo*, in an article published in the *Beijing Morning Post* in 1924 (Kao 1974: xxii). Lin’s article indicates that in the West, humour refers to wit, irony and amusement. Qian (2011: 148) states that Lin’s neologism translation as well as a phonological borrowing of humour accurately represents his own understanding of humour. The character ‘*you*’ refers to secluded and serene. And the character ‘*mo*’ refers to tacit understanding. In the 1930s, Lin also established a journal named *Lunyu Decadaily*, which published articles about humour and jokes, and which substantially raised people’s awareness and understanding of humour in Chinese. Because of these major contributions, Lin is known as “Master of Humour” in China. Consequently, in modern China, *youmo* is now widely accepted by Chinese people as humour. Sample (2011: 170) points out that before Lin translated humour as *youmo* in Chinese, there was no specific word for humour, though some terms were widely used in relation to humour, such as satire (*fengci*) and the laughable (*huaji*). He argued that in Chinese, *youmo* later came to explain laughter more precisely than *huaji*, the earliest term (Yue 2010: 407). In addition, Liao (2003: 31) makes a distinction between humour, which uses natural verbal behaviour for the purpose of provoking people to smile thoughtfully, and laughable (*huaji*), which refers to funny actions and/or ridiculous speech for the purpose of provoking laughter.

Although the evolution of humour in China is linked to the development of Western culture to some extent, it should be noticed that *youmo* is not equal to humour in Western culture. Based on his research to compare the acceptance of humour in China and Canada, Chen (2013: 200) points out that Chinese people tend to accept humour when it conveys a positive meaning. In comparison, people from Canada tend to accept humour in a broader sense (Ruch 1998), which not only covers laughter, fun, but also nonsense and so on. One of the reasons is that Chinese people are more cautious, conservative and critical when appreciating humour, because of Chinese sociocultural factors which restrain the ways in which people can



laugh at each other (Yue 2010: 415). Lin (1974: 289) grades laughter, as aroused by humour, from thoughtful warm smile to hilarious wild laughter. In this classification, he felt that the humour that raises a thoughtful smile is more recommended in Chinese culture. In China, the concept of restrained humour has been rooted in humour since ancient times, causing people to learn to laugh cautiously and insightfully.

### *2.5.3.2 The problems of verbal humour translation in audiovisual programmes*

As was discussed in section 1.2.1, the growing contribution of overseas media production in China has led to renewed efforts by the producers of blockbusters to market their audiovisual products on a worldwide scale. China has been importing an increasing number of foreign language programmes in the last two decades, mainly American and British audiovisual programmes (Sweney 2014; Grimm 2015; Song 2018). This development trend has without doubt led to a spectacular boom in the Audiovisual Translation industry. However, not all big selling films in their original language can achieve the same result in foreign countries. As a result, the process of including subtitles has attracted increasing attention, as members of the media industry have realised that translation plays an important role in the way in which products are received (Wang 2014). The complexity of this process presents a great challenge to audiovisual translators, which most acknowledge is heightened in products which include humorous content.

Chiaro (2014a: 18) argues that humour in audiovisual programmes is produced by the combination of cognition, emotion, interaction and expression. Therefore, it is not enough for a subtitler to focus only on the verbal elements in audiovisual programmes for the purpose of humour translation. When the problem of humour translation extends to verbal humour, Chiaro (2014a: 19) states that the translator's considerations cannot be restricted to the literal meaning of the words but must also include sociocultural elements. Moreover, when humour occurs in audiovisual programmes, this further complicates the task of the translator. Chiaro (2014a; 2014b) thus indicates that sometimes, taking visual or acoustic elements into consideration is required in order to expose humour in audiovisual programmes. Chiaro (2014b: 201) points out that in some cases verbal humour can only be revealed in conjunction with a specific visual code. Since translators cannot control the visual code, they

need to look for solutions in order to deal with visually anchored humour in their translation. Acoustically anchored humour also needs more attention from the translator. To be more precise, Chiaro (2014b: 203) further states that accent and language variations, which are performed by sound, can also trigger humour in films. When this is the case, the translator needs to find ways to integrate these elements into the target text, so that the humour is not lost. Chiaro (2006: 200) emphasises the challenges of finding equivalent words, pronunciation, forms and concepts in translation, in order to recreate the ambiguity or polysemy which led to humour in the first place. For example, she (2010: 5) observes that if the humour is constructed by homophony, the translator may need to find words phonetically similar to use in the target text, so that an equivalent effect is created. However, it may be difficult for translators to find two homophones for the target text which sound similar but have different meanings. On occasions, it may be impossible.

#### *2.5.3.3 The General Theory of Verbal Humour and Translating Humour*

The General Theory of Verbal Humour, proposed by Attardo and Raskin (1991) and introduced briefly in section 2.5.3.1.1, has been influential among translation studies scholars interested in humour. Attardo (2008) lists six hierarchically ordered Knowledge Resources in humour, and defines them as follows:

1. Script Opposition: the Script Opposition of the Semantic Script Theory of Humour
2. Logical Mechanism: Corresponds to the resolution phase of the incongruity/resolution models, essentially it is the mechanism whereby the incongruity of the Script Opposition is playfully and/or partially explained away.
3. Situation: refers to the “props” of the joke, the textual materials evoked by the scripts of the joke that are not funny.
4. Target: what is known as the butt of the joke.
5. Narrative Strategy: the “genre” of the joke, such as riddle, 1-2-3 structure, question and answer, etc.
6. Language: the actual lexical, syntactic, phonological, etc. choices at the linguistic level that instantiate all the other choices. (Attardo 2008: 108)

Attardo (2002: 181) states that Script Opposition is adopted from the Semantic Script Theory of Humour which is proposed by Raskin (1985), which the writer introduced in section 2.5.3.1.1 earlier. Script Opposition refers to the requirement of opposition or overlapping of the script in a humour text. Attardo (2002:183) suggests that The General Theory of Verbal Humour theory provides a metric, which is based

on the hypothesis of linear variation tested in Ruch et al. (1993), to evaluate the similarity of the joke in source language text and target language text. Using the order of the six Knowledge Resources listed above, Attardo argues that the degree of perceived difference arises linearly from Script Opposition to Language between two different jokes. In practice, this means that two jokes expressed in two different languages are considered more similar than those expressed by different Script Opposition. Attardo further states that using the scale ranging from Script Opposition to Language, translators should try to minimise the difference between source humour and the translated form. He (2002: 183) suggests that translators should attempt as far as possible to respect all six Knowledge Resources in the process of translation. In other words, translators should attempt to control the difference at the lowest degree for achieving the pragmatic purpose. Figure 8 below illustrates the hierarchical organisation of the six Knowledge Resources.

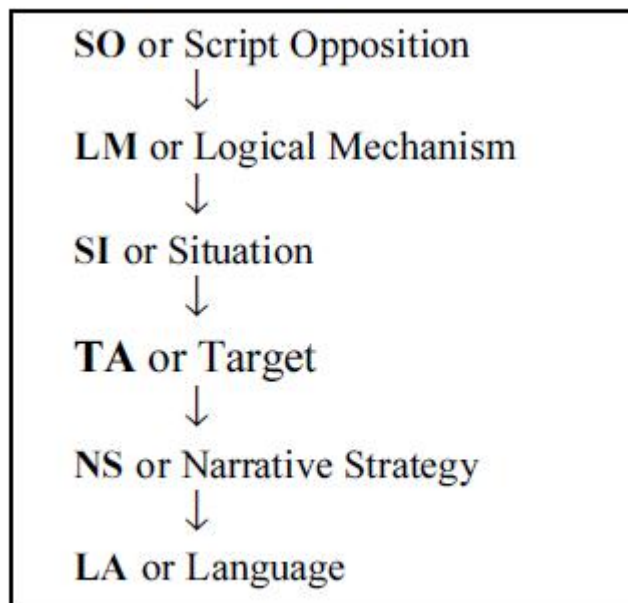


Figure 8. Hierarchical organisation of the Knowledge Resources (Attardo 2002: 183)

Discussing this theory in the context of Audiovisual Translation, Zabalbeascoa (2005: 202) points out that these six parameters only provide a metric for establishing equivalence from source joke into the target text. He (2005: 202) argues that translators have to combine the specific requirement and situation to decide whether sameness or funniness is more important to humour translation. Díaz-Cintas

and Remael (2007: 215) indicate that sometimes translators might choose funniness as their priority in the process of translation instead of the similarity of semantics of humour in the two different languages, and vice versa. Zabalbeascoa (2005: 188) states that semantic value is not the only factor in the process of humour translation. For instance, humour can be applied as the purpose of the text or it can also be used for the purpose of social intercourse, such as breaking the ice, as a speech opener. In these cases, translators are required to integrate the specific context into the process of humour translation.

In addition, Zabalbeascoa (2005: 201) argues that it is difficult to give a full list of priorities in advance, like a predefined theory, before translators see the actual translation task. To reach the intended goals in the translated text, translators need to figure out the specifics of the task in hand, and any restrictions which could cause them problems during the translation process. That being the case, it becomes important for translators to ensure they first obtain a general view of the priorities and restrictions of their particular task when they are doing translation of humour. However, Zabalbeascoa (2005: 201-202) does offer a general guide of four different levels of priorities, namely top priority, middle range priorities, marginal priorities and priorities that are prohibited, which should be considered clearly in the process of humour translation and which was not mentioned in the General Theory of Verbal Humour theory. A top priority refers to the feature that has to be achieved no matter what. Next, the middle range priorities refer to the priorities that are highly demanded, but other features of the text should also be involved in the process of translation. Then, the marginal priorities should be considered, once other more essential priorities have been fully accomplished. Last, priorities that are prohibited should have no place in the text, even if they may be rational in other kinds of situations. In addition, based on the hierarchical sequence of these six Knowledge Resources, Zabalbeascoa (2005) proposes a binary branch tree as a research tool to guide the translator in humour translation (Figure 9).

set of possible solutions for verbal joke as translation problem

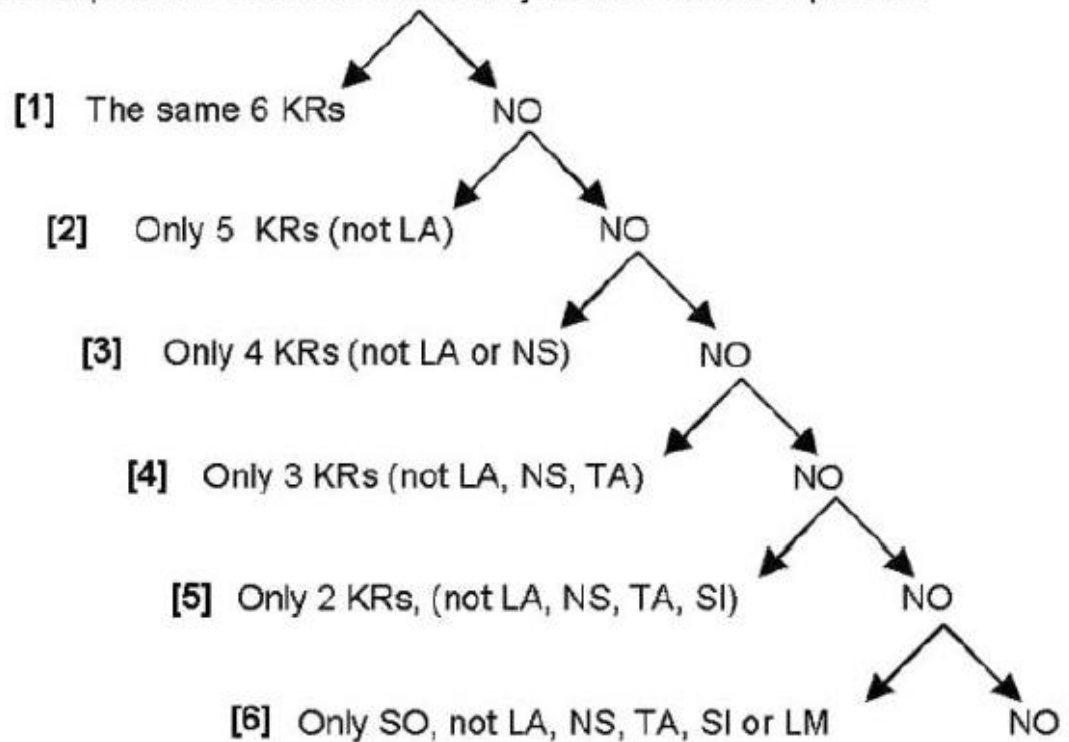
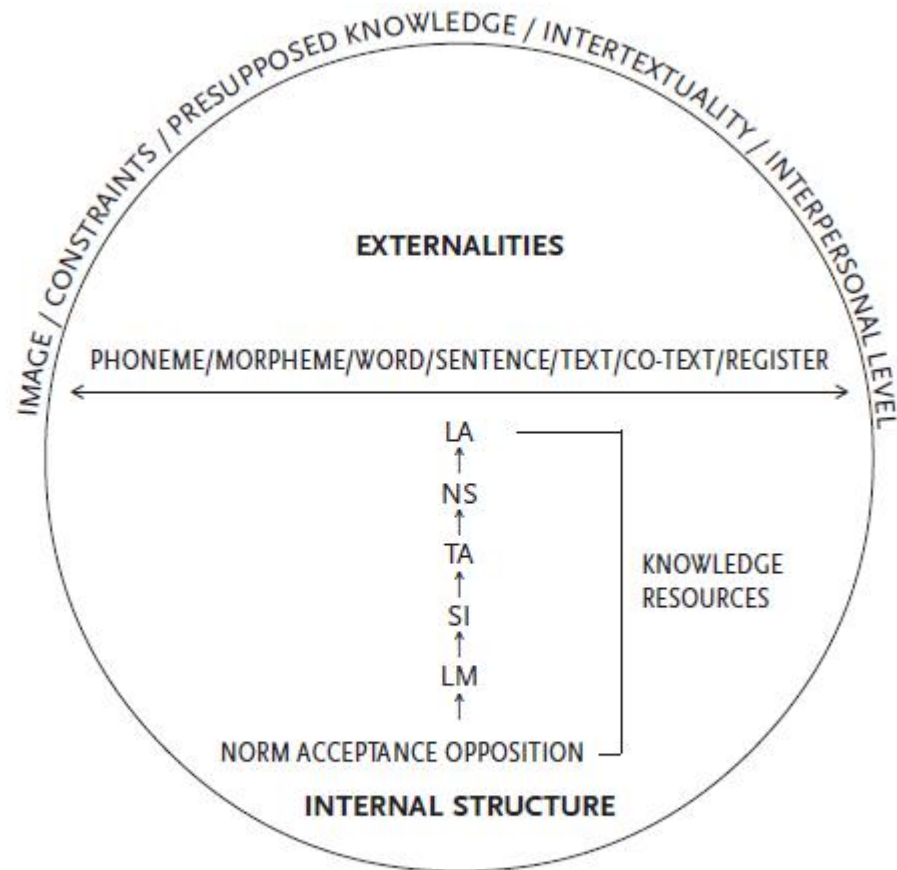


Figure 9. Adapting the hierarchical organisation of the General Theory of Verbal Humour Knowledge Resources to binary branch translational analysis (Zabalbeascoa 2005: 203)

Using this binary structure allows translators to identify whether humour is the priority in a particular translation. Zabalbeascoa (2005: 202) indicates that this binary branch tree is a descriptive tool that enables humour translation researchers to establish their own priority list in the process of translation. Therefore, sameness should not be the translator's only consideration.

Another approach to humour translation based on the General Theory of Verbal Humour is proposed by Asimakoulas (2004). As established by Attardo and Raskin (1991: 327) the six Knowledge Resources proposed in the General Theory of Verbal Humour cannot include all elements that will produce a joke. Therefore, a specific analysis of the joke should be undertaken as part of the actual humour producing process. Furthermore, Attardo (1997: 403) emphasises the weight that each society places on the meaning of a script, because a script is a container of semantic information which is relevant according to a given subject. Therefore, cultural knowledge which belongs to a society is included in the script. Stressing this socio-cultural dimension, Asimakoulas (2004: 824) emphasises that social elements form

another important aspect of humour. He suggests that social/cognitive expectations should be considered in relation to verbal humour analysis as norm acceptance and/or norm opposition. His proposed model is presented below.



Key: LM=Logical Mechanism, SI=situation, TA=Target, NS=Narrative Strategy, LA=Language.

Figure 10. A humour translation model considering the contextual variables. (Asimakoulas 2004: 825)

For Asimakoulas (2004: 824), norm acceptance refers to the kind of humour which is constrained by contextual and/or social elements, such as a stereotype. Norm opposition refers to script opposition which is affected by social elements. He believes, moreover, that norm opposition includes social incongruities. Furthermore, Asimakoulas (ibid.: 825) states that norm acceptance/opposition in films can be seen as the information container which becomes a humorous communication bridge between the director/screenplay writer and their audiences. As can be seen from this humour translation model, Asimakoulas (2004: 825) also considers context, related

to social elements, as comprising externalities, which include image, constraint, presupposed knowledge, intertextuality and interpersonal level. Image, as the crucial component of an audiovisual programme, reflects humour through moves or objects related to the development of plot in films. At the same time, constraint indicates that a language element, such as words or other textual material, used for a humorous effect, such as a spoonerism, in one language may not work in other languages. Culture differences create further restrictions in the process of producing humour effects. Presupposed knowledge refers to general knowledge which is acquired by an individual or a group of people who are living in the same society or community. In that situation, cultural elements underlined by presuppositions can affect people's communication at linguistic and non-linguistic levels. Moreover, intertextuality refers to the source which is provided from original text and the direct text, which, for someone who has never seen the original audiovisual programme before, can cause problems in getting information. Finally, the interpersonal level refers to specific attitudes and feelings which are produced in communication. For example, disparagement humour might be used to show the dissatisfaction of a specific group of people according to interpersonal elements.

#### *2.5.3.4 Humour Translation and Relevance Theory*

As mentioned in section 2.5.3.1.1, the second direction of humour research is based on Relevance Theory and this section will consider how linguists have examined humour under this influence (Curco 1995, 1996a, 1996b; Yus 2003, 2012). Curco (1996a: 53) indicates that through ostensive stimuli given by interlocutors in the process of communication, intentional verbal humour is produced as a result of ostensive communication. However, Curco (1996a: 54) further states that, sometimes, the intended meaning cannot be interpreted only according to the linguistic code expressed by the speaker. Yus (2003: 1297) also points out that humour is a kind of utterance that is sometimes used by the speaker implicitly towards an ultimate expected effect. In such cases, Curco (1996a: 54) suggests that hearers need to recover the information which the speakers intended to provide, relying on the inferential process for the purpose of understanding the humorous effects. Yus (2012: 117) indicates that based on application of Relevance Theory, there are two gaps that need to be filled in the processes of expressing and interpreting humour. On the one hand, a gap exists between the code which is used in the text for expressing humour

and the intention of the speaker in using this text. To be more precise, the information provided by the speaker depends on the hearer's ability to predict relevant information from memory and then retrieve it and process it humorously. On the other hand, an additional gap exists between the code which is used in the text and the interpretation which is made by the hearer according to that code. The hearer needs to engage with inferential strategies in order to proceed to a relevant interpretation of the text in accordance with the specific context environment.

Yus (2012) also applies Relevance Theory to the translation of humour. He (2012: 125) states that there are three essential elements which need to be taken into account in the process of translating humour. First, translators need to infer the intended interpretation from the source text. Second, the specific context needs to be considered, since, as Yus (2012: 117-118) points out, the same joke can produce different effects according to the interlocutor's environment. Third, there are predictions of mutuality in the source text between the communicator and the readers in their culture. Then the translator needs to transfer all this information into the target language with his/her target language readers in mind, with a more or less different way of coding because of different social norms or stereotypes between source language and target language. In addition, Gutt (2000: 214-215) indicates that interpretive resemblance will be different for source language communicators and the target language texts and their readers. In agreement with this view, Yus (2012: 126) states that reaching similar interpretive resemblance of humour effect is the most essential aspect that the translator needs to consider in the process of humour translation.

Yus (2012: 126-130) suggests that there are three parameters which need to be considered in the process of humour translation. First, the culture element is essential in humour translation since the culture shared by one language group is different from that shared by the other language group (Yus 2012: 126). Yus (2012: 128) indicates that sometimes it is difficult to find the equivalence of intra-cultural referents from source language into target language. In such cases, translators need to evaluate whether this cultural information in the source language can be transferred as the same information into the target language or not. If this cultural information has to be substituted or modified into the target language, cognitive effect, mental effort and humorous effect need to be considered carefully in the



process of humour translation. Second, semantic resemblance, referring to the coding of information between source language and target language, needs to be considered in humour translation. Yus (2012: 128-129) claims that the coding of information can hardly always be the same between source language and target language. Therefore, for maintaining humour effect, translators need to find equivalent words or expressions in target language to replace the original humour that existed in the source language. Third, pragmatics is the most important element for consideration in humour translation. Yus (2012: 130) believes that a pragmatic parameter should be used to choose the inferential strategies for the purpose of reaching a relevant interpretation of humour. Yus (2012: 129) divides the pragmatic parameter into two areas, namely inferential steps and balance of effects and effort. Inferential steps are used for adjustment on the basis of whether inferential strategies are applied to a relevant interpretation from source text to target text from three aspects: explicit content, implicit import and context. Achieving a balance between cognitive effects and mental effort means that the translator must attempt to replicate the cognitive effects and mental effort involved for the reader of the source language text at a similar level through the translated text for the target language reader.

Yus (2012: 142-145) proposes relevance theoretic patterns for translating humour. He outlines three main steps in dealing with humour translation. First and foremost, the translator needs to acquire the information from source text and interpret it according to the underlying source language context, such as cultural and social stereotypes. In this process, the interpretation by the translator should be similar compared to the understanding achieved by source language audiences. The translator should focus on the following three main elements to reach the relevant mutual parallel standards in this process: explicit information leading to explicit interpretation, implicit information leading to implicit interpretation, and contextual information which is relevant to producing humorous effects. Second, translators need to concentrate on the inferential steps predicted by source language writers to produce humour effects to their source language audiences. Yus (2012: 143) emphasises that recognition of the inferential steps in the source text and attempting to keep the similarity in the translated text are the central elements of humour translation. Lastly, translators must attempt to make the translated humorous text as

similar as possible by combining cultural, semantic and pragmatic considerations in the process of translation.

#### **2.5.4 Relevance Theory and Subtitling**

Kovacic (1994) was the first to apply Relevance Theory to subtitling. Kovacic (1994) attempts to apply Relevance Theory to explain reduction of translated subtitles, which is a typical feature of subtitling that creates problems which cannot be resolved simply by considering linguistic factors. Kovacic (1994: 245) argues that the speed of the conversation in audiovisual programmes is not the only justification for decreasing the text in translated subtitles. Differences and similarities of the system of language between source language and target language also need to be considered for the purpose of reduction in subtitling. In cases where there are large differences between source language and target language, for example, different syntactic patterns or different average word length, it is particularly important to find an optimal approach to reduction in subtitling. Kovacic (1994: 247) suggests that translators need to construct similar contextual effects for the purpose of achieving as much interpretive resemblance between source language and target language as possible. Kovacic (1994: 248) states that in situations where there are no propositional equivalents for linguistic elements between source language and target language, translators need to make an appropriate description for the further interpretive resemblance assumption for their target audiences according to Relevance Theory. She further points out that taking the context into account is the essential element in the process of achieving maximum resemblance in the interpretation. Kovacic (1994: 250) indicates that reducing any parts of the text in the process of subtitling needs to be considered carefully. Although at that moment, Relevance Theory might indicate that some elements are redundant in terms of the audiences having to make more effort for understanding, these elements might have connection with information introduced later in the series of audiovisual programmes. Hence, subtitlers need to keep this fact in mind during the process of translation. Therefore, Kovacic (1994: 251) emphasises that although Relevance Theory is a valuable tool for guiding reduction in subtitling, the combination of specific elements still needs to be considered in the process of translation. Díaz-Cintas and Remael's considerations on humour (2007: 148) are limited to a chapter but relevant to our study since they give particular attention to television series. They consider

that it is essential for translators to familiarise themselves with the entire series of an audiovisual programme before they start to make specific decisions regarding such as reducing text in their translation, to evaluate the effort needed from target audiences and their understanding, which is an onerous task.

Bogucki (2004a, 2004b, 2013, 2020) also attempts to apply Relevance Theory to subtitling. He (2004a: 86) argues that Relevance Theory provides a main direction guide for translators to make decisions in the process of translation. The question of constraints in the target language is discussed by several scholars. Bogucki (2004a) states that there are two forms of constraint on subtitling. First, subtitling is limited according to the target audience's expectations. Second, there are technical restrictions in subtitling, such as temporal and spatial limitation requirements. Depending on these restrictions, translators are required to restrict the words to be shown in subtitles, although technical restrictions should not be the only reason for translators to carry out deletion or rendition of different elements in subtitling. However, these constraints should not be the excuse for translating just the semantic meaning without considering whether target language audiences will be able to use it in connection with other multimodal elements to infer the necessary information. Hence, Relevance Theory is applied to help translators to decide which and whether various elements should be maintained or not in the process of subtitling. For example, Bogucki (2004b: 72) points out that the visual context, as a specific element in an audiovisual programme, imposes limitations on the verbal component as it will appear in the translated subtitles. Therefore, Relevance Theory will assist translators in reducing redundant elements and maintaining relevant linguistic elements in subtitling. Bogucki (2004b: 75) argues that the ultimate purpose of applying Relevance Theory to translation is not to achieve maximum explicitness from source language to target language. In other words, the information which is provided through the combination of translated subtitles and other existing multimodal elements should bear as much resemblance as possible to the source language text and other multimodal elements.

### **2.5.5 Features of Subtitling**

Subtitling as a specific type of translation, and one of the most commonly used in media texts, has attracted increasing interest in recent decades. This research focuses on the presence and representation of politeness in the source audiovisual

programme, as well as the process of translating it through subtitling, since subtitling is currently used as the main Audiovisual Translation mode in the Chinese market. The translation of politeness in subtitles has been selected as the focus of this study based on the observation that politeness, as a form of interpersonal pragmatics, is often omitted or reduced in the process of subtitling (Hatim and Mason 1997: 79). Hatim and Mason have analysed the translation of politeness in subtitles in French original conversations and their translated English subtitles in a French movie. They (1997: 96) point out that due to the reduction of the original's politeness in the translated film, audiences who have to rely on translated subtitles to watch the film meet difficulties in retrieving the interpersonal meaning compared to audiences who are able to watch the film without the need for subtitles. They believe that, to a greater or lesser extent, this could affect the understanding of a film's character by audiences who have to read translated subtitles when they watch films. Expanding on this point, House (1998: 64) indicates that reaching interpersonal equivalence of politeness requires comprehensive considerations on various pragmatic dimensions. Since politeness is strongly associated with social context, translators need to deal with such contextual differences in the process of translation.

Compared with other forms of translation, subtitling has its own features, which should receive more attention from translators. Three main characteristics of subtitling are as follows:

1. Compared to other kinds of translation, there are strict restrictions on the length of each subtitle due to the limitations imposed by technical requirements.
2. Subtitling is a kind of translation from speech to writing, which is a cross-medium translation activity (Hatim and Mason 1997; Bogucki 2004a, 2004b, 2013, 2020).
3. Since audiovisual programmes are polysemiotic by nature, it is necessary to consider the following four different signs, as classified by Delabastita (1990: 101-102), when subtitling: “verbal signs transmitted acoustically (dialogue), non-verbal signs transmitted acoustically (background noise, music), verbal signs transmitted visually (credits, letters, documents shown on the screen), non-verbal signs transmitted visually”. In other words, subtitling is a multimodal form of translation. Therefore, subtitling should be considered in combination with the visual context in

the process of translation (Hatim and Mason 1997; Bogucki 2004a, 2004b, 2013, 2020).

Audiovisual programmes have a more specific semiotic dimension compared to a literature text such as a novel. Therefore, this aspect has attracted increasing attention from Audiovisual Translation scholars (Zabalbeascoa 1997; Gottlieb 1998; Díaz-Cintas 2001). The parameters of Audiovisual Translation are more varied than those applying to literary translation since they relate to verbal, visual and audio elements. Therefore, in audiovisual programmes, the verbal element is not the only component used to transfer information for target audiences. In his discussion of dubbing, Zabalbeascoa (1997: 338) indicates that nonverbal elements sometimes are used as supplementary information to support verbal signs. He (1997: 339) further points out that nonverbal elements and their potential relevance not only apply to dubbing but also to other types of translation. On the other hand, Díaz-Cintas (2001: 182), in discussing the importance of semiotics in humour translation, points out that semiotic elements in audiovisual programmes cannot be neglected, because they also contribute to the transferring of information. For example, one actor might laugh, as a non-verbal visual sign, when another person tells a joke. If this joke relates to the original culture, the translator needs to tread cautiously for the reason that culture differences between source language and target language may mean the semantic meaning which is shown in the translated subtitles will fail to convey the humour of the conversation.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

This chapter introduced five main areas relating to the topic of this research: politeness, humour, using humour to construct different face-saving strategies, Relevance Theory, and features of Audiovisual Translation. Although these five areas were considered separately, they were presented with a view to highlight the obvious strands of commonality that emerge among them. In some cases, such as in the areas of humour and politeness or Audiovisual Translation and humour, research has already been undertaken, associating the two fields of study, as has been discussed. However, this detailed literature review has exposed two research gaps in Politeness and Translation Studies, specifically in relation to subtitling.

First, little research has been undertaken on the translation of politeness in subtitles. Although Hatim and Mason (1997) were pioneers in pointing out the

challenges of how to subtitle elements relating to politeness, the scope of their work was limited and little work has yet been done in this area. This gap is particularly visible in the English-Chinese language pair. It is undoubtedly linked to the fact that until recently, few audiovisual products from the UK were available in China. However, the situation has considerably changed in the last decade, with the UK now being a major provider of foreign television programmes (Staff 2013; Jackson 2016; Dams 2020). Another aspect of the mediation of politeness that this review has emphasised is that British and Chinese cultures, in very different ways, give much importance to the expression of politeness. This review has therefore highlighted the differences in expressing politeness in the British English into Mandarin Chinese language pair not only from a linguistic but also from a cultural point of view. These differences are particularly acute in an area of communication such as politeness, often expressed pragmatically rather than semantically. They are challenging to subtitle, as subtitling, bound to transfer orality into a written text and to space limitations on the screen, is a mode of translation with inescapable constraints. From this overview, the need has emerged to construct a composite model of translation which includes a cultural perspective, in order to explore how to subtitle elements relating to politeness in the English into Chinese language pair.

Second, as this review has shown, whilst both British and Chinese scholars have explored the translation of humour in Audiovisual Translation, in relation to subtitling, few studies have focused on how humour can be used as a strategy for politeness. Although existing research undoubtedly shows that people use humour as an effective approach for being polite in their communication in both British and Chinese texts, the relationship between politeness and humour has yet to be fully explored. Research has indicated that both verbal and nonverbal uses of humour can be instrumental as a strategy for showing politeness in order to maintain a positive environment in people's communication. It has also outlined that humour has become an increasingly attractive form of expression for Chinese people (Wei 2017; Chen 2020). However, the challenge of rendering this strategy effective across two very different cultures has not been given much attention, and much less in terms of subtitling, as a constrained form of translation. Therefore, the composite model of translation theory, which combines the respective strengths of Relevance Theory and

Multimodal Transcription, attempts to address this research gap through considering humour in relation to these two different cultural contexts.

In order to address the two research gaps which were identified above, this research will concentrate on how to deal with the problems which exist in the translation of politeness, humour and using humour to construct different face-saving strategies in subtitles from English to Chinese. Therefore, the conversations in the research corpus needed to provide sufficient examples for comprehensive analysis of the pragmatic use of politeness, humour and showing politeness by using humour. *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006) was considered appropriate since it contains an abundance of examples of use of politeness, humour and use of humour for the purpose of being polite (or less polite sometimes) in conversations among hotel staff and customers. Hence, the decision was made to use the first season of *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006), eight episodes in total, as material for analysis in this essay. The methodology for analysing this material will be discussed in the next chapter.

## Chapter 3. Methodologies

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter intends to introduce the construction of an appropriate methodology for use in this research for analysis of the translation of politeness, humour and using humour to construct different face-saving strategies from the chosen examples from the first season of *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006). An audiovisual programme is a comprehensive text compared to written texts, because it not only contains verbal elements but also non-verbal elements. A large number of established audiovisual programmes set stimuli successfully through both verbal elements and multimodal elements in the development of their story. Following these elements, source language audiences can make the inference spontaneously, so a deep impression can be embedded in their memory while they are watching it. Audiovisual Translation scholars have increasingly emphasised the importance of multimodality features in the process of analysing audiovisual programmes. Hence, in section 3.2, multimodality, the key features in audiovisual programmes will be introduced and discussed. This section aims to explore how four core multimodal elements, namely images, language, sound and music, are being used to offer various kind of stimuli, and discusses which kind of stimuli these multimodal elements can offer in audiovisual programmes. Addressing multimodality in audiovisual programmes means that Audiovisual Translation is understood beyond verbal translation from one language to another language, and that during the process of translation, verbal aspects need to be considered in combination with various other elements contained in the audiovisual programme. Next, in section 3.3, Multimodal Transcription, this project's main framework for text analysis, will be introduced in detail. Multimodal Transcription, based on multimodal theory, was proposed by Baldry and Thibault (2006) and further discussed and developed by an increasing number of audiovisual researchers. Multimodal Transcription aims to include various multimodal elements in one systematic form. Using this method can help translators to observe the influences between verbal elements and multimodal elements in the process of providing meaning in audiovisual programmes. Multimodal Transcription implies creating degrees of division among both verbal and non-verbal elements in the analysis of audiovisual texts. However, for the purpose of this Audiovisual Translation research, certain modifications will be made to Baldry and Thibault's



Multimodal Transcription method in order to apply it to the analysis of subtitles translation from English to Chinese, as will be discussed in section 3.4. In section 3.4, the modified Multimodal Transcription framework which will be used in this research will be introduced in detail. Through this system framework, Multimodal Transcription can help translators to identify the stimuli which are provided by different multimodal elements and related verbal elements in a text. This method is particularly effective in examining the expression of politeness, humour and using humour to construct different face-saving strategies, as the chosen examples in this research will show. This modified Multimodal Transcription framework will emphasise the features of audiovisual text by showing source text, translated subtitle and multimodal elements in an organised form. The framework can then be used to work out the complicated relationships between verbal elements and other multimodal elements, which could affect the inference of explicit and implicit meaning in the expression of politeness, humour and different face-saving strategies both in English and Chinese, as demonstrated by the later research corpus analysis. The important message to take from this is that translators should not only pay attention to the verbal element translation, but also focus on the stimuli which are offered by other multimodal elements in the process of subtitles translation from English to Chinese.

### **3.2 Multimodality and Audiovisual Translation**

Researchers in Audiovisual Translation Studies have highlighted differences between audiovisual and conventional text translation. Bogucki (2013: 101) states that as one of the specific characteristics of audiovisual programmes, multimodality derives from a particular combination of various semiotic elements within one programme. Desilla (2012: 35) demonstrates that as a whole product, the meaning of a film cannot only depend on one single semiotic element within that film. The overall meaning is essentially produced through interaction among various semiotic elements in the film product as a whole. Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2007: 52) also emphasise that the interaction between the verbal and non-verbal semiotics in audiovisual programmes such as films serves the specific aim of clarifying the story narrative. Even without considering the culture-bound differences from one language to another language, Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2007: 52) point out that the expression of some non-verbal elements of audiovisual programmes, such as body

language, can create major challenges for the translator. This is because some non-verbal semiotic elements can be observed directly through the performance of the characters on screen, such as obvious body movements or facial expressions. Moreover, these elements are used to stress the effect and/or interact with verbal elements which are needed specifically in that scene for the purpose of expressing politeness and humour. This brings challenges for the translator in the interpretation of these non-verbal elements during subtitling. Furthermore, as was stated in the introduction, some gestures or body language may have a specific meaning in one culture, and may even have the opposite meaning in another culture. For instance, shaking the head up and down means yes in most countries, while this is not the case in countries such as Bulgaria (Angelova 2017). An example illustrating the difference in use of 'yes' and 'no' between English and Chinese is given by Yau (1997: 78). When A asks B: 'You are not eating?' in Chinese, B will answer: (a) 'Yes, I am not eating' or (b) 'No, I am eating.' However, in English the responses are respectively: (a) 'No, I am not eating' or (b) 'Yes, I am eating'. Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2007: 52) give the following example regarding a translation involving body language. In the English movie *Loaded* (Campion 1994), a group of students have gathered in a house belonging to the aunt of one of the girls. One of the students asks her "Does your aunt mind us staying here?" The girl answers "No, she hasn't lived here since my uncle died", shaking her head at the same time. Díaz-Cintas and Remael (ibid.) point out that shaking the head represents a negative message as well as the audio 'no'. Therefore, some amendment must be made in the subtitling if shaking the head means 'yes' in the subtitle language, as in Greek and Bulgarian. They suggest that in this situation the question should be phrased as "Is your aunt happy with us staying here?" In that case, the answer can be phrased as follows: "Yes, she moved out when my uncle died". Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2007: 52-53) also emphasise that a major alteration like the one above, changing an affirmative message into a negative message and vice versa, needs to be done for an obvious reason. It is essential to keep the verbal language in synchrony with the body movements shown to the audience. Baldry and Thibault (2006: 18) state that in a multimodal text, each and every semiotic element makes a contribution to forming meaning that is produced through their combination and integration.

Multimodal theory stresses the need to pay attention to the integration and interplay of various modes which exist in audiovisual programmes. Through the

exploration of various modes in audiovisual texts, this theory emphasises the connection among each and every mode in the audiovisual programme. Multimodal theory breaks down the boundaries which exist between each mode and considers all modes which have an effect in the audiovisual programme in combination. The audiovisual product reflects their performance not only through language but also other modes which are included in the product, such as images, sound, as well as music.

The application of Multimodal theory to the analysis of audiovisual programmes can present which and how different modes work with each other in more detail during the audiovisual text as well as the Audiovisual Translation. As we have seen earlier, elements such as politeness and humour cannot be considered as producing a relevant effect only through verbal content in audiovisual programmes. In addition, politeness and humour which exist in one language might not exist in the target language. What is even more challenging is that the information on politeness and humour in an original audiovisual programme might be incorporated in combination with another relevant mode, such as body language, in the original audiovisual programme. In that case, if the translator only translates the meaning which has been conveyed in the original conversation literally, this would cause part of the meaning to be missing for the target language readers. Therefore, this increases the challenge for translators in dealing with the necessary information during their translation. Studies by Audiovisual Translation scholars have attempted to integrate multimodal theory into the area of translation to stress the essential effects which are provided by multimodal elements during the process of inference by their audiences. Gambier (2006: 7) points out that these research efforts are positive moves to introduce other semiotic elements into Audiovisual Translation, instead of focusing solely on the meaning as expressed through the linguistic aspects, as was the case in the early Audiovisual Translation research, since multimodal text is the product of integration, for instance, in a film or advertisement. Zabalbeascoa (2008: 24) suggests that verbal, nonverbal, audio and visual elements are all of equally important status in terms of their contribution to the expression of meaning in an audiovisual programme. Similarly, Taylor (2013: 99-100) indicates that as a multimodal product, an audiovisual programme produces meaning not only through the spoken or written words but also in combination with various other modes which exist in the programme, such as sounds, kinetic action, and images. In other words, in the

process of Audiovisual Translation, instead of only considering the written text, translators should also focus on the specific situation when translating from one language to another language. Taylor (2004: 161) suggests that the translator should employ a proper rendering strategy in considering semiotic modes and verbal expression in order to make decisions on deleting or remedying relevant information during translation. To be more precise, if a particular semiotic modality contains information which overlaps with the verbal expression, it becomes possible to delete or condense that aspect of the verbal expression, without any omission of the main information. Furthermore, this process can to some extent relieve the pressure in terms of temporal and spatial requirements that restrict Audiovisual Translation. On the other hand, some information may need to be added to enable the audience to understand the plot without undue effort. For example, temporal and spatial limitations in Audiovisual Translation sometimes lead to vocative elements being omitted during translation. However, Szarkowska (2010: 82) points out that in a film, if the addressee is sitting with other characters in one screen, then the vocative element needs to be conserved in the translation since it is an essential sign to distinguish the addressee from the other characters.

Pérez-González (2014: 192) indicates that there are four core modes which exist in audiovisual programmes, namely sound, music, image and language. These four main modes are used as the basic material for audiences to acquire information in audiovisual programmes. In the making of audiovisual programmes these four main core modes are used to set up stimuli for their audience to follow in order to understand the communicative intentions which have been pre-determined by the producers (Stöck 2004: 11). Stöckl (2004: 11-12) created a hierarchically structured framework that includes the core modes and sub-modes which exist in print media and audiovisual programmes, as shown in the following two figures:

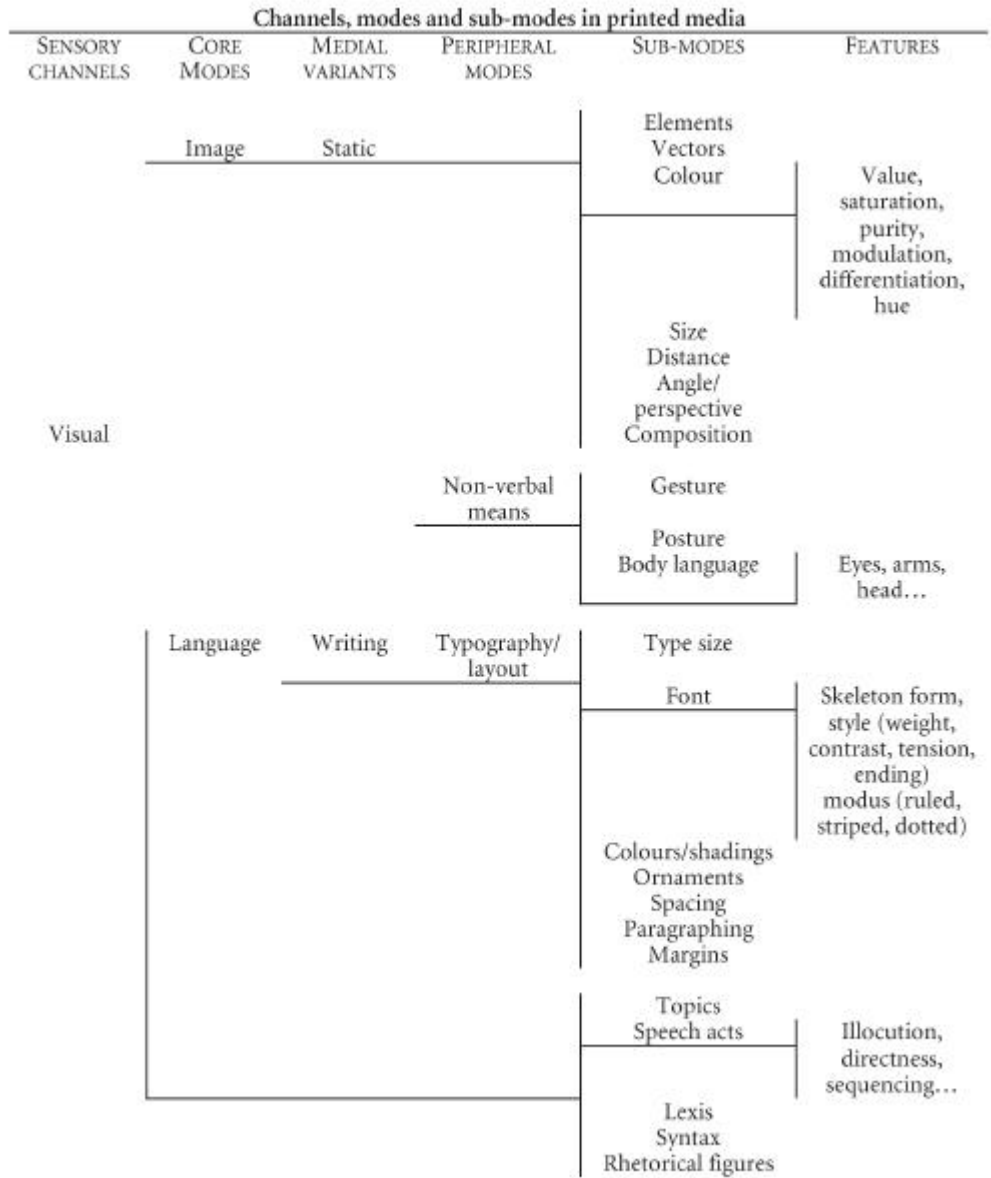


Figure 11. Network of modes, sub-modes and features in printed media (Stöckl 2004: 12)

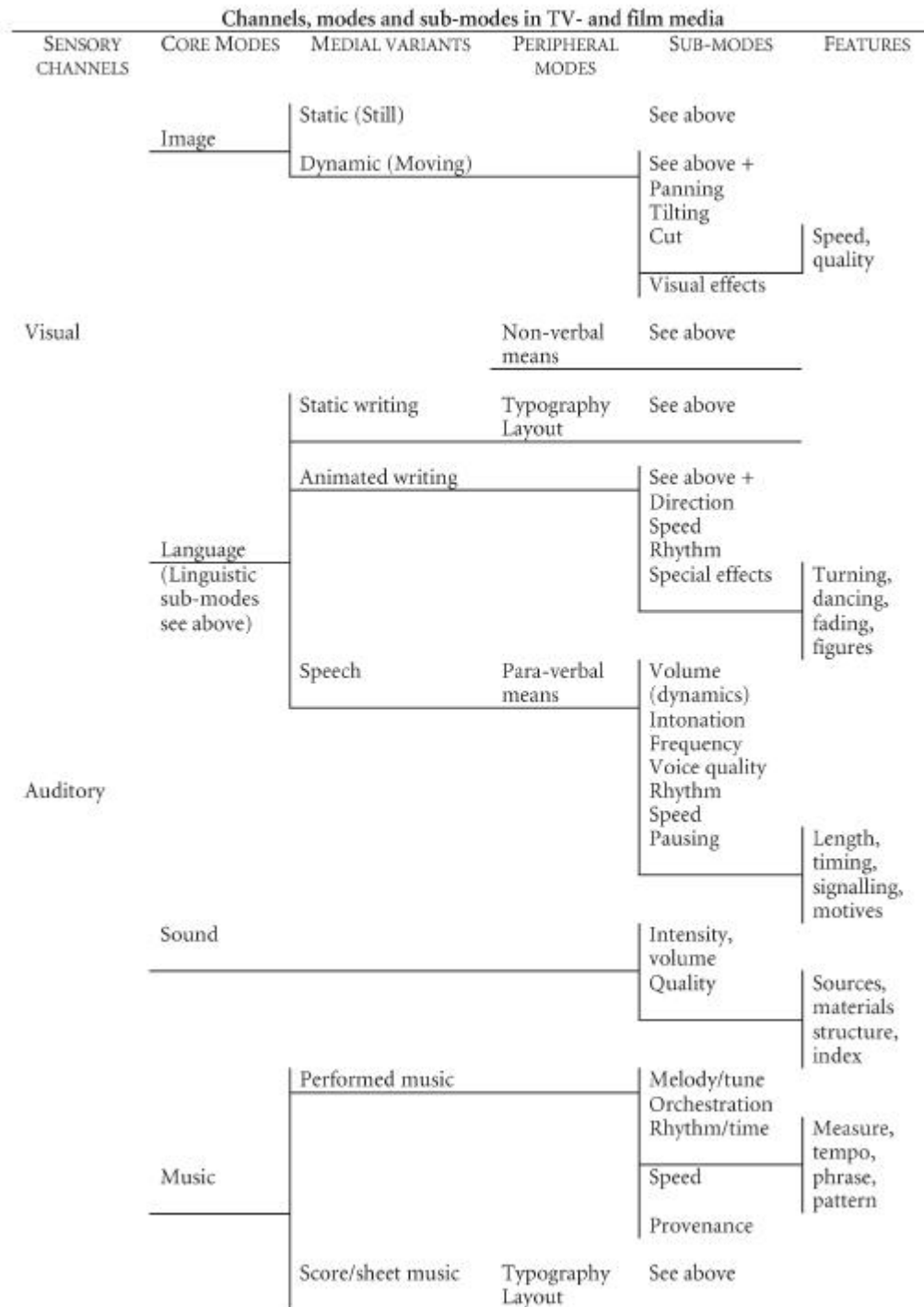


Figure 12. Network of modes, sub-modes and features in TV and film-media (Stöckl 2004: 13)

The two figures above show that the four main modes can be divided into various detailed sub-modes. As can be seen from Figure 12, an audiovisual programme consists of various modes that include but are not limited to language, unlike conventional written texts such as novels. These different modes need to be integrated to enable inference of communication intention from the audiovisual

programme. Based on the categorisation by Stöckl, Pérez-González (2014: 194) simplified and adapted the hierarchical structure as follows:

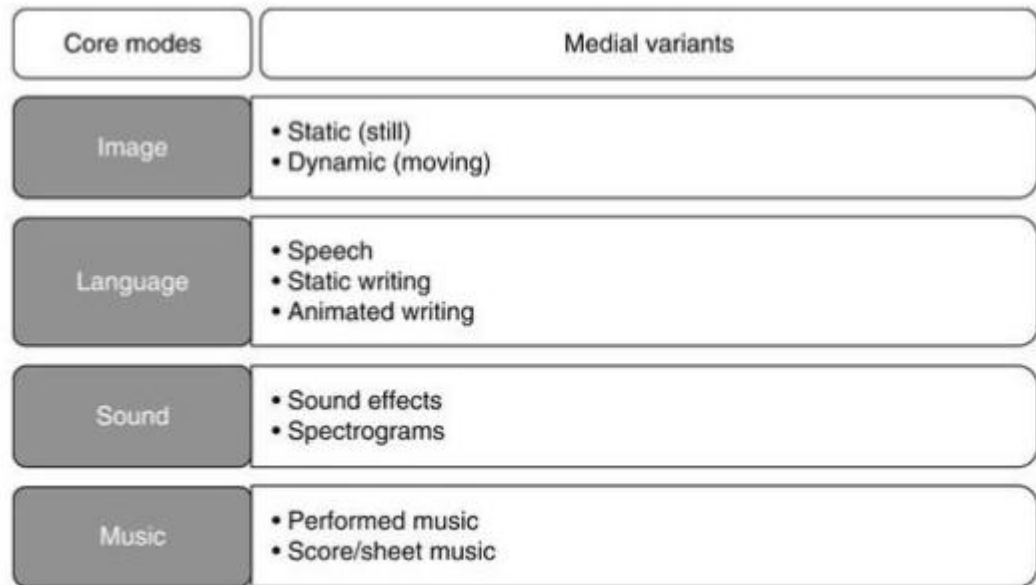


Figure 13. Network of core modes and medial variants (Pérez-González 2014: 194)

Following this division of the core modes which is shown above, Pérez-González further classified sub-modes relating to each core mode, which will be introduced and discussed individually in the following sub-sections. Pérez-González (2014: 198) points out that depending on the core mode chosen by the communicator, relevant sub-modes are selected for the purpose of the enrichment and extension of the core mode in a specific audiovisual programme. To be more precise, the various choices of sub-modes play the main role in enabling the core mode to be expressed and emphasised relevantly in audiovisual programmes. Moreover, the final interpretation of the communicative intention relies on the collaboration of each and every relevant sub-mode during the process of communication. Stöckl (2004: 14) emphasises that sub-modes are as important as core modes since the overall effect is produced through the interplay among relevant modes under the specific situation. Stöckl (2004: 14-15) further highlights that the conjunction and interplay of various sub-modes serves to form a mode. In this mode, no sub-mode is less important than the other sub-modes or can perform the mode's function alone. In other words, the final function which is produced by the cooperation and interplay among different modes is far stronger than if each of the relevant modes were to perform separately. Stöckl (2004: 14) also indicates that non-verbal elements are conflictual elements as they

can either produce an effect individually or can be combined with language to perform a final function according to different situations from time to time. In the following section, the four core modes in audiovisual programmes will be introduced and discussed separately in more detail.

### 3.2.1 Image

Image is applied as a direct representation in audiovisual programmes. As can be seen from Figure 14, image as one of the core modes is divided into two medial variants, namely static and dynamic images. Pérez-González (2014: 213) indicates that through the application of these various sub-modes, they become instruments of constructing visual semiotics.

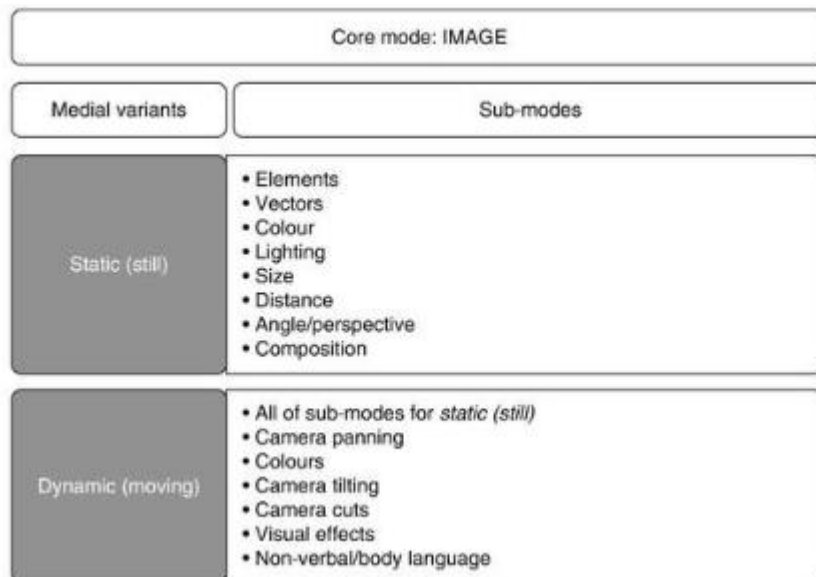


Figure 14. Network of sub-modes for Image core mode (Pérez-González 2014: 214)

Based on the above chart, Pérez-González (2014: 213) explains that as a sub-mode of image, ‘Element’ is a general term which refers to ‘the form of animate beings, inanimate objects or other distinct figurative/abstract visual representations’. Therefore, ‘Element’ can be seen as a static or dynamic image depending on its specific use. Pérez-González (2014: 213-214) states that an audiovisual text is a kind of product which requires the coherent combination of visual and verbal elements. Considering printed advertisements, which also involve the combination of verbal and visual elements as a whole product, Stöckl (2004: 19) further indicates that for the purpose of maintaining the overall communicative gestalt, the inter-modal connection existing between visual and verbal elements is retained through the



conjunction and interplay of the relevant sub-modes which belong to these two core modes, not only semantically but also formally.

In some audiovisual programmes, certain visual elements are arranged through the performance of characters for expressing some specific information, such as politeness or humour. In this kind of situation, the correlation of verbal and visual elements becomes important in an audiovisual programme. However, some of these elements which are expressed through visual images to the original language audience may not be noticed by other language audiences if no further explanation is provided during subtitling. In that case, the inter-modal correlation of verbal and visual elements which exists in source language might not exist in the target language. Hence, the clue which is given in visual elements might not easily be connected with verbal elements in the target language. For example, Yau (1997: 73) provides the example from China of using hand gestures to say thank you to a person who is pouring tea for guests. Those who are accepting the tea thank the person pouring by tapping their hands on the table near the cup two or three times with bent middle and index fingers to represent *kowtow*. *Kowtow* is a gesture which was used in ancient times by people in a lower position to show their gratitude to people in a higher position. *Kowtow* means the same as *kowshou*. In these terms, both *tow* and *shou* represent the head. In the latter case, *shou* is also a homophone of hand. Therefore, people use their hands instead of the head to knock on the table to show their appreciation to the person pouring the tea for them. Yau (1997: 73) indicates that using this gesture enables people to say thank you without interrupting their conversation. The practicality of this gesture is the main reason why it has spread from its origins in Guangdong to other provinces in China in the last couple of decades. This example illustrates that this kind of body language might easily be ignored or could cause confusion among audiences who are not familiar with the convention existing in the original language context if there is no further interpretation. Therefore, one of the meaningful inter-mode correlations between verbal and visual elements in one language might become meaningless in the other language, which is one of the challenges which needs to be confronted by translators. Furthermore, some visual elements in one language might even convey the opposite meaning in the other language, such as the body language to show ‘yes’ and ‘no’ in different countries as discussed earlier. This is another problem which needs to be

dealt with carefully. Some gestures can similarly cause confusion due to differences in their interpretation by people from different cultural backgrounds. Last but not least, some gestures which exist in one language might have a different meaning in the other language. Therefore, it is a major challenge to transfer the information which is produced by the combination of certain specific gestures and the verbal from one language into another language. For example, in Episode 1 Season 1 of *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006), a conversation occurs between Anna and Charlie who used to date each other and then meet again a long time after they broke up. This time, these two people are competitors for the position of deputy manager at Hotel Babylon. Anna appears very confident about getting this position since this is her second interview for the same post. When she says 'looks promising' to show off to Charlie about her interview, she crosses her index finger and middle finger together. This is a gesture which is used in English to wish someone good luck. However, this gesture is used in some parts of China to refer to the number 10. In that case, this gesture cannot be seen as having any connection with what has been said by Anna. Furthermore, no further explanation of this gesture is given in the Chinese subtitle. As a consequence, the meaning of this gesture and the words said by Anna cannot be understood by reading the Chinese subtitle.

To accompany the different perspectives, such as various camera angles, different visual effects will be affected. As a consequence, the information presented in the audiovisual programme will also vary. Pérez-González (2014: 222) discusses the importance of this information in the production of meaning. He thus identifies two different camera angles: the horizontal and the vertical. The horizontal angle is normally used to represent the relationship between the participants in communication, while the vertical angle is normally used to represent the difference in power or status between the speaker and the hearer in audiovisual programmes. Pérez-González (2014: 222) also identifies three different types of vertical angles, namely high, medium and low. A high angle is used by a viewer positioned in a higher place to look down on the lower depicted world. Use of this angle indicates that the status of the viewer is higher than that of the depicted world. A medium angle is used by a viewer at an equal level to look at the depicted world. Using this angle represents that the status of the viewer is at the same level as the depicted world. Finally, a low angle is used by a viewer who is positioned below to look up at

the depicted world. Use of this type of angle indicates that the status of the viewer is lower than that of the depicted world. For example, there is a scene in Episode 1 Season 1 of *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006), in which Charlie is having an interview with Rebecca for a position as deputy manager. Charlie is talking about his understanding of the responsibilities of the deputy manager. In this scene the vertical angle in relation to Charlie varies from higher angle (Figure 15) to medium angle (Figure 16). This represents that the viewer, Rebecca, is in a higher position than Charlie. From the changing angle in this scene, it can be seen that Charlie is being investigated by the viewer. At the same time, although Charlie is the only person depicted from Figure 15 to Figure 16, he is shown consistently on the right instead of in the middle. Then the shot changes to Rebecca who is sitting in the middle of the screen in Figure 17. As can be seen from Figure 17, Rebecca, as the general manager of this hotel, is of a higher status than Charlie.



Figure 15. The interview with Charlie 1



Figure 16. The interview with Charlie 2



Figure 17. The interview with Charlie 3

Due to the word limit in this research, other sub-modes relating to the image core mode will not be discussed separately in detail. However, this does not mean that the other kinds of sub-modes are not important in audiovisual programmes. In delivering a complete audiovisual programme product, the agents involved in the programme

making have to pre-arrange all the relevant sub-modes which correlate and interplay with each other according to the specific purpose.

As can be seen from the above examples, having to consider the inter-modal synergies between the correlation of verbal and visual elements which are produced in the original language raises a new challenge for translators when translating into a target language. Two different approaches have been offered to deal with the existing difficulties of coordination between the various verbal and visual elements of the expressed information when making audiovisual programmes. On the one hand, the adjustment of some visual elements is an approach used in order to coordinate the different information which is expressed in verbal and image modes, respectively. Pérez-González (2014: 215) points out that, in fact, this approach has been attempted in the making of some films, such as *Dracula* (Browning and Freund 1931). In the process of making some parts of this film, the plots and the scenarios were kept the same. However, different teams of characters who spoke the different languages were used to re-make parts of the film during the film making process. On the other hand, for economic reasons, Pérez-González (2014: 214) states that it is more economical to retain unchanged the visual images which already exist in the original audiovisual programme. In that case, translators have to figure out how to use verbal elements in order to maintain the connection between verbal and image elements and sometimes express the non-verbal in translation.

### **3.2.2 Language**

As one of the main approaches used to provide information, the core mode of language in audiovisual programmes is represented not only acoustically but also visually.

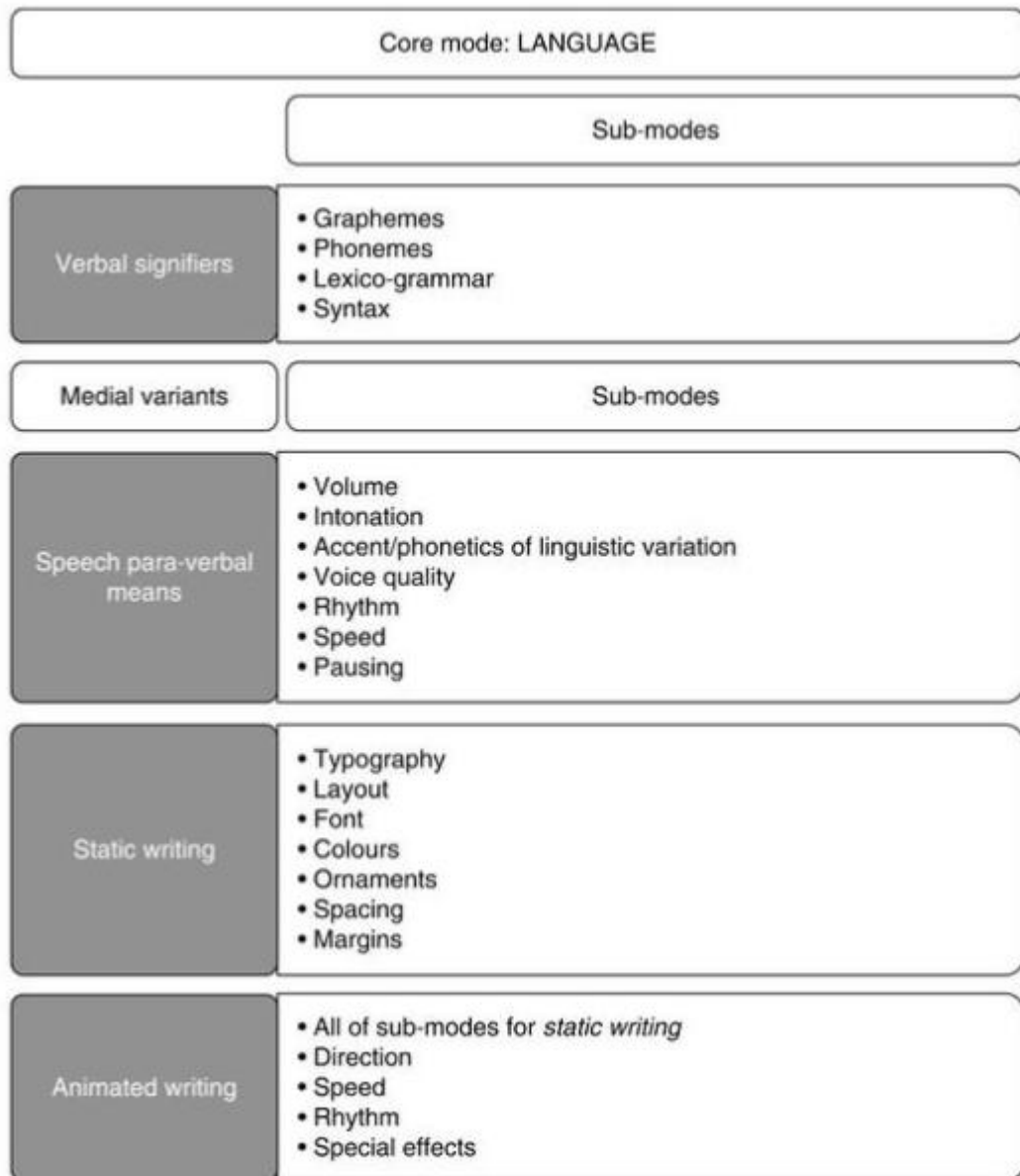


Figure 18. Network of sub-modes for language core mode (Pérez-González 2014: 199)

As can be seen from Figure 18, Pérez-González (2014: 200) indicates that language can be expressed via para-verbal means of speech through verbal speech hearing. Language can be seen as represented in static or animated form through writing on the scene. Pérez-González (2014: 201) highlights that the manipulation of the sub-modes in speech is an effective way to construct characters, and specifically in dubbing through such as controlling the speaking volume or speed, which should not be ignored during Audiovisual Translation. In addition, Neves (2005: 221) indicates that the manipulation of sub-modes in acoustic language, such as changing the voice level or speaking speed, is a useful approach generally applied in

audiovisual programmes to express different degrees of implied irony as well as contradiction. Pérez-González (2014: 202) also states that unlike with dubbing, subtitling the speech part lacks the flexibility to adjust the diegetic voice. Pérez-González (2014: 203) further illustrates that sometimes the audiovisual programme introduces some changes, such as changes from close up shots to long shots, to indicate the distance between the speaking character and diegetic characters or audience. However, it is hard for translators to represent this through subtitling, specifically through commercial subtitling conventions.

### 3.2.3 Sound

Sound is another essential core mode which is applied to audiovisual programmes for various purposes. As can be seen from Figure 19, Pérez-González (2014: 206) divides sound effects, as expressed acoustically in audiovisual products, into three elements, namely intensity, volume and quality. Pérez-González (2014: 204) states that sound effects are normally represented in synchrony with the visual mode in audiovisual text.

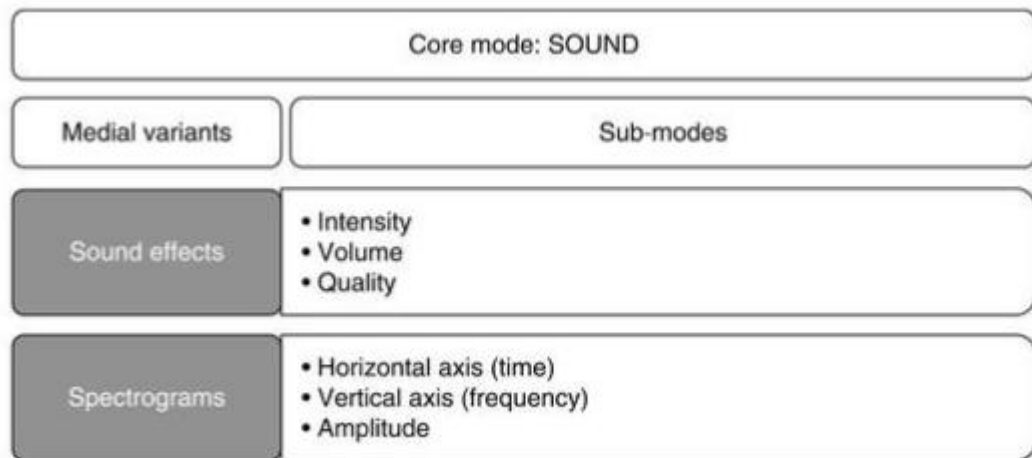


Figure 19. Network of sub-modes for the sound core mode (Pérez-González 2014: 206)

Sound effects are sometimes provided in audiovisual programmes in interplay with the original language context for some specific purpose. Pérez-González (2014: 206) indicates that producers of audiovisual programmes attempt to use sound effects in accompaniment with the meaning producing resources to complement or emphasise certain effects which are produced by other modes in audiovisual programmes. Pérez-González (2014: 206) demonstrates that the inter-mode connections between sound and other relevant modes should be given attention

during Audiovisual Translation. However, attending to the cooperation between sound effects and other relevant modes presents a huge challenge in audiovisual programme translation. This is because the meaning which is created by sound and the accompanying other relevant elements in one language might not have the same connection in the target language. For example, there is a conversation in Episode 1 Season 1 of *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006) in which Tony and Charlie, who are good friends as well as colleagues, talk about all kinds of sacrifices which Charlie has made to get a promotion. Charlie mocks the efforts he has made as ‘kiss a little bit of arse’. At the same time, when he says this phrase, he also makes a kissing sound. This sound can be connected with the phrase spoken by Charlie during the original language conversation. Also, when Charlie makes this sound while speaking, the interplay between the sound and language increases the humorous effect in the original conversation. However, the phrase which is used to describe the same situation in Chinese is ‘*paimapi*’ (literal translation: pat horse’s butt). Since there is no ‘kiss’ part in the Chinese phrase, it is hard to connect this sound with the translated phrase in the subtitle. As can be seen from this example, dealing with the cooperation and interplay between sound and other modes which exist in one language in order to transfer this connection into another language presents a huge challenge to translators of audiovisual texts.

### **3.2.4 Music**

Music is one of the semiotic languages involved in the construction of audiovisual programmes. It plays a range of roles in audiovisual programmes, such as setting the mood for films, accompanying a narrative or associating with a specific character (Chalkho 2015; Desblache 2019; Desblache 2020). Music not only has a remarkable capacity to be meaningful in conjunction with other languages, such as visual or verbal languages, it also uses a wide range of parameters in order to express those meanings. Figure 20 shows how Pérez-González (2014: 208) classified the sub-modes which relate to the core mode of music. Pérez-González (2014: 207-208) indicates that from the acoustical aspect, music can be performed for a staged dramatic purpose or used as incidental music. From the visual aspect, music is also noted down on the score or sheet, which is not available for the chosen television drama in this research. Therefore, this section will focus on the former aspect, acoustics.



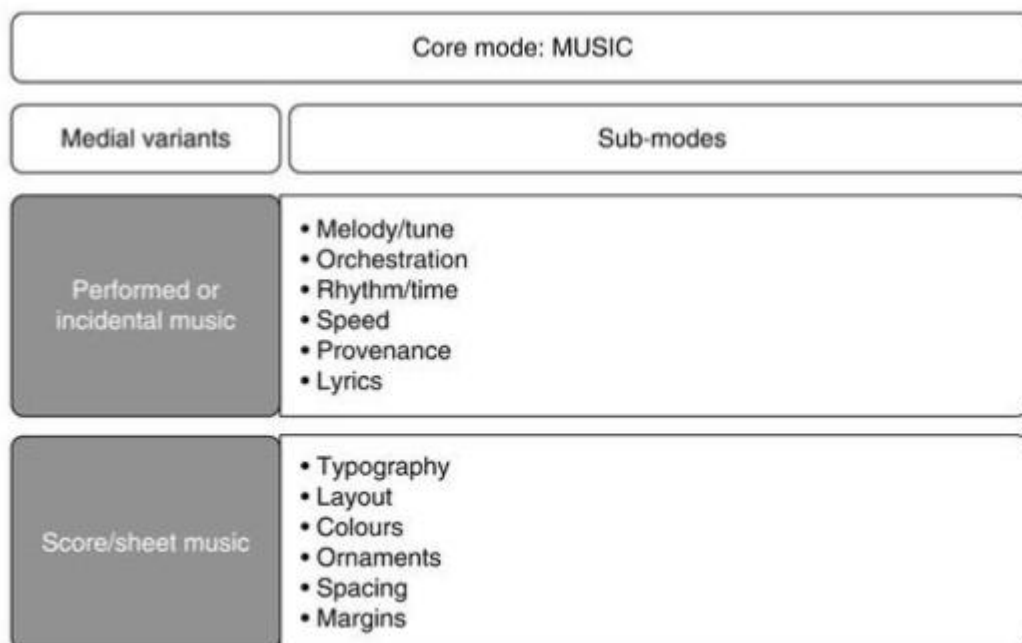


Figure 20. Network of sub-modes for the music core mode (Pérez-González 2014: 208)

Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2007: 208) indicate that according to the specific purpose, directors will make cautious decisions on choosing and using music in their audiovisual programmes. To be more precise, Brown (1994: 26) points out that music is an essential tool in the process of construction and displaying of emotions, moods as well as mental tension. Brown (1994: 15) also says that the setting of music to emphasise emotional effects in programmes is an effective way to draw the audience's attention and arouse an emotional response from them during the display of the programme. Pérez-González (2014: 208) states that music can be meaningful on its own or via combination and interplay with a specific verbal text in audiovisual programmes. It can be seen that diegetic music, which refers to the music that is presented by the characters themselves, as well as non-diegetic music have their own various functions in audiovisual programmes. Chalkho (2015: 102) indicates that the music used in cinema contributes to the meaning of a film in varied ways, such as by making a semantic narration of the story, attaching meaning to the scene, as well as compiling films according to the system of genres. Chalkho gives an example from the horror movie *The Shining* to show how music creates an atmosphere of horror, which cannot be seen just through the images in the scene. If audiences mute the sound in the beginning scene of the movie, they can only see a pleasant view of a car driving on a road on a sunny day. However, the music which is chosen as the background in this scene attempts to create a horror atmosphere to prepare for the

coming story plot. This shows that music plays an essential part, in combination with other semiotics in audiovisual programmes, in expressing information and messages to their audience. According to research done on implicatures in the Bridget Jones film comedies, Desilla (2012: 44) also suggests that a non-verbal piece of music, a classic tune from another musical movie *The Sound of Music* (Wise 1965), which is hummed by the heroine Bridget, implicitly sets the tone of happiness and cheerfulness for the scene without the need for any verbal expression. Furthermore, Pérez-González (2014: 211) indicates that even without verbal elements during the performance of music, other sub-modes which exist in audiovisual programmes still can be used to combine with music for the purpose of meaning creation. In consequence, the meaning which is produced through the combination of music and other relevant sub-modes can to some extent contribute to the effect of construction of characters or other relevant settings in a subtle way. Here is an example to show how non-verbal music is used in *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006) to set the atmosphere according to different situations. In Episode 6 Season 1 of *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006), Anna and Charlie have an argument about their assumptions on what happened in the room of two of their guests according to the sounds occasionally heard by Anna when she was walking past their room. Anna heard Mrs. Johnson shouting ‘No, please no...!’, the sound of breaking glass, and choking sounds from a female. Based on hearing these sounds, Anna supposes that Mr. Johnson was seizing Mrs. Johnson’s neck to try to kill her in their room and Mrs. Johnson was begging for her life. She therefore explained the choking sound as caused by Mrs Johnson trying to escape from Mr. Johnson’s grasp and the broken glass sound as due to a flowerpot being broken in the struggle. During the description of how these images developed in Anna’s head, a thrilling piece of music was interplayed, which sets the atmosphere using a scary tone. In addition, the scene is displayed in a room in which no lights are turned on, which makes the scene look dark. However, Charlie’s assumptions are in stark contrast to those described by Anna. Charlie is trying to persuade Anna there is no problem between this couple. Therefore, he supposes that Mrs Johnson was eating a snack but suddenly began to choke. Being unable to breathe she staggered around the room without control and bumped into the flowerpot, which would explain the broken glass sound. Mr. Johnson realised what was happening and was trying to help her vomit up the snack. During Charlie describing the images developing in his head, a relaxed sequence of music was

interplayed to create a calm atmosphere since Charlie supposes that this couple were enjoying pleasant reading time when the accident happened. In addition, the scene is displayed in a room in which the light is turned on, which makes the scene look bright. To compare these two opposite scenes, the music sequences used during the performance each make their own contribution to setting the different atmospheres created by the contrasting assumptions and explanations from Anna and Charlie, based on the assumption of receiving the same evidence.

In the above paragraph, the various functions served by music in audiovisual programmes have been introduced. In this paragraph, the focus will move to discussing how the verbal elements of music in audiovisual programmes work, as well as their translations. It should be noticed that different pieces of music might have different degrees of importance in various audiovisual programmes. Therefore, translators adopt different strategies for music translation in audiovisual programmes. Firstly, some pieces are displayed as simple background music which is rarely related with the scene, such as a random song in a shopping mall when the characters are looking for something to buy. In this case, Franzon (2008: 378) points out that the music will not be translated since the verbal contents are not relevant to the narrative of the scene. Secondly, some lyrics take priority over the tune. One reason for this situation is that the music takes on the responsibility of the narrative function, explicitly or implicitly (Díaz-Cintas and Remael 2007: 208). Furthermore, in a musical movie, music is an essential element of the whole movie. Another reason is that sometimes music is used to imply a mood which is reflecting the characters or creating an atmosphere which connects with the scene. In this case, Franzon (2008: 378) suggests that there are two options to deal with this music translation situation. One is to treat the lyrics as another source text during the process of translation, so the audience can get to know the information in the original song, though with no music form (*ibid.*). The other is to translate the lyrics line-by-line, though slightly modifying the tune or even rewriting the whole music to fit in the translated lyrics if necessary (*ibid.*). This translation strategy is a little bit complicated since permission and commission are required from the agents and/or copyright holder in advance. Moreover, a high level of technical knowledge is needed in the process of adapting music according to the translated music. Thirdly, some lyrics are less important than the music. In this case, Leni and Pattiwael (2019: 56) suggests that some

modification of the lyrics is needed for the purpose of fitting them to the tune structure or rhyme of the music. Especially in stage musicals or operas, Franzon (2008: 386) points out that translators have to maximise the verbal rendering, even to delete some parts or add something new into the translated lyrics to make sure the performance or singability of the music is as good as the original score which has been widely acknowledged as a masterpiece in advance. Rewriting the entire lyrics is also an option, as in the case of essential elements of the original songs, such as a repeated phrase. In some circumstances, translators may be affected by the impression which is given in the original lyrics. When talking about the fidelity of this kind of translation, Franzon (2008: 388-389) indicates that achieving this is based on the contextual appropriateness, which refers to dramatic intention, suitable register or style of language and potential staging.

Music, in the wider context of media, is an essential tool which, in terms of lyrics, is used for various purposes in audiovisual programmes. Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2007: 208-209) suggest that some songs are used to complement the narrative explicitly. Through the interaction between song and conversation in the audiovisual programme, Di Giovanni (2008: 303) states that lyrics are a useful tool to complete a programme's narration. For that purpose, she (2008: 305) indicates that lyrics can be used to interact with other components to express the information. In musical movies in particular, music is an essential element involving crossover with conversation in contributing to the narrative for the whole programme (Di Giovanni 2008: 310). To be more precise, music can be used to express the thinking and feeling of the characters. It can also be used to construct a conversation among multiple characters, whether accompanied by verbal speech or not. Here is an example given by Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2007: 210). In the movie *The Grapes of Wrath* (Ford 1940), Tom sings *Red River Valley* while he is dancing with his mother. The song describes the love sent from Tom to his mother, while also sending a message that he is trying to persuade his mother that he will be fine and will not be arrested. In such instances, Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2007: 210) suggest that a proper translation of the song should be done in the translated movie, to reflect the importance of the message expressed by the song.

Here is an example in *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006). In Episode 7 Season 1, a song, *Under the boardwalk*, is sung by members of the hotel staff, including Dave, Derek,

Gino and Tony. They joyfully sing this song in turn in their staff locker room while they are changing out of their hotel uniform. This song describes a man who comes back from working hard all day to spend time with the person he loves under the boardwalk, to rest and watch the people come and go. The picture which is drawn by the song is also being used to reflect how these staff work hard day after day in this hotel. In this case, the lyrics are subtitled without taking the rhymes of the words into account, which just gives the audience a general idea that these employees work hard for their hotel. This song is hummed again near the end of this episode by Derek, who was fired after being caught stealing customers' money in their hotel because of the pressure he was under to help one of his daughters to pay her college tuition fees. Considering Derek's difficulties and his and his father's hard work from generation to generation for this hotel, although she fired him, Rebecca, the hotel manager, still gave a job to one of Derek's sons to relieve some of his financial burden. In the end, Derek was humming this song as he finished his work and walked back home.

### **3.3 Multimodal Transcription**

Using an advertisement clip as analytical material, Thibault (2000) was the first to propose Multimodal Transcription as an approach to the analysis of a multimodal text. Later, Baldry and Thibault (2006) further developed this Multimodal Transcription approach through applying it to various genres of multimodal products as reported in their book. This approach, involving the meticulous analysis of semiotic modes, was summarised by Taylor (2003). It involves:

- (1) the duration in seconds of each frame and the chronological order of the presentation, marked by the letter T(time)
- (2) the visual frames themselves
- (3) a description of the components of the visual image portrayed in terms of the camera position (CP), the horizontal (HP) or vertical (VP) perspective, the visual focus (i.e. gaze vectors-VF), the virtual distance of the shot (D), the visually salient items (VS), the secondary items that are visible on screen and which provide some meaningful content, for example the clothes people wear (VC= visual collocation), the colours used (CR), and the coding orientation (CO), describing whether the scene is natural or in some way surreal
- (4) the kinetic action of the participants, including body movements, facial gestures, etc.
- (5) the complete soundtrack (dialogue, music, sounds, etc.)
- (6) a metafunctional interpretation of how the film creates meaning as it unfolds over time. (Taylor 2003: 192)

From the above categorisation, it can be seen that Multimodal Transcription analysis is an attempt to investigate how the various semiotic modes existing in an audiovisual text are integrated to express meaning to their audience. Here is some further detailed information on Multimodal Transcription regarding film work.

### 3.3.1 Camera position

There are two main kinds of camera positions (CP), namely stationary and moving (Baldry and Thibault 2006: 193). The camera position can be changed to get closer or further away from the audience. There is further division in terms of moving the camera position, which can be seen from Figure 21.

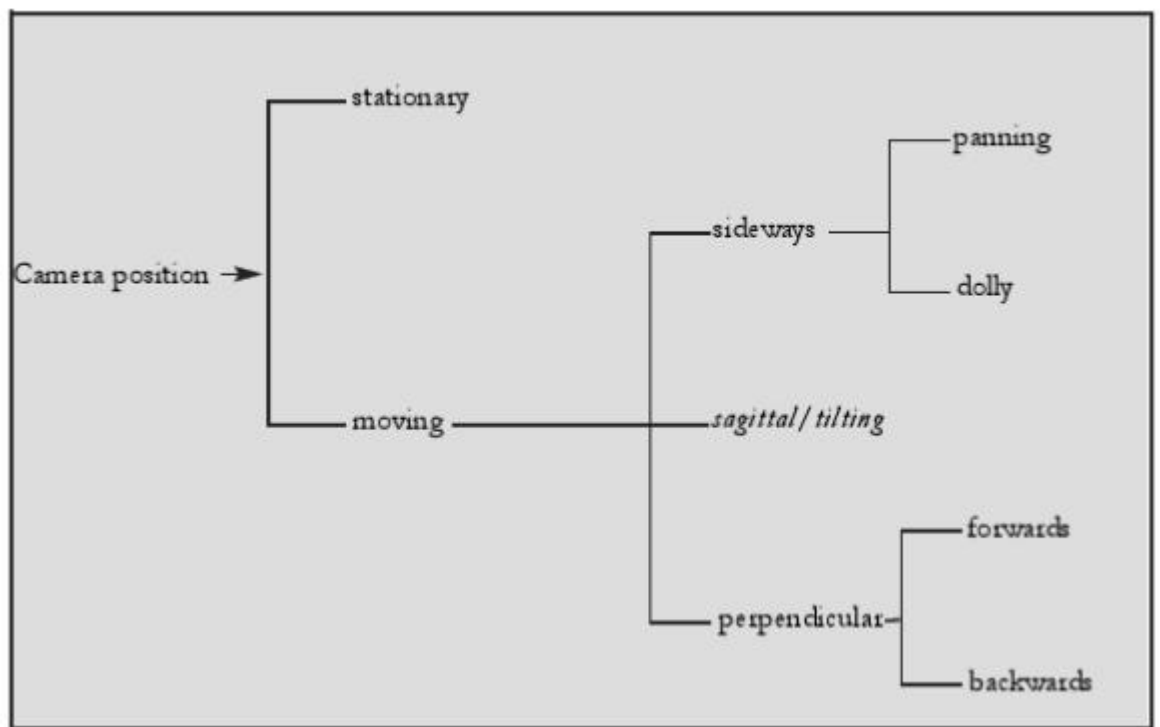


Figure 21. Camera position relative to depicted world of image and visual kinaesthesia of viewer: main options (Baldry and Thibault 2006: 194)

Turner (2006: 71) states that moving the camera can be used for certain specific purposes. For example, the end of a scene on a close up shot is an effective approach to express strong emotion or crisis in audio programmes. Here is an example. Episode 6 Season 1 in *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006) tells the story of how a family in

decline tries to steal back a piece of their precious heritage from the people who bought it. This family wants to steal it back secretly. Consequently, a lot of strange things happen in this hotel, such as blood appearing in the bathtub or a female guest going missing, before the staff find out the truth. Therefore, the whole episode is surrounded by mystery and a strange atmosphere. At the beginning of this episode, at around 00:52, the camera is moving at a regular speed towards the hotel corridor. Then it takes a left turn and keeps moving towards the front lift. At this time the moving speed is increased from normal to fast. Accompanied by a voice-over: “Hotels can be lonely places...And in the bowels of the hotel, places you'll never see, it can get really creepy...”. In addition, thrilling background music and fading colours in the corridor evoke a frightening atmosphere and set the tone for the whole episode as well as for the audience.

### **3.3.2 Perspective**

There are two main types of camera perspective, the horizontal angle (HP) and the vertical angle (VP). Baldry and Thibault (2006: 195) indicate that horizontal angles refer to the degree of participation or empathy with the characters in the depicted world. They identify two main kinds of horizontal angles, namely direct and oblique. Baldry and Thibault (2006: 195) further state that vertical perspective refers to the relative power or status between the viewer and the depicted world. They classify this angle into three kinds: high, median and low. To be more precise, when the viewer looks from a high point to a lower depicted world, it might indicate that the viewer is of a relatively higher status or has more power than other participants in the depicted world. When the viewer looks at the same level as the depicted world, it might indicate that the viewer is of relatively equal status to the participants who are shown in the depicted world. Lastly, when the viewer looks from a lower to a higher depicted world, it might indicate that the viewer is of a relatively lower status than the participants who are in the depicted world.

### **3.3.3 Distance and visual effect**

Baldry and Thibault (2006: 197) state that distance (D) which is used in Multimodal Transcription cannot be treated simply as an objective property of the

physical world. It also cannot be treated just as a matter of individual perception.

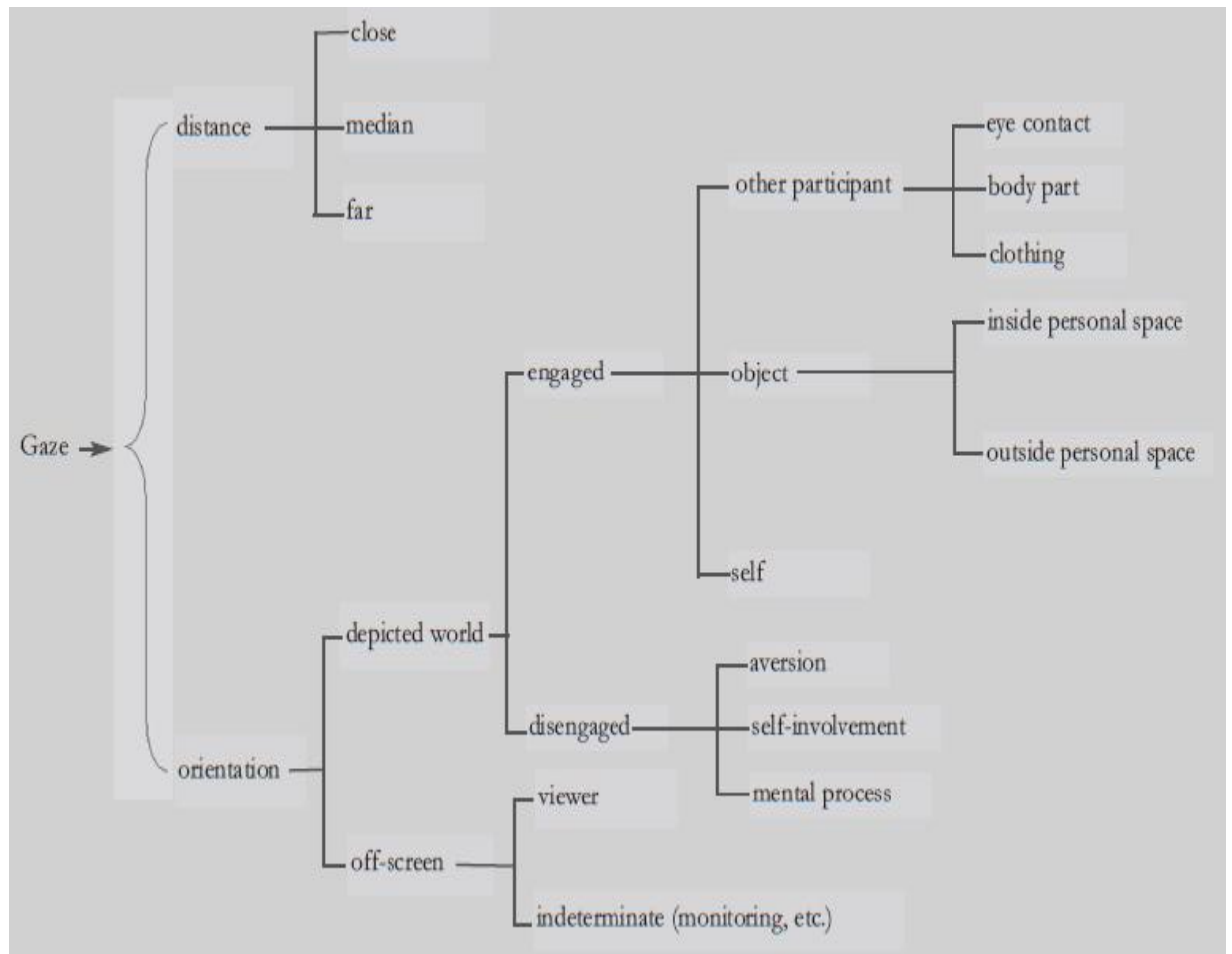


Figure 22. System network of basic options for gaze in video texts (Baldry and Thibault 2006: 196)

Kress and van Leeuwen (1996: 90) emphasise that distance is a kind of approach which can be used as meaningful creation material. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996: 130) further indicate that the distance, from close to far, which exists between the speaker and the hearer can be used to reflect the degree of intimacy in their relationship. This comes from and is also similar to the existence of the distance maintained between the viewer and the participant in their daily action according to their closeness degree, which is called ‘proxemics’ by Hall (1969). Further, Kress and van Leeuwen (1996: 131) state that proxemics is performed in correspondence with the size of frame in audiovisual programmes, such as film or television dramas. Baldry and Thibault (2006: 39) suggest that the varying degrees of social distance between interlocutors can be reflected through various kinds of camera distance. To be more precise, Machin (2007:116) indicates that close shot is a useful instrument to indicate a close relationship between the speaker and the hearer. To the contrary,



applying a long shot is an effective approach to represent a lacking intimacy relationship between the participants on the screen. The producer will use distance to achieve a specific purpose when producing an audiovisual programme. To be more precise, Kress and van Leeuwen (1996: 132) describe an imaginary relation being transmitted through the distance between the person shown in the production and the viewer. In this case, if an image is shown in a close shot, even if the person in the picture is a stranger to the viewer, it attempts to create a close relationship between the two. To the contrary, if an image is shown in a long shot, even if the person in the picture is a close relative or even the viewer him/herself, it attempts to produce a distant relationship between the person in the production and the viewer. Furthermore, camera distance provides more than one function to indicate social relationships among people in audiovisual programmes. More specifically, Machin (2007: 116) explains that a close shot sometimes is used for the purpose of increasing certain feelings among the audience, such as fear or calm. In example 2 of 4.2.1.1, several close shots are shown that focus on two separate groups of people, with other staff in one and Gino in the other, which construct different feelings within these two groups while they are listening to Tony tell them about a murder which happened in another hotel. The other staff can be seen frowning, shaking their heads or looking nauseous in the close shot to show their fears about this murder. At the same time, Gino is just focusing on enjoying his Bolognese. Even though Tony tries to scare Gino by describing in detail the victims losing their intestines, thus making a connection between Gino's food and his murder story, Gino still calmly carries on eating his food.

Baldry and Thibault present a scale of transcription conventions which can be used to divide the intimacy of the relationship between the speaker and the hearer from maximally close to maximally distant as follows:

MAXIMALLY CLOSE

VCS = *Very close shot* (less than head and shoulders);

CS = *Close shot* (head and shoulders);

MCS = *Medium close shot* (human figure cut off at waist);

MLS = *Medium long shot* (full length of human figure);

LS = *Long shot* (human figure occupies approximately half the height of the image);

VLS = *Very long shot* (the distance is even greater);

MAXIMALLY DISTANT (Baldry and Thibault 2006: 197)

This classification of the camera distance will be used later in the analysis and discussion chapter. The use of these abbreviations to represent different camera distances in the Multimodal Transcription framework could help translators and readers to observe the use of different camera distances in audiovisual programmes and to figure out the answers to the following two questions. First, what kind of influences can be created through using different camera distances in audiovisual programmes? Second, will the clues created by different camera distances have any influence on the subtitling?

### **3.3.8 The soundtrack**

Baldry and Thibault (2006: 209) identify speech, music and other sounds as three essential elements in the soundtrack that have their own features and combine together to make a contribution to the ultimate soundtrack in audiovisual text. In that case, they suggest that it is better to transcribe these three elements in a unified way rather than to divide them respectively (Baldry and Thibault 2006: 210). Furthermore, they (2006: 214) indicate that music, speech and movement can be performed simultaneously. Therefore, the display and interplay of various elements become increasingly important in the whole multimodality of audiovisual text. In consequence, it becomes essential to present whole meaningful units, which are constructed by various elements in a multimodal audiovisual text, together in the transcription. They (2006: 211) further state that according to the term 'coarticulation', it should be noticed that sometimes there might be more than one sound happening at one time. In that case, a dialogic relationship might be constructed for the listener though the display and interaction among various sounds which occur at the same time. To be more precise, voice dynamics refer to the various voice choices which offer more selections to the character. In that case, the character's choice of voice will depend on either physical or psychological statements under the consideration of the specific context, discourse genre and so on (Baldry and Thibault 2006: 222). Also, an appropriate use of the voice is key to helping actors to construct a unique character and express their personality smoothly. This is because the proper voice can enable the audience to get involved in exploring the plot and making spontaneous inferences from relevant information. Sapir (1949: 536) says that the voice can be used to provide useful information relating to the

speaking person, such as showing the personality of the character. Considering the importance of the voice, Kozloff (2000:91) points out that having the right voice is one of the essential standards when casting an actor for a character role. When considering the specific standards for a suitable voice, Kozloff (2000: 93-95) indicates that the speaking speed, speaking volume and the intonation of the speech become useful parameters. An actor can express the emotions or construct the personality of a character by controlling his or her own voice. Thus, it can be seen that actors are trained to use their voice precisely so they can control the nuance according to the specific situation during their performance. Both shouting and whispering are useful instruments to draw the audience's attention so the necessary information can be expressed by the performance. Suddenly increasing or decreasing the speaking volume is a direct approach to show the emotion flowing through the specific stimulation during the conversation, such as in examples 2 and 7 of 4.1.1. In these two examples, the speaking speed and speaking volume from the same person change quite differently during the conversation, so these can be used to attract more attention from the audience to figure out what and why this is happening during the conversation. Baldry and Thibault offer a classification and notation of various sounds which can be used to retrieve them in the soundtrack, as shown in Figure 23.

1	[♫]	= instrumental music (e.g. Row 2, Column 5)
2	[♫ ♀]	= female soloist (e.g. Row 17, Column 5)
3	[♫ ♂]	= male soloist (not attested here)
4	[♫ ♀ chorus]	= female chorus (e.g. Row 16, Column 5)
5	[♫ ♂ chorus]	= male chorus (not attested here)
6	[☉ ♀]	= female speaker (not attested here)
7	[☉ ♂]	= male speaker (e.g. Row 31, Column 5)
8	[±]	= source of spoken voice off-screen, not shown in depicted world (e.g. Row 31, Column 5 ff); the symbol is used at the start and end of the sequence, in this case Row 31 and Row 57, respectively
9	[☀ sheep]	= other non-speech or non-musical sounds, including silence, followed by a brief verbal specification of the specific sound: in the present example, the sun symbol followed by the word 'sheep' designates the (non-linguistic/ non-musical) sounds of the sheep, as in e.g. Row 2, Column 5
10	[☀ silence]	= silence other than rhythmic pause or juncture in speech and/or music (e.g. Row 1, Column 5)
11	↓	= continuation of previous, as for example when sung or spoken text is stretched over more than one <i>visual frame</i> or <i>shot</i> (e.g. Row 3, Column 3 and Column 5). As the example here shows, this notational symbol is not specific to the soundtrack and is used in other columns. In all cases, it has the same significance

Figure 23. Notational conventions used in the transcription of the soundtrack (Baldry and Thibault 2006: 215)

Baldry and Thibault point out several elements related with the soundtrack which can produce effects on a whole text, such as rhythm, loudness, tempo, and so on. Moreover, they further divide these various elements into various degrees in their Multimodal Transcription. To take loudness as an example, they (2006: 217) state that as an essential approach used to create characteristics of one speaker, the character manipulates his/her loudness degree during their performance. They (2006: 218) further divide loudness into five degrees in their Multimodal Transcription, namely (pp) = very soft; (p) = soft; (n) = normal; (f) = loud; (ff) = very loud. Tempo, as one of other elements in the soundtrack, refers to the rate of a successive syllable (Baldry and Thibault 2006: 219). Tempo, as manipulated by characters during their speech, can be used as one reference according to a specific purpose which characters need to achieve or under the specific context. They classify tempo into slow (S), median (M) and fast (F). In Multimodal Transcription, the pause and continuity of music, sound as well as speech, can also be considered. Baldry and Thibault further divide the function of pause, which is presented as (#) in

Multimodal Transcription, in two main ways, either as a signal of ending or a signal of open-endedness. They (2006: 220) state that during the performance, a pause could be a normal breathing break or it also could be applied when the music or speech ends by using a decreasing melody, which is presented as (/). To the opposite, instead of being a sign of an ending, the pause also can be used to indicate open-endedness by using an increasing melody, which is presented as (\). As a signal of open-endedness, pause is used as a sign of attempting to continue. For some sounds which happen simultaneously, the overlaps of these sound will be marked as [SI] in the transcription.

In an audiovisual programme, the soundtrack includes speech, music and other kinds of sound effects. Desilla (2012: 37) stresses that there is no equality of status among the various sounds. In that case, those which are important could take the central status, while others, which are less important, could be background sounds. Regarding the different statuses of sound, van Leeuwen (1999: 23) suggests that there are three kinds of sound status, namely figure, ground and field. Figure refers to the most essential sound in the social world of the listener. This kind of sound must be recognised by the listener for his/her following reaction. Ground refers also to the kind of sounds belonging to the social world of the listener, although these are less important. Field refers to sounds that are not involved in the social world of the listener but occur at the physical level, to construct the general soundscape of the listener.

Baldry and Thibault (2006: 221) indicate that using a register for manipulating the soundtrack is an effective approach when considering the specific purposes which the audiovisual text needs to achieve, such as tension, anger, relaxing the tension, and so on. They divide the soundtrack according to upper, middle and lower registers. They (2006: 222) further state that changing the register is an effective approach to enable speakers to perform fluctuations of their mood during their speech.

Pérez-González (2014: 295) highlights that the value of the Multimodal Transcription analysis approach lies in its attempt to clarify how these various semiotic modes work together to produce meaning instead of being separated in an audiovisual text. In recent decades, other researchers have applied this approach to the analysis of translations of audiovisual programmes. For example, Taylor (2003;

2004) proposed a modified version of the original approach for analysis of the translated text of audiovisual programmes to help the translator make decisions on which strategy to use during their translation. Taylor (2013: 102) also conducted research to investigate how the combination of various semiotic elements in a multimodal text, including the spoken language, can express the meaning more concretely and clearly compared with just relying on the spoken language. In other words, it may be more effective for the translator to express the essential meaning through the integration of semiotic elements and verbal language, and flexibility is therefore required in terms of considering the specific situation during translation. Secondly, Taylor (2013: 101-102) argues that such flexibility extends to considering details within a specific category according to the specific requirements during the process of analysis. Therefore, other researchers have more options for adapting this analysis approach during their own research (Szarkowska 2010; Taylor 2013). However, as will be discussed in the following paragraph in relation to disadvantages of this approach, it can be hard to apply the appropriate degree of flexibility at this stage. On the other hand, it provides an opportunity for translators or researchers to make their analysis or research purpose more specific and to add clarity to their work, as well as to propose further suggestions for enhancing applications of this Multimodal Transcription analysis.

Nevertheless, Multimodal Transcription presents disadvantages which need also to be addressed. As Bogucki (2013: 100) indicates, Multimodal Transcription was first considered through the analysis of advertisements. Although the advertisement normally does not last much time when it is displayed, the analysis examples which are chosen by Baldry and Thibault (2006) already occupy pages in terms of Multimodal Transcription. Therefore, when considering other kinds of audiovisual programmes, such as hours long films or television dramas, this method seems too complicated to apply. Taylor (2013: 102) indeed claims that it is hard to keep to the original frame by frame time scale proposed by Thibault (2000) for audiovisual programmes which are displayed over a longer time period than a short advertisement. However, in this research, the conversations collected from television drama will not take up too much time. Therefore, adopting Multimodal Transcription in the conversation analysis of this research does not seem to present a serious problem. Moreover, Szarkowska (2010: 79) points out that the factors considered in

this method are too complicated to be applied to longer audiovisual programmes. Taylor (2013: 101-102) also mentions that the meticulous and detailed division into different modes reflects that the standard form of selection of elements for analysis is vague and unstable. Nevertheless, it should be noticed that these further division elements in the main elements allow a clearer vision of how various elements are displayed and integrated with each other in one conversation to express politeness and/or humour through the performance of characters. Therefore, Multimodal Transcription is a proper instrument for adoption in the analysis in this research.

### **3.3.4 Visual collocation**

In audiovisual programmes, it can be seen from the screen that the main elements combine with other additional elements in the display on the screen, which can be termed visual collocation (VC). Baldry and Thibault (2006: 198) indicate that visual collocation refers to the secondary items which are provided to accompany the participant's status. Visual collocation creates the background to stress the participant's status. Furthermore, the creation of meaning not only depends on the performance of the main participant but also the combination of secondary items which are included in the visual collocation.

### **3.3.5 Visual salience**

Baldry and Thibault (2006: 199) state that visual salience (VS) refers to items which demonstrate higher status compared to other additional items in visual text. They indicate that compared with other additional items which exist in the background, salient objects normally take up a smaller portion of the whole visual product. They further point out that salient objects are normally separated from visual text according to elements of solidity and colour.

### **3.3.6 Visual focus or gaze of participants**

Baldry and Thibault (2006: 200) indicate that visual focus (VF) refers to whether the look from participants to the viewers is direct or not. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996: 122) state that the connection between the viewer and the participants can take the form of eye contact between them, which can be seen through the eyelines. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996: 122) also point out that direct eye contact is a clear approach to produce a visual form of direct address. To be more precise, visual focus is an effective approach to use to construct interaction between the participant and the view if it is a direct look. In contrast, if there is no direct look from the

participant to the view, then there is less interaction or communication between them (Machin 2007: 110). Moreover, Goffman (1985: 62) indicates that cutting off the eye contact can be seen as a reasonable sign of stopping the conversation. Baldry and Thibault (2006: 201) further point out that visual focus can be used to construct a gaze vector from a given participant to another participant, which is also used to represent the degree of solidarity between them. At the same time, distance is another essential element which is used to combine with visual focus sometimes to indicate the interplay between the participants.

### **3.3.7 Kinesic action**

Baldry and Thibault (2006: 202) indicate that people's choice of movements depends on the perceptual laws according to a specific social circumstance. They further point out that the movements carried out by the characters in the depicted world interact with camera movements which are similar to the head-body movements of the viewer. They emphasise that movement, as a meaning creation material, is connected with other semiotic elements in visual text, and cannot come alive without exquisite transcribing. Movement can be used to connect the performers and the participants through initiating movement or reactive movement. In other words, body language can be used as a supplementary element to enable the speaker's idea to be expressed more directly and vividly to the hearer. Moreover, by observing the hearer's body language, the speaker might decide to talk a bit more on the topic if the hearer appears to be paying attention or might change to another topic if the hearer appears uninterested.

Baldry and Thibault (2006: 203) point out that there are two elements which are related with the construction of the construction of movement syntagms. One of these elements is the ecosocial environment from which the movement is initiated. The other one is the spatial deployment of the body and/or the body parts which is included in the production of the movement. Movement is therefore an essential approach in producing interpersonal meaning, through the combination with other agents, such as human and non-human, to affect the conversation according to a specific circumstance (Baldry and Thibault 2006: 206).

Kozloff (2000: 95-96) indicates that various kinds of body language, such as facial expressions, hand gestures from the characters, offer clues relating to the speech for their audiences to infer. To be more precise, sometimes facial expressions are used



as reinforcement to support the content being spoken at the same time by the characters. On the other hand, sometimes a character may exhibit a facial expression that indicates the opposite meaning to the words used in the conversation, such as showing an expression that reflects a struggle with feelings which is inconsistent with the conversation content. In addition, some aspects of body language which exist in the source language audiovisual programme are related with the culture of the source language audience. For example, in British culture, people knock on wood when they mention something that could cause them bad luck. By doing this, they want to send away the bad luck. In China, when people say something could cause them bad luck, they will say '*pei pei pei*' to cancel what they said before and drive away bad luck.

Body language offers clues to the audience in many different ways according to the above example analysis. Firstly, some forms of body language set the basic tone of the context for the whole conversation when they are used at the start. To be more precise, by following the clues offered by body language at the very beginning of the conversation, the audience could infer whether the following conversation will be continued in a friendly or serious environment. Thus, in example 3 of 4.1.1, Mr. Balanovsky offers Charlie a seat by using his left hand to point the seat and taking one step back to allow Charlie to pass him to reach the seat before he asks Charlie anything in their conversation. Mr. Balanovsky uses these friendly body language gestures to establish a friendly environment in order to get information from Charlie about his daughter's fiancé later in the conversation, which also shows his concern about his daughter's happiness. Secondly, body language can be used during speech for such reasons as emphasising certain information as in example 1 of 4.1.1. Mrs. Radley uses her index finger to point in the air while she repeats 'Mrs, Mrs Radley'. By doing this, she implicitly stresses the mistake made by Rebecca (hotel manager), who thinks she is not really Mr. Radley's wife. This body language is thus used to draw the attention of the audience for the purpose of sending some information for them to infer. Thirdly, body language can be used for specific reasons such as creating a humorous effect as in example 6 of 4.1.1. In this conversation, Anna is taking care of a teenage violinist in their hotel. She wants to leave the impression on this teenage violinist that she is a fun person to be with. She takes the bow from this violinist and uses it as a baton to point to the bed to instruct the violinist to sit down

on her bed to have a rest. These movements increase the entertainment while she is giving the order to the violinist. When address terms are used for creating humour, especially in combination with specific body language, it attracts attention from the audience and helps them to notice and infer the humorous effect during the conversation. This kind of body language also draws the attention of target language audiences. Therefore, translators are presented with the challenge of having to decide whether the same clues are operative in their lingua-culture and, if not, how to create new clues. Next, sometimes body language is used as an implicit clue, which engages the interest of the audience to look for an answer in the later part of the audiovisual programme. For example, after finishing the conversation in example 13 of 4.1.1, Rebecca shows her dissatisfaction and doubt about the ability of James to run the hotel restaurant, due to the low number of bookings in the hotel restaurant that night. However, after she has left, James and Tony look at each other and smile. This arouses the anticipation of the audience regarding what will happen later (the hotel staff are working together to keep the restaurant empty on purpose so they can hold a special anniversary dinner for Rebecca and her husband as a surprise gift to Rebecca). From the above different types of body language analysis, it can be seen that body language is an important element in constructing the cognitive context for the source language audience, so the audience can make inferences from the environment of the conversation. This could raise a challenge for translators since some body language gestures may not exist or may even mean the opposite thing in the target language culture. Last but not least, some body language produces important effects on interpersonal modification. Movement is a useful instrument for showing the emotion or attitude of the character through the performance. For example, in Episode 3 Season 1 *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006), Alexis, who is working in this hotel washing dishes, is hired by Charlie and Tony to pretend to be the fiancé of one of their guests, Natasha, and to meet his future ‘father-in-law’ Mr. Balanovsky. The first time that he sees his future ‘father-in-law’, Alexis takes the initiative by stretching out his hand, wanting to grab the hands of his future ‘father-in-law’ to say hi. It can be seen that his own hands cannot stop shaking. However, Mr. Balanovsky does not grab Alexis’s hand. Instead, in a serious way, he asks Alexis to sit down. After that, Alexis puts his hand down immediately. Through these movements performed by the characters, the differences in attitude between these two characters are shown. Alexis is nervous and wants to leave a good

impression on Mr. Balanovsky. Also, he obeys the order from Mr. Balanovsky in deference. To the contrary, Mr. Balanovsky is indifferent and does not like this future 'son-in-law' very much. These movements construct an obvious comparison with later movements from these characters when Alexis completes the fake wedding with Natasha. Alexis proposes a toast to Mr. Balanovsky to thank him for providing a luxury wedding for Natasha and him. He holds up a glass of wine and nods his head casually towards Mr. Balanovsky. And as a response, Mr. Balanovsky holds up a glass of wine and raises the glass a little bit towards Alexis as a reluctant gesture of accepting the toast. At the same time, instead of looking at Alexis directly, Mr. Balanovsky just turns his eye view to the side of Alexis. Through performance of this series of movements, the changing attitudes of these two characters can be seen. Alexis feels relaxed as well as compliant. To the contrary, while the attitude of Mr. Balanovsky softens, he still does not like Alexis very much. Through their movement performance the changes in Alexis's and Mr. Balanovsky's attitudes are made obvious.

### **3.4 Multimodal Transcription framework in this research**

As discussed in the previous section, Multimodal Transcription, as proposed by Baldry and Thibault (2006), incorporates various elements which exist in multimodal texts to create meaning in the final product through comprehensive integration of the various semiotic elements. Though some researchers criticise this approach for being too complicated to be applied to the analysis of longer programmes such as film or television drama, the detailed divisions into main elements in this transcription method enable a close look at the various elements in audiovisual programmes and how they work in the producing of audiovisual text. Therefore, this research will adopt this Multimodal Transcription method in the analysis process. To avoid bringing too much complicated detail into the transcription, elements which produce functions in this television drama will be selected and described in tabular form. Furthermore, since this transcription method is not designed specifically for analysing subtitles translation, two adaptations will be made to suit the framework of this research. First, English transcripts will be included under the soundtrack column. Second, a column needs to be added to the table for the inclusion of Chinese subtitles and back translation. The examples chosen for the analysis and discussion in Chapter 4 needed to satisfy these two standards. Firstly, one or more than one

multimodal element is being used to show one or more than one relatively strong stimulus in each chosen example. This is because this research focuses on the influence between verbal elements and other multimodal elements in the process of meaning expression in audiovisual programmes. In that case, the modified Multimodal Transcription framework could be a convenient and efficient method to enable translators to pick out the multimodal elements which are used to offer stimuli in people's conversation. After this step, translators can move on to figure out whether or not the stimuli which are offered by multimodal elements could influence verbal elements in the expression of politeness and humour. As a result, it could help translators to observe the influences between verbal elements and other multimodal elements involved in expressing politeness and humour in the process of translation. Furthermore, focusing on the stimuli offered by multimodal elements from this framework could help translators to figure out the multimodal elements which are used to offer stimuli during the conversation. Hence, translators could take the specific cognitive context from the target language audience into consideration in the translation process to see whether these stimuli which are offered by multimodal elements in source text could offer the same stimuli to their target language audiences. Then translators could make the related modification decisions required in the process of translation to reach a relatively high degree of interpretive resemblance between source text and target text. Secondly, the chosen examples would need to be dispersed into four categories as we mentioned in section 2.3.3 of Chapter 2. Accordingly, this research attempts to figure out the influences from differences in social status and social distance in the process of expression of politeness and humour. The pragmatic use of politeness and humour serves different purposes in different conversation contexts. Therefore, to make sure the conversations work in audiovisual programmes, characters need to choose different verbal elements and other multimodal elements, such as body language, to offer stimuli, so their audiences can infer the relevant information from the programme.

Table 1 below is a sample of the framework which will be adopted in the analysis chapter in this research.

Number & Time	Visual Frame	Visual Image	Kinesic Action	Soundtrack	Chinese Subtitle & Back translation
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Table 1. Modified Multimodal Transcription framework for analysis of examples in this research

Column 1 is used to record the number of the sequence, which enables the details of the conversation to be identified in the later analysis and discussion chapter. The times of the beginning and ending of the conversation are also noted in this column, which provides a convenient time index for tracking related conversation clips back to the *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006) DVD.

Column 2 is the frame column, for inputting the selected screen shots used to represent the scenes during the conversation, in sequence. Each one of these scenes will contain at least one sentence which is spoken during the conversation. The chosen screen shots in this column do not have to be taken from the lean-in time of the speaking sentence. Most of the screen shots used to represent the related scenes selected for this column are chosen to represent specific stimuli for information expression, such as facial expressions. In this way the scene is attempting to show more information than that expressed merely by verbal expression during the conversation. It is a relatively direct approach used to show more information to the readers that will help them to understand the framework and the conversation. However, one screen shot can hardly contain all the information which has been transmitted during the conversation. Furthermore, presenting too many screen shots may overcomplicate the process required to understand the conversation. That being the case, the following columns 3, 4 and 5, contain supplementary information to support this column in order to help readers to get more information about what is happening during the sentence speaking.

Next, column 3 contains various elements which are related to the visual image. Five main elements are included in this column: camera position (CP), camera distance (D), visual collocations (VC), camera perspective (HP), and visual focus or gaze of participants (VF). As has been discussed in the above sections 3.2 and 3.3, these five elements were chosen since they contribute greatly to the interpretation of audiovisual text. However, these are not the only elements which will affect the interpretation of the conversation. Therefore, other elements that may occur that are related with the conversation description will also be described in this column. This column could help in conducting deeper analysis of some specific information; for

example, the power difference between the interlocutors could be shown through camera position or distance. However, some expressions which can be seen through a visual image, such as facial expression, will not be included in this column. They will be saved for the next column.

Column 4 records kinesic actions and includes information on body movements, facial changes and other related actions for consideration in interpretation of the original conversation. Information on kinesic actions could be used in combination with the verbal information from the conversation to assist the interpretation of the audiovisual text as a whole.

Column 5 includes the soundtrack during the selected conversations. The further division elements, which have already been introduced in the last section, and which relate to the soundtrack, will be noted in this column, such as the degree of loudness. The original conversation will be recorded in this column as well. Columns 3 to 5 include as much detail as necessary from the conversation. Furthermore, these three columns contain as much exploration of the multimodal elements as necessary for the interpretation of the whole conversation. Exploration by means of these three columns is intended to provide readers with the relevant elements as well as the necessary stimuli for the interpretation of the conversation without watching the audiovisual programmes. From these three columns, it can be seen that expression of information during the conversation does not rely only on the verbal expression, since integration of other elements is required for its interpretation. However, in a cognitive environment, it is impossible to assume that interpretation takes only one form, considering the enormous variety of audiences and situational contexts. Therefore, these columns offer as much relevant detail as possible. This in turn will assist in the following analysis of what underlies the relevant elements of interpretation of the conversation and exploration of the interplay among these elements.

Lastly, column 6 includes the translated subtitles as well as the back translations. These last two columns are used to show the translated subtitles and whether they are the same as or different from the original conversation. In showing how the different elements are involved and integrated with each other, this table is intended to demonstrate how these various elements are clarified to the readers.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

In conclusion, this chapter focused on the research methodology to be used for analysis of the proposed corpus. Audiovisual programmes, specifically in terms of subtitling, create immense challenges for translators. Translators should consider both verbal and non-verbal elements during their audiovisual translation. As research on audiovisual programmes is expanding, so is the need to understand how meaning is created through the combination and interplay of a wide range of elements. Multimodal Theory thus offers an appropriate methodology for considering the combination and integration of the various elements which exist in audiovisual programmes (Thibault 2000; Taylor 2003, 2004, 2009, 2013, 2018, 2020; O' Halloran 2004; Baldry and Thibault 2006; Gambier 2006; Machin 2007; Szarkowska 2010; Bogucki 2013; Pérez-González 2014; Bruti 2015, 2016; Remael and Reviere 2019). Derived from Multimodal Theory, Multimodal Transcription offers further division of the main elements. This further division helps researchers to uncover more details during their research on audiovisual programmes and will therefore be useful, with some modifications, for subtitling analysis in the current research. Multimodal Transcription can be used to clarify four core modes, namely image, language, sound and music, and their sub-modes, which exist in the original conversation. By deconstructing the various semiotic modes generically, the Multimodal Transcription framework not merely allows extraction of various parallel modes but also construction of a synthetic complex form which cannot be provided from the individual parts alone (Baldry and Thibault 2006: 18). In addition, using the Multimodal Transcription framework can help the reader to acquire more details of how various semiotic modes interplay with each other for various purposes (Taylor 2003: 194; Taylor 2004: 161; Bogucki 2013: 100), such as creating politeness and humour. The various elements displayed are presumed to be of optimal relevance for the inference of audiences of audiovisual programmes, through enabling them to use ostensive stimuli to infer the necessary information without any unnecessary effort, as an ostensive-inferential communication between audiovisual programme and audience (Sperber and Wilson 1986: 50-54). Hence, the stimuli represented through Multimodal Transcription, both from the verbal element and other multimodal elements, are being used to display the communicative intention and informative intention (Sperber and Wilson 1986: 54-64) through the audiovisual programme in an organised framework. The modified Multimodal Transcription

framework in this study exhibits in detail the related multimodal elements and verbal elements from the chosen examples, which will be presented in the appendix. However, some of these will be selected for use in the next chapter as representations of the modified Multimodal Transcription framework to help translators to organise the different elements in a systematic way.

This modified Multimodal Transcription framework can then be used by translators as a supplementary framework to identify the stimuli which are offered both by verbal elements and multimodal elements in audiovisual programmes. Subsequently, Relevance Theory, as a pragmatic approach used in the further analysis of subtitling examples, is instrumental in emphasising how politeness and humour perform their functions in the original conversation. Relevance Theory was first adopted as a translation theory by Gutt (1998), though only focused being discussed in literary translation. In terms of this thesis, the pragmatic use of politeness and humour is not only being expressed by interlocutors' conversation, but also through the cooperation with other multimodal elements which are represented in audiovisual programmes. However, the connotation meaning which is provided by these various elements could cause obstacles for inference by the target language audience due to culture differences (Yus 2016: 238). In that case, instead of only focusing on solving problems from the linguistic aspect, the adapted Multimodal Transcription framework applied in this thesis exploits the stimuli which are provided through the combination of verbal elements and related multimodal elements in terms of Relevance Theory as an integrated text specifically designed for the purpose of pragmatic translation of politeness and humour in audiovisual programmes. Although some studies have attempted to adopt Multimodal Transcription into audiovisual translation (Taylor 2003, 2004, 2009, 2013, 2018, 2020), very few have combined these two theories in the study of audiovisual translation. In consequence, it is proposed that the combination of these two theories in this thesis will fill this research gap through exploring interlingual communication in multimodal text, specifically in subtitling of audiovisual programmes from English to Chinese. Although there are relatively strict temporal and spatial limitations on audiovisual programme translation, translators should consider how the influence created from the existing multimodal elements is transferred to the translated text in the expression of pragmatic use of politeness and humour in the



process of subtitles translation from English to Chinese. The next chapter, Chapter 4, will analyse and discuss the chosen examples which contain the pragmatic use of politeness and humour from a British television drama *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006) through the combination of the modified Multimodal Transcription framework and Relevance Theory.

## Chapter 4. Analysis and Discussion

The aim of this research is to analyse the translation of politeness and the translation of humour, with a special focus on uses of humour to express politeness, from English to Chinese in audiovisual programmes. In Chapter 2, the importance of using Relevance Theory in the study of these uses of translation has been underlined. As noted, the use of Relevance Theory as a tool in Audiovisual Translation analysis is in a relatively early stage and has mostly attracted research interest in the past two decades. Relevance Theory stresses the importance of the broader cognitive context in any linguistic exchange. In audiovisual programmes, audiences need to infer a great deal of information while they are watching the programme to follow the development of the story. The information in audiovisual programmes is not only provided by characters' conversation, but also from other multimodal elements as discussed in Chapter 3. In an ideal translation environment, the Multimodal Transcription framework, which displays the various multimodal elements present in an audiovisual programme in a systematic way, could be used by translators to figure out the relevant stimuli which are offered by multimodal elements in source text. At the same time, whether these stimuli can be used to provide similar stimuli in target text should also be considered by the translator. Based on this logic, in this chapter a combination of Relevance Theory and Multimodal Transcription will be used in order to analyse and discuss the translation of politeness, humour, and the use of humour to express politeness, in a selection of 51 examples drawn from eight episodes of Season 1 of the British television drama *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006).

The chosen examples which are analysed using a Multimodal Transcription framework are included in the Appendix. To have included these examples in full within the body of the thesis would have exceeded the word limit of this thesis. However, the most representative examples will be selected and discussed in this chapter. The examples related with the translation of address terms and humour are divided into four subsections:

- equal non-intimate dyads address terms
- unequal intimate dyad address terms: superordinate to subordinate
- unequal intimate dyads address terms: subordinate to superordinate
- equal intimate dyads address terms

The division relates to the consideration of two important elements relating to the pragmatic use of politeness, which are social distance and difference of social status between the speaker and the hearer, which this thesis has discussed in section 2.3.3 of Chapter 2. The social distance and difference in social status will also affect the expression of humour to some extent.

This chapter contains three main sections. Section 4.1 focuses on the analysis and discussion of the examples of address terms. In section 4.2, the analysis and discussion concentrate on the examples of humour including examples where humour is used to express politeness. Both these sections will explore the influences between verbal elements and other multimodal elements. Section 4.3 will provide the conclusion of this chapter.

#### **4.1 Data analysis and discussion of address terms translation**

This section will analyse and discuss 37 examples related to the translation of address terms during the dialogue between the *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006) characters. Section 4.1 is divided into four parts according to the differences of social distance and social status between the speaker and the hearer.

In subsection 4.1.1, 15 examples related to the translation of equal non-intimate dyads in address terms will be analysed in three subsections. In this section, the main conversations are between hotel guests and hotel staff, and reflect the differences in social status and social distance between the two. First, in subsection 4.1.1.1, the single multimodal elements which are used to offer stimuli related to the chosen address terms will be introduced one by one according to their frequency in the chosen examples. The multimodal elements which have been selected for analysis in this section offer stimuli which are related to the inference of further information through the cooperation with verbal elements in the examples. There are three main reasons to extract these multimodal elements and deal with them in this section before conducting the analysis of the whole conversation in section 4.1.1.3. Firstly, bringing together all the multimodal elements which offer different degrees of stimuli through the conversation could provide a general view to anticipate how frequently multimodal elements are being used to provide stimuli to make it worth the effort for their audience to infer further information in terms of politeness in audiovisual programmes. Secondly, by showing what kinds of stimuli are offered by these multimodal elements during the conversation, the study attempts to stress the

importance of the effect on the information inference through these stimuli in source language text in the processing of expressing politeness between the interlocutors. Last but not least, it could assist in constructing a direct comparison with the content in the later section 4.1.1.3. To be more precise, the stimuli which are provided through non-verbal elements in the source text might not be inferred in the same way in the target language text between source language audience and target language audience due to their different cultural backgrounds. Comparing the stimuli which are provided through the same non-verbal elements in both source language text and target language text could help translators figure out the essential effects which are provided by these non-verbal elements on the related verbal elements in terms of politeness expression and which might be different in the source language text and target language text. Employing that strategy could help translators to attend to making proper adjustments to subtitles based on the stimuli which are provided by the existing non-verbal elements in terms of politeness inference to their target language audiences. Next, in subsection 4.1.1.2, the translation strategies which are used in these examples will be summarised. In subsection 4.1.1.3, the 15 examples will be divided into three parts according to different stimuli which are provided by the chosen address terms in the source language text, namely address terms that are neutral, address terms containing dislike and address terms creating a humorous effect. By dividing the use of address terms into different groups, this study attempts to find out whether and how multimodal elements affect the chosen address terms and their translated version in the process of politeness expression in audiovisual programmes. A specific Multimodal Transcription framework will be selected and applied, as in subsection 4.1.1.3, so as to better visualise the effect of multimodal elements on the chosen address terms in the source text and their translation.

In the next two subsections, 4.1.2 and 4.1.3, seven and five address term examples will be considered, respectively. These two subsections will each be divided into two parts. In the first part, the single multimodal elements in the chosen examples will be listed according to frequency. The translation strategies which are adopted in these chosen examples will also be summarised at this point. The chosen address terms in these two sections are used in exchanges between the hotel manager and other staff and therefore constitute a cognitive context which it is necessary to understand in the process of translation.

Finally, in subsection 4.1.4, ten examples related with the translation of equal intimate dyads in address terms will be analysed and discussed in three subsections. This subsection will be structured similarly to subsection 4.1.1. The examples in this subsection mainly involve staff, who are close in social distance and have similar social status. Firstly, in subsection 4.1.4.1, the single multimodal elements which are used to offer stimuli related with the chosen address terms will be introduced one by one according to frequency in the chosen examples. At that point we intend to show the stimuli which are produced by these multimodal elements alone. By thus identifying these stimuli, translators could then make decisions as to whether they could offer similar stimuli to the target audience or not. Next, in subsection 4.1.4.2, translation strategies which are adopted from these chosen examples will be summarised. The aim here is again to show the effect of multimodal analysis on the choice of translation strategy during the process of translation. Lastly, in subsection 4.1.4.3, ten examples will be divided into three groups according to different stimuli in the source text, namely address terms used to reduce social distance, address terms used to create a sense of humour, and address terms used to attract the attention of the addressee. Here, the relationship between multimodal elements the translation of politeness as expressed through address terms will be explored.

#### **4.1.1 Equal non-intimate dyads in address terms**

##### *4.1.1.1 The functions of single multimodal elements in the audiovisual programme*

In subsection 4.1.1 of the Appendix, 21 address terms were analysed in 15 selected conversations. Among these 21 address terms, 13 are used by hotel guests and staff in conversations with each other. The other eight address terms are used among staff while they are talking about other hotel guests. Relationships between hotel guests and staff are not usually close. While hotel staff are providing their services to their guests, they have to be professional since they are working in one of the top starred hotels. Therefore, using the proper address term when the hotel staff are dealing with their guests is essential, no matter how trivial the exchange. During the analysis, it was seen that address terms are used according to specific situations and for various functions. Furthermore, in most of these examples, various multimodal elements are used in combination with the chosen address term during the conversation, enabling audiences to infer various information from the pragmatic

use of these address terms through the combination of verbal elements and other multimodal elements.

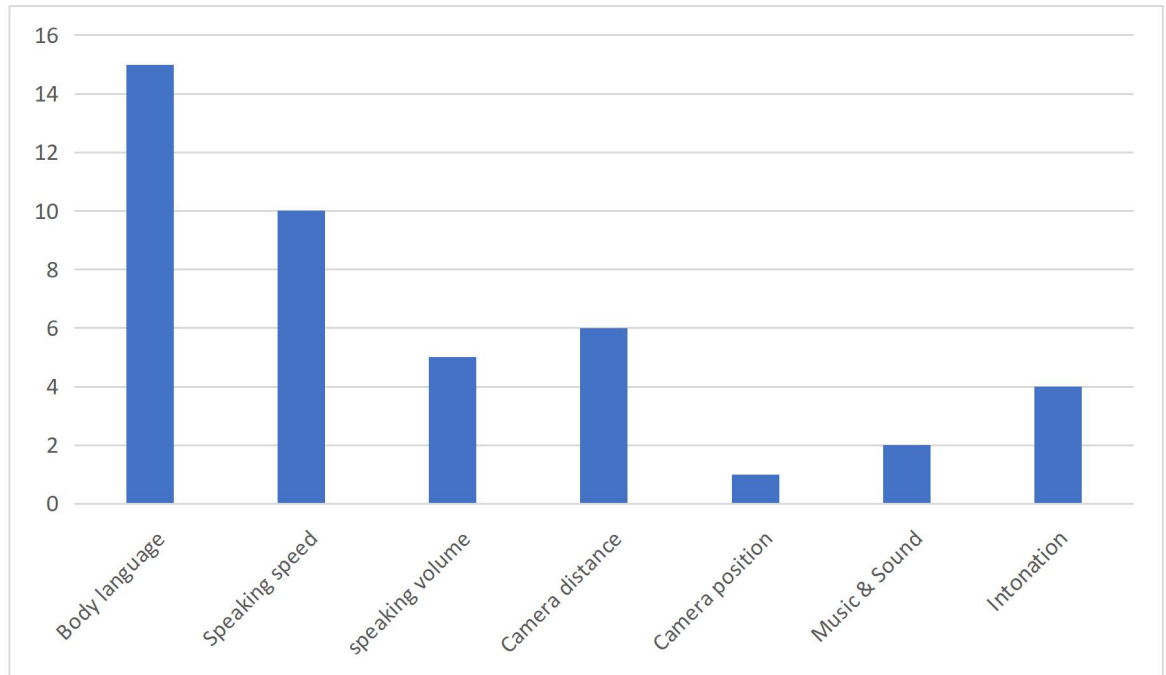


Figure 24. Multimodal elements in subsection 4.1.1 of the Appendix

As can be seen from this bar chart, seven elements are found to offer stimuli for information inference from address terms by the audience, including body language, speaking speed, speaking volume, camera distance, music and sound, and camera position, in decreasing order of frequency. Body language is the most frequently used element, and is used 15 times to offer information to the audience in combination with the chosen address term in the following examples in subsection 4.1.1 of the Appendix: 1 (Miss...; Mrs. Mrs. Radley), 2 (Vladimir Balanovsky's daughter), 3(my daughter), 4 (Mr. and Mrs. Cord; sunshine), 5 (her), 6(someone), 7 (Good old Sally; the ball crunching bitch), 8 (your daughter), 9 (sir), 10 (Sanctimonious shit; little man), 11 (Murderous scum) and 15 (you). Through the performances of the characters, body language becomes an essential instrument for offering information to the audience, being one of the direct performance sources shown on the screen.

The analysis indicates that in ten of the 15 instances body language is used to express attitude in the following examples: 1 (Miss), 2 (Vladimir Balanovsky's daughter), 4 (Mr. and Mrs. Cord; sunshine), 7 (Good old Sally; the ball crunching bitch), 9 (sir), 10 (Sanctimonious shit; little man), 11 (Murderous scum) and 15

(you). In row 2 of example 1 (Miss...), when Rebecca notices the tattoo on Mrs. Radley's back, she moves back a little bit, shrugs her shoulders, smiles and turns her head up a little bit to Tony. This body language shows that Rebecca feels satisfied about her observation. Also, she feels positive about her suspicions that Mrs. Radley is a prostitute, so she shows her positive attitude to Tony.

In example 2 (Vladimir Balanovsky's daughter), Charlie's cautious and negative attitude regarding helping one of their guests to lie to her father can be inferred from the following body language: he turns his head and looks around, shakes his head and leans his body toward Tony in row 5. Also, they are surrounded by other staff in the staff canteen and he does not want other people to hear their conversation due to its seriousness. In example 4 (Mr. and Mrs. Cord; sunshine), the interlocutors smile at each other to show their friendly attitude towards each other in rows 1 and 2. Furthermore, in row 2, Mr. Cord uses other body language, such as grabbing David's hand with both of his hands and patting David's shoulder, which shows he is trying to reduce the distance between himself and hotel staff.

In example 7 (Good old Sally), row 2, when Gino first hears the auditor is coming, he smiles, nods his head, sits comfortably to lean back on the back of the chair since he thinks that the coming auditor will be the nice one whom he knows well, which shows his positive and relaxed attitude. Next, in row 4 (the ball crunching bitch), when Gino hears the name of the actual auditor, who is well known for her extremely strict working attitude, he frowns, moves forward from the back of the chair, sits up straight on the front part of the chair and puts his left arm on the table to support himself. These body language signals from Gino show his negative attitude about the coming auditor, and also create a contrast with his body language earlier in this conversation.

In example 9 (sir), Charlie smiles after he hears the guest speaking in row 4, which shows his positive attitude to the guest. In example 10 (Sanctimonious shit; little man), the guest raises his eyebrows, opens his eyes wide, nods and tilts his head and uses his left hand to point to Charlie in row 3, which shows that he feels irritated since he realises that his fraud has been seen through by Charlie. In example 11 (Murderous scum), Gino frowns, raises his eyebrows, shrugs his shoulders and nods his head in row 1, which shows his negative attitude towards the assumed killers

who are going to come and kill one of their hotel guests. In example 15 (you), Jackie smiles as, holding a bag in her hands, she runs towards the guest in row 1, which shows her pleasure on finding the guest, and reads the guest's facial expression while she shows him his belongings and returns them to him in the lobby. Next, in row 2, Charlie smiles and moves his gaze from the guest to the floor while the guest checks inside the bag, which contains women's lingerie. This shows that Charlie already knows that the real reason for this guest staying at their hotel is that he wants to indulge his transvestism without being noticed by people who know him, and that Charlie wants to avoid causing embarrassment to the guest. Therefore, from the body language of Jackie and Charlie, it can be seen that these two staff are trying carefully to ease the guest's anger and practically solve the problem with this angry guest who is not willing to pay the expensive fees for the services he had used in their hotel.

In row 4 of example 1 (Mrs. Mrs. Radley), body language is used to emphasise information. As it can be seen in row 4, Mrs. Radley uses her left hand index finger to point in the air while she is correcting and giving information sought implicitly by the hotel manager. From this the audience can infer that she has noticed that instead of using her real name, the hotel manager is doubting her identity as the real wife of Mr. Radley.

In example 6 (someone), Anna uses body language to produce humorous effects and bring a relaxed feeling into the conversation. Anna uses a violin bow to give the instruction to Calista to get some rest from her daily routine of violin practice, in row 3. Later, from the smile on the girl's face, the audience can infer that the humorous effect created by Anna has worked with Calista.

In examples 3 (my daughter) and 8(your daughter), body language is used at the beginning of the conversation to set the tone of the environment of the characters' conversation. In example 3(my daughter), Mr. Balanovsky takes one step back to make some room for Charlie to come through the room and raises his left hand toward the chair to invite Charlie to have a seat. The audience can infer the friendly conversation environment that Mr. Balanovsky has tried to establish through these gestures, before he says a word. This friendly body language constructs a friendly conversation context for later when Mr. Balanovsky asks for Charlie's help in getting some information about his daughter's boyfriend.



In example 8 (your daughter), Jackie uses her elbow to push Anna and peeks to the guest's side and Anna looks at Jackie and then turns her head to the guest. Based on these body language signals from Jackie and Anna, the audience can infer that Anna is feeling too guilty to admit her mistake to the guest. Body language is thus used to construct a cautious conversation context for Anna later to explain the damage to the girl's hand to her father. It can be seen that body language offers various and essential stimuli in the chosen conversations. These stimuli could influence the choice of verbal elements, which could further affect the information inferred by the audience, as will be discussed regarding further translation examples in subsection 4.1.1.3.

Next, there are ten examples that contain changes in speaking speed to offer stimuli to the audience, making this the second most important element. In seven of the ten instances speaking speed is used to indicate changing attitude on the part of the characters in the following examples: 4 (sunshine), 5 (her), 7 (Good old Sally; the ball crunching bitch), 8 (your daughter), 9 (sir) and 15 (you).

In row 2 of example 4 (sunshine), Mr. Cord's speaking speed changes from fast to medium. At the beginning, when he tries to stop David from carrying his luggage, his speaking speed is fast, which shows that he does not want to bother David. Later, when he expresses his appreciation, his speaking speed is slow, which stresses his appreciation properly to David. In row 6 of example 5 (her), Charlie's speaking speed is fast, which shows his worried attitude towards the female guest. In row 2 of example 7 (Good old Sally), Gino speaks at medium speed, which shows his relaxed attitude on hearing from Rebecca that the auditor is coming to check their hotel. Later, in row 4 of example 7 (the ball crunching bitch), Gino's speaking speed changes from fast to medium after he hears that a strict auditor is being sent to check their hotel, which shows his strong negative attitude toward this coming auditor at first, then he tries to calm down. In row 1 of example 8 (your daughter), Anna speaks at slow speed, which shows her cautious attitude about having to admit she is the one who trapped the guest's daughter's hand. In example 9 (sir), Charlie uses a fast speaking speed during the conversation in row 2 and then slows down in row 4. The use of these two different speaking speeds shows how Charlie's attitude towards the guest changes from nervousness to relief. In row 1 of example 15 (you), Jackie is speaking at fast speed, which shows her positive attitude when she catches the guest

to return his forgotten belongings before he leaves the hotel. Later, in row 3 of example 15, Charlie is speaking at medium speed, which shows his calm attitude when dealing with this complaining guest. In row 4 of example 1 (Mrs. Mrs. Radley), Mrs. Radley is speaking at slow speed. Based on this stimulus, audiences can infer that she has recognised Rebecca's suspicion and is making her marriage status clear to Rebecca. In row 5 of example 2 (Vladimir Balanovsky's daughter), Charlie is speaking at slow speed. From his slow speaking speed, audiences can infer that Charlie is showing his concern about the seriousness of helping Natasha (one of their guests) to deceive her father about her wedding so she can stay in London to start her new life instead of going back home with her father. In row 3 of example 6 (someone), Anna tries to persuade the young violinist to have some rest. Her speaking speed changes from fast to slow, which creates an entertaining and relaxed environment.

The third most frequently used multimodal element is camera distance, which is used six times in the selected examples. In five of the six instances it is used to show a serious attitude on the part of the characters, which also contributes to the construction of the cognitive context. In row 4 of example 1 (Mrs. Mrs. Radley), there is a close shot when Mrs. Radley points her finger while she is confirming her marriage status to Rebecca. This close shot shows her serious attitude when Rebecca calls her by the wrong title. From row 1 to row 3 in example 2 (Vladimir Balanovsky's daughter), the camera distance is medium close shot. Two characters can be seen at the same time in one scene. Then, from row 4 to row 6, the camera distance is close shot. Only one character can be seen at one time in one scene. The changing camera distance in this conversation shows how Charlie changes from having a relaxed attitude while engaging in casual small talk with his colleague to a serious attitude since he thinks lying to someone in such an important position is not a good idea, even if the intention is good. In example 3 (my daughter), the camera distance changes from medium close shot (from row 2 to row 7) to close shot (from row 8 to row 11) to accompany the attitude of the characters becoming more serious. At the beginning, Mr. Balanovsky is busy with his own work and therefore asks questions while at the same time tapping on the laptop. Charlie keeps giving vague answers since he is trying to cover up this fraud. Since Mr. Balanovsky does not get any useful information about his daughter's fiancé, his attitude becomes serious. As

it can be seen, the camera distance changes from medium close shot to close shot to show this seriousness. In row 4 of example 7 (the ball crunching bitch), the camera distance changes to close shot as compared to medium close shot in row 2. This is because Gino suddenly gets the news from Rebecca that the coming auditor is a strict person. The changing camera distance reflects Gino's attitude changing from relaxed to shock because of the coming auditor. In row 1 of example 11 (Murderous scum), the camera distance changes from close shot to very close shot and then back to close shot again while Gino describes his experience of the Mafioso. The camera distance shows that Gino's words are attracting the attention of other colleagues. Camera distance also can be used to emphasise information. In row 2 of example 1 (Miss...), there is a close shot of the tattoo on Mrs. Radley's back. Earlier in this episode, staff were discussing during their meeting whether it was reasonable to judge a female as a prostitute just because she has a tattoo on her body. Also, Rebecca is suspicious that this female guest is a prostitute and not the real wife of one of their guests. As a result, while she is conducting this conversation with Mrs. Radley, she tries to find any stimuli that can help her to find out the real status of this female guest. This close shot of the tattoo on Mrs. Radley's body shows that it has attracted Rebecca's attention as well as increasing her suspicions.

The fourth most frequently used multimodal element is speaking volume, which is found in five examples. Two kinds of information are offered by the changes in speaking volume in this subsection. In four out of five of these instances, speaking volume is used to show the speaker's attitude. In row 2 of example 4 (sunshine), the volume of Mr. Cord's speech changes from loud to normal, to escape from the bother with other staff and give tips to staff. The speaking volume shows Mr. Cord's friendly attitude to the hotel staff. In row 2 example 7 (Good old Sally), Gino's speaking volume is normal, which shows his calmness on hearing the news that an auditor is coming to check their stock since he thinks the auditor is the nice one whom he knows well. Later, in row 4 of example 7 (the ball crunching bitch), Gino's speaking volume changes from loud to normal, which shows the fluctuation in his attitude from panic to trying to calm down once he learns that the actual auditor is a lady well-known for her strict working attitude. In row 3 of example 10 (little man), in the later part, when the guest says 'little man', his speaking volume becomes louder compared with the beginning part. There are two reasons for this: firstly, the

guest is standing a bit further away from Charlie compared to the beginning part; secondly, the guest uses a louder voice to show his derisive attitude towards Charlie, and that he does not fear Charlie. In row 5 of example 2 (Vladimir Balanovsky's daughter), Charlie lowers his speaking volume. This is because he is worried about Tony wanting to help Natasha (one of their guests) to hold a fake wedding to deceive her father. Additionally, this low speaking volume shows Charlie's fear of this guest's father. Here, Charlie is seeking just to draw Tony's attention in order to deal with this tough situation. In consequence, Charlie keeps his voice down to make his serious and negative attitude clear to Tony.

The fifth most frequently used multimodal element is intonation, which is used in five examples, namely examples 1 (Mrs. Mrs. Radley), 2 (Vladimir Balanovsky's daughter), 6 (someone), 9 (sir) and 10 (sanctimonious shit). In three of the five examples, it is used to emphasise the information from the speaker. In row 4 of example 1 (Mrs. Mrs. Radley), Mrs. Radley uses intonation on the word 'Mrs.'. By doing this, she purposely emphasises her marriage status to Rebecca since she has noticed that Rebecca has doubts about her real status. In row 3 of example 6 (someone), Anna uses intonation on 'someone' to emphasise the information that the teenage violinist needs to have a rest. In row 3 of example 9 (sir), Mr. Wiltshire uses intonation on the word 'Sir'. By doing this, he is stressing his confusion as to why somebody would have 'Sir' as a surname, which is an approach he uses to indicate to Charlie that he wants to create a humorous atmosphere between Charlie and himself. In the other two examples, intonation is used to show the speakers' attitude during the conversation. In row 5 of example 2 (Vladimir Balanovsky's daughter), Charlie uses intonation on 'Vladimir' when he mentions 'Vladimir Balanovsky's daughter'. By doing this, he shows his seriousness and negative attitude about helping Natasha (the guest) to hold a fake wedding to deceive her father, Mr. Balanovsky. In row 3 of example 10 (Sanctimonious shit), in the beginning part, the guest uses intonation on 'shit' to show his dissatisfaction with Charlie. In this part, the guest and Charlie are having a conversation outside this guest's room. Since he has a companion inside the room, he has to use a quiet voice to talk to Charlie. Also, he is standing close to Charlie. Therefore, by using this intonation, he shows his angry attitude towards Charlie on account of Charlie knowing that he has been having affairs with different women in their hotel.

Next, music and sound are used in two examples. Accompanying background music is used as an effective way to indicate the environment of the conversation in example 9 (sir) of 4.1.1. The rhythm of the background music, sometimes quick, sometimes slow, creates the tension and mysterious atmosphere for this conversation. At the same time, this music reflects Charlie's mood since he does not know what this prisoner is really like, so he is cautious and nervous while serving this guest. In row 4 of example 7 (the ball crunching bitch), though there is no screen shot of the laughter from other staff, laughing sounds can be heard during the conversation, which offer a stimulus to the audience that what the character is saying is interesting.

Lastly, camera position is used in example 3 (my daughter) of 4.1.1. In this example, the changing camera position shows the changing attitude of the speaker. From row 2 to row 7, Mr. Balanovsky continues typing on the laptop, which shows that while he is concerned about his daughter's fiancé, he is also busy with his work. In this part, the camera position is continuously moving, which creates a busy and rushed conversation environment. Since Mr. Balanovsky does not get any useful information from Charlie in this part, from row 8 to row 11 he focuses all his attention on Charlie. It can be seen that in this part the camera position remains stationary, which creates a more serious and focused conversation environment. Therefore, the changing attitude on the part of the character is indicated through the contrasting camera positions in these two parts of the conversation. Furthermore, it indicates to the audience that the conversation environment has changed from casual to serious.

#### *4.1.1.2 Translation strategies*

Subsection 4.1.1.2 will deal with the analysis of address terms used in the selected conversations. Of the total of 21 address terms, 14 are rephrased in the translated text, and are contained in examples 1 (Miss...; Mrs. Mrs. Radley), 2 (Vladimir Balanovsky's daughter), 3(my daughter), 4 (Mr. and Mrs. Cord), 5 (her), 6(someone), 7 (Good old Sally; the ball crunching bitch), 8 (your daughter), 10 (sanctimonious shit), 11 (Murderous scum), 13 (Mr. and Mrs. T) and 14 (your father). Four of the others are translated literally, in examples 9 (sir), 12 (Mr. Daniels), 13 (delightful couple) and 15 (you), while the remaining three are omitted from the subtitle, in examples 4 (sunshine), 10 (little man) and 12 (Charlie). According to the analysis of



the above existing multimodal elements in the conversation from subsection 4.1.1 of the Appendix, it can be seen that various multimodal elements work together with the chosen address term to offer stimuli during the conversation. In addition, the interlocutors in subsection 4.1.1 of the Appendix are not close to each other. Kozloff (2000: 43-47) states that various information can be inferred through the spoken words and the characters' manner of expression, such as the characters' personality, social class, and so on. In such cases, the address term is a useful instrument to indicate the characters' distance from each other, which means that these become stimuli in the conversation.

*4.1.1.3 Analysis and discussion of the stimuli which are offered by verbal elements and non-verbal elements in combination with each other during the conversation*

This subsection contains three main stimuli which derive from the combination of various multimodal elements and the use of address terms. Firstly, the address term is an essential instrument to show respect to the addressee. The address terms used in examples 1 (Miss...; Mrs. Mrs. Radley), 2 (Vladimir Balanovsky's daughter), 3 (my daughter), 4 (Mr. and Mrs. Cord; sunshine), 5 (her), 8 (your daughter), 12 (Mr. Daniels; Charlie), 13 (Mr. and Mrs. T; delightful couple), 14 (your father) and 15 (you) of subsection 4.1.1 of the Appendix are all neutral expressions in the source language text. Other multimodal elements are also used to reinforce and supplement the purpose of showing respect to the addressee. In some of these examples (examples 1 (Miss...; Mrs. Mrs. Radley), 2 (Vladimir Balanovsky's daughter), 3 (my daughter), 4 (Mr. and Mrs. Cord; sunshine), 5 (her), 8 (your daughter), 13 (Mr. and Mrs. T) and 15 (you)), when they are combined with other stimuli from various multimodal elements, the source language audience can further infer other information which constructs the cognitive context for that audience, to convey such as a respectful attitude on the part of the speaker towards the hearer. Since Chinese has more ways than English of expressing the same address term, the various Chinese expressions for address terms contain different information regarding the speaker and the hearer. To be more precise, different expressions of one address term in Chinese can show the different statuses of the speaker and the hearer.

Here is the Multimodal Transcription framework of example 1.

Number	Visual Frame	Visual	Kinesic	Soundtrack	Chinese Subtitle
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& Time		Image	Action		& Back Translation
1 00:11:20		CP: Moving > Stationary D: MLS > CS > MLS > CS VC: Hotel room HP: Directly VF: Rebecca looks at Mrs. Radley then to Tony then back to Mrs. Radley, Tony looks at Mrs. Radley then to Rebecca	Rebecca walks in front of Mrs. Radley, crosses her hands in front of her body, uses her left hand to point at Tony; Tony closes the door, walks in next to Rebecca, puts his hands behind his back, turns his head to Rebecca, rolls his eyes; a masseur is giving a massage to Mrs. Radley; Mrs. Radley is lying face down on the massage table	FIELD: [♪] SI Massage sound FIGURE: Rebecca: Good morning, Madam, Rebecca Mitchell, General Manager. And this is my colleague Tony Casemore from our Guest Relations department. We just wanted to make sure that everything was to your satisfaction today. n, M	Rebecca: 早安\ 我是酒店总经 理文碧嘉\ 他是 客务关系部的 同事托尼\ 我们是想确保你 满意今天的服 务 Back translation: Rebecca: Good morning. I am the hotel general manager Mitchell Rebecca. He is my colleague Tony Casemore from our Guest Relations department. We came here to make sure you are satisfied with today's service.
2		CP: Stationary D: CS VC: Hotel room HP:	Masseur is giving a massage to Mrs. Radley; Mrs. Radley is lying face	FIELD: [♪] SI Massage sound FIGURE: Mrs. Radley: I'm full of	Mrs. Radley: 我 喝饱香槟 又有 人替我按摩\ 满意得要死 Back translation: Mrs.

		<p>Directly VF: Mrs. Radley is face down on the massage table, Rebecca looks at Mrs. Radley then to Tony; Tony looks at Rebecca</p>	<p>down on the massage table; Rebecca has a look at the back of Mrs. Radley, moves back a little bit, shakes her shoulders, smiles complacentl y, turns her head a little bit up to Tony; Tony looks at Rebecca with no specific facial expression</p>	<p>champagne and I'm having a massage. Everything's bloody wonderful, I'd say. n, M</p>	<p>Radley: I am full of champagne and have someone do massage for me. Very satisfied.</p>
<p>3 00:11:39</p>		<p>CP: Stationary D: CS VC: Hotel room HP: Obliquely VF: Rebecca looks at Mrs. Radley, Tony looks at Rebecca.</p>	<p>Rebecca looks at Mrs. Radley; Tony turns his head from Rebecca to Mrs. Radley</p>	<p>FIELD: [♪] SI Message sound FIGURE: Rebecca: I'm sorry, I didn't catch your name, <b>Miss...</b> n, M</p>	<p>Rebecca: 抱歉 我忘了你的名字 Back translation: Rebecca: Sorry, I forgot your name.</p>



4		<p>CP: Stationary D: CS VC: Hotel room HP: Directly VF: Rebecca and Tony look at Mrs. Radley</p>	<p>Mrs. Radley points her left hand index finger, one staff member is doing the massage for Mrs. Radley, Tony frowns</p>	<p>FIELD: [♪] SI Massage sound FIGURE: Mrs. Radley: <b>Mrs. Mrs. Radley.</b> n, S</p>	<p>Mrs. Radley: 我是雷太太 Back translation: Mrs. Radley: I am <b>Mrs. Radley.</b></p>
5		<p>CP: Stationary D: CS VC: Hotel room HP: Obliquely VF: Rebecca looks at Mrs. Radley and Tony back and forth, Tony looks at Mrs. Radley</p>	<p>Rebecca raises her eyebrows; Tony frowns</p>	<p>FIELD: [♪] SI Massage sound FIGURE: Rebecca: And is Mr. Radley here today? n, M</p>	<p>Rebecca:雷先生今天在这里吗 Back translation: Rebecca: Is Mr. Radley here today?</p>
6		<p>CP: Stationary D: MLS VC: Hotel room HP: Directly VF: Mrs. Radley is lying face</p>	<p>Mrs. Radley dangles champagne glass in the air with her right hands, points her right hand index finger into the air,</p>	<p>FIELD: [♪] SI Massage sound FIGURE: Mrs. Radley: Oh. He's out doing some meetings. n, M</p>	<p>Mrs. Radley: 他去了开会 Back translation: Mrs. Radley: He is out for meeting.</p>

		down on the massage table	waves her left hand in the air; Rebecca turns her head to Tony; Tony turns his head to Rebecca; Masseur is giving a massage to Mrs. Radley		
7		CP: Stationary D: CS VC: Hotel room HP: Obliquely VF: Rebecca looks at Mrs. Radley, Tony looks at Rebecca then to Mrs. Radley	Rebecca shakes her head; Tony frowns, Masseur is giving a massage to Mrs. Radley	FIELD: [♪] SI Message sound FIGURE: Rebecca: Doing some meetings? Is there any way we could contact Mr. Radley? A mobile telephone number, perhaps? n, S > M	Rebecca: 去了开会\他有没有手提电话让我们联络他 Back translation: Rebecca: Out for meeting. Does he have a mobile number that we can contact with him?
8		CP: Stationary D: MLS VC: Hotel room HP: Directly VF:	Mrs. Radley raises her head up, crosses her arms in front of her to support her body, shakes	FIELD: [♪] SI Message sound FIGURE: Mrs. Radley: He doesn't like to be disturbed.	Mrs. Radley: 他不喜欢被骚扰\他晚上会回来\你到时可以找他\怎么了\有什么问题 Back

		<p>Rebecca and Tony look at Mrs. Radley, Mrs. Radley looks at Rebecca and Tony</p>	<p>her head, shrugs her shoulders, Rebecca stands straight and raises her head, Tony raises his head and looks carefully at Mrs. Radley's face</p>	<p>He'll be back tonight if you wanna talk to him then. Why, is there a problem? n, M &gt; S</p>	<p>translation: Mrs. Radley: He does not like to be disturbed. He will come back at evening. You can find him by then. Why? What is the problem?</p>
<p>9 00:12:08</p>	  	<p>CP: Stationary D: MCS VC: Hotel room HP: Directly VF: Tony and Rebecca look at Mrs. Radley, Mrs. Radley looks at Rebecca and Tony back and forth</p>	<p>Charlie shakes his head, smiles, turns his body back to the door and leaves, Mrs. Radley smiles to Tony, turns her head back to Rebecca, stops smiling, raises her champagne glass to Rebecca, raises her eyebrows, Rebecca squeezes a reluctant smile and</p>	<p>FIELD: [♪] SI Massage sound FIGURE: Tony: Not at all, Mrs Radley. You enjoy your treatments. n, M</p>	<p>Tony: 完全没问题 请继续享受 Back translation: Tony: Not at all. Please enjoy your treatments.</p>

			turns her body to the door		
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In example 1, Rebecca wants to find out whether a woman purporting to be Mrs. Radley is really Mr. Radley's wife or just a prostitute. From the answer which is given by Mrs. Radley in row 2, the register which is used by Mrs. Radley, including words such as 'bloody', indirectly reflect she does not sound like a well-educated lady. Also, there is a close shot showing a tattoo on Mrs. Radley's back at the beginning of the conversation and a close shot of Rebecca's series body language after she sees the tattoo, in the same row. This tattoo offers an indirect stimulus to Rebecca as to whether this lady is Mrs. Radley or not. At the same time, the body language from Rebecca shows that she is satisfied and positive about the observation. All these multimodal elements indicate why Rebecca feels justified in collecting more information about Mrs. Radley. Therefore, in row 3, Rebecca uses the female address term of 'title + last name' to try to find out whether this customer is married or not. By doing this, she is trying to reduce the threat to the negative face of the hearer, indicating that she has not met this lady before and so might not address her correctly. In consequence, the source language audience can infer from the original question that Rebecca doubts that this woman is indeed married to Mr. Radley. As a response, in row 4, this lady uses 'Mrs.' twice to correct Rebecca and an intonation on the word 'Mrs.' to emphasise that she is the wife of Mr. Radley. The body language from Mrs. Radley and the close shot in this scene also show her seriousness about making a clear confirmation of her marriage status at that moment. By doing this, Mrs. Radley tries to reduce the threat to the positive face of Rebecca, since she was aware of the attempt from Rebecca, though she did not correct Rebecca directly. In Chinese, the address term which is used to address women to show their marriage status should be arranged in the form of 'last name + title'. Therefore, it is hard for the speaker to use a title as a beginning to lure the hearer to confirm or deny whether this title corresponds to their status. Hence, in row 3, the translator has translated 'I did not catch your name, Miss...' into '我忘了你的名字' (I forgot your name). As can be seen from the translated text, in attempting to achieve interpretive resemblance between the original conversation and the Chinese subtitle, the

translator has transmitted the explicit meaning in the original conversation. While reducing the implicit meaning of attempting to ask the marriage status by using the title 'Miss' at the start to ask for the name from the hearer in the subtitle, the subtitle does comply with an acceptable way to find out a customer's name. Therefore, the target language audience still can infer that Rebecca has some problems to try to figure out the name of Mrs. Radley at the moment. Also, instead of asking directly whether this lady is married to Mr. Radley or not, the translated text maintains the reduction of threat to the negative face of the hearer. Next, in row 4, 'Mrs. Mrs. Radley' is translated into '我是雷太太' (I am Mrs. Radley). In the translated text, the answer from Mrs. Radley directly shows her marriage status with Mr. Radley, although the repetition 'Mrs. Mrs.' is dismissed. As an answer to the question about her name, instead of giving Rebecca her full name, the subtitle explicitly contains Mrs Radley's marital status, which shows that Mrs. Radley has noticed that instead of asking for her name, Rebecca's real purpose is to confirm whether she is married to Mr. Radley or not. Also, in combination with Mrs. Radley's body language and the close camera shot, the target language audience can infer that Mrs. Radley is emphasising her marriage status with Mr. Radley since she recognises the trap from Rebecca in asking her name. Therefore, the translated text maintains the purpose of reducing the threat to the positive face of Rebecca from Mrs. Radley.

In row 5 of example 2 (Vladimir Balanovsky's daughter), Charlie uses 'Vladimir Balanovsky's daughter' when he is questioning the feasibility of Tony's plan to help Natasha (a guest) to hold a fake wedding to deceive her father (Mr. Vladimir Balanovsky). Combined with other multimodal elements, Charlie's body language, using a lower speaking voice, slow speaking speed, and his intonation as well as the camera distance, all help the source language audience to infer Charlie's serious and respectful attitude towards Mr. Balanovsky. In the Chinese subtitle, daughter is translated as '千金' (precious daughter). This Chinese address term was traditionally used to refer to a daughter from a rich or powerful family with respect. Therefore, use of these address terms shows that the hearer is of higher status than the speaker, although recently the standard for using this address term has become blurred. This address term can now also be used in contemporary Chinese to refer to a daughter who is of more or less similar status to the speaker, for the purpose of being polite in a formal way. Additionally, the use of this word in a relatively formal conversation

environment shows that the speaker himself or herself is of good educational background. Moreover, this address term can only be used to refer to the hearer's daughter, not the speaker's own daughter, for the purpose of showing respect to the hearer. Therefore, using this address term shows respect from the speaker to the hearer. At the same time, Natasha's father's last name is kept intact in the subtitle to convey a formal register. Therefore, the use of this formal address term also increases the respect and fear shown by Charlie to Natasha's father in this conversation. Hence, interpretive resemblance from English to Chinese is achieved through the expression of this formal address term combined with other multimodal elements which are mentioned above to emphasise the potentially serious consequences of angering an important guest of their hotel by arranging the fake wedding.

In example 3 (my daughter), Charlie is asked to come to Mr. Balanovsky's room after Mr. Balanovsky has walked out in the middle of a seemingly unpleasant conversation with his daughter and future son-in-law in the hotel bar. When Charlie comes into the room, Mr. Balanovsky's body language shows his attempt to convey a friendly attitude to reduce the social distance between Charlie and himself. This attitude can also be inferred from the translated address term '小女' (little daughter) by the target language audience. Later during the conversation, the changing body language reflects how Mr. Balanovsky's attitude changes from relaxed to serious. Next, the camera position changes from moving (from row 2 to row 7) to stationary (from row 8 to row 11) and the camera distance changes from medium close shot to close shot, which both serve to reinforce Mr. Balanovsky's serious intention to get some useful information about his future son-in-law from Charlie. These multimodal elements offer stimuli to the audience that Mr. Balanovsky wants Charlie to help him to find out more about his daughter's fiancé. In the translated text of row 8, the translator translates 'my daughter' as '小女' (little daughter), which is a humble way for the speaker to refer to his own daughter from ancient times. Nowadays, the use of this address term can indicate that the speaker is of good educational background as well as humility in a relatively formal circumstance. Considering the above information offered by the address term '小女' (little daughter), when the speaker who is of higher status uses it to refer to his/her daughter, the pragmatic use of this address term shows some other specific information to the hearer. The use of this

humble Chinese address term shows that the speaker is trying to degrade his own social status and reduce the social distance between the hearer and himself. According to this translated address term, the target language audience can infer that Mr. Balanovsky values the information which is offered by Charlie about his daughter's fiancé since he values his daughter's happiness more than anything.

In row 1 of example 4 (Mr. and Mrs. Cord; sunshine), Ben's body language helps the source language audience to infer his friendly attitude toward the guest couple Mr. and Mrs. Cord. In the translated text, the translator translates 'Mr. and Mrs. Cord' into '高氏伉俪' (the Cords, respectful couple). From this translated address term, the target language audience can infer Ben's respect towards this couple. In row 2 of example 4, Mr. Cord's body language, changing speaking speed and sound are used to show that he is trying to avoid trouble with other staff and to reduce the distance between himself and other staff by being friendly. The address term 'sunshine' which is used by Mr. Cord also shows his own lower social class background. In the translated text, the translator omits this address term. As a result, the direct stimuli from the address term regarding such as Mr. Cord's lower social class background is lost to some extent. However, from the supplements provided by other existing multimodal elements in this conversation the target language audience can still infer Mr. Cord's friendly attitude toward David, such as his facial expression. In consequence, though part of the pragmatic use of the direct address term 'sunshine' is missing because of its omission from the subtitle, the target language audience can still infer the remaining part of the pragmatic use of this address term through the combination with other multimodal elements in this conversation.

In example 5 (her), Charlie asks Tanya to check one of their guest rooms since the guests who should have checked out did not show up. When Charlie hears that there is only one man in that room, he uses his head to point to the door and asks where the female guest is, by using simply the second person pronoun 'her' to refer to the female guest, in row 6. By using 'her', Charlie attempts to be as simple as possible to avoid other people finding out that he knows this female guest very well. Also, in row 5, Charlie asks about the female guest situation immediately at a quick speaking speed, which shows that Charlie is eager to get the information about the female guest. In the subtitle, the translator uses the word '女主人' (hostess) to make it clear

in the address term that Charlie is specifically asking about the whereabouts of the female guest. In addition, by combining this with Charlie's speaking speed and body language, the target language audience can infer that Charlie cares about finding out where the female guest is. However, the specific attempt to conceal the ambiguity in the relationship between the female guest and Charlie can hardly be inferred by the target language audience. Furthermore, the translated address term 'hostess' increases the distance between the female guest and Charlie compared to the source text.

In row 1 of example 8 (your daughter), Anna tries to apologise to Mr. Pappas for breaking his daughter's hand when she was babysitting. According to her body language and her speaking speed, the source language audience can infer that Anna is cautious and fearful about admitting her mistake. In the translated text, the translator translates 'your daughter' into '令媛' (your precious daughter), which shows the respect from Anna. In the Chinese address term, '令媛' (your precious daughter) is used to show the respect from the speaker to the hearer. In ancient times, this honorific address term would have been used by a government official to refer to the hearer's daughter to show the respect from the speaker to the hearer. Nowadays, it is acceptable for this address term to be used to refer to a hearer's daughter who is of similar status to the speaker in a relatively formal conversation environment. Also, the use of this formal address term shows the speaker has a good educational background. In consequence, the target language audience can infer that Anna is trying to apologise to the guest carefully and cautiously since the situation does not look optimistic for her if she admits full responsibility for what she has done to one of their important guests.

In row 1 of example 13 (Mr. and Mrs. T; delightful couple), Rebecca is checking the booking situation for the hotel restaurant with James. In the original conversation, Rebecca reads out 'Mr. and Mrs. T' as the words were written down by other staff on the restaurant booking notes. In this conversation, only the initial letter of a couple's surname is mentioned. The letter 'T' is actually short for 'Thorne', which is the surname of Rebecca and her husband. By doing this, staff drop a hidden stimulus to Rebecca, so she will later realise that this initial letter refers to her when she becomes aware of the surprise. However, this stimulus is not clear enough for her to solve the puzzle immediately she reads it, since this is a present which has secretly



been planned for her in advance by other staff. At that moment, Rebecca looks at the notes with no specific facial expression, which shows that she has not realised that 'Mr. and Mrs T' refers to her husband and herself at this stage, which proves the staff's secret plan is working. When Rebecca has left the desk, instead of being sad about their working ability being questioned by Rebecca, James and Tony turn their heads to each other and smile, which also offers a stimulus to their audience that they are arranging something secretly behind Rebecca's back. Therefore, the audience need to look further into this episode to find the reason relating to these initial letters as the plot develops. In the later part of this episode, Rebecca is asked to go to the hotel lobby, where she meets her husband unexpectedly. At the same time, staff show up to bring them drinks, the same one they had at their wedding, and lead them to their table by using their full surname, 'Mr. and Mrs Thorne'. At that time, Rebecca first realises the hotel restaurant table is actually booked under the initial 'T' from her very own surname, specifically by hotel staff as a surprise gift for her and her husband's anniversary celebration. When Rebecca reaches her table after the lead from James, she repeats 'Table for two. Mr. and Mrs. T.' again, which shows that she finally gets this stimulus offered by James in row 1. In the Chinese subtitle, the translator just translates 'Mr. and Mrs. T' into '一对伉俪' (a respected couple) in row 1, which is a specific term to show respect when addressing a couple. Though the expressions of mysterious and vague information expressing are still kept in this conversation, the original hidden surprise stimulus which is offered by this initial letter of the booking reference is lost in the translated text. Although Rebecca still figures out the surprise anniversary gift from staff through their hostile actions and repeats 'a respected couple at table for two' in the translated subtitle in the later part of this episode, the target language reader can hardly infer that the hotel restaurant is booked under the surname of Rebecca specifically by other staff as a surprise gift.

In example 15 (you), from the different body language and speaking speeds, the source language audience can infer that Jackie and Charlie are trying to solve the problem with the guest calmly and professionally at the reception desk. From these multimodal elements, the source language audience and target language audience can infer the same friendly and professional attitude. During the conversation, the second person pronoun 'you' has been used by both of them in row 1 and 2. However, in the translated text, the translator translates 'you' into '你' (you), which



is a neutral second person pronoun. From this translated second person pronoun, the target language audience cannot infer the professional politeness from the hotel staff. In China's hotel industry, as a service industry, hotel staff normally address their guests as '您' (you with politeness), which contains politeness, to show their respect to their guests. Therefore, a conflict might appear in the process of inference between the existing multimodal elements and the translated second person pronoun in the conversation for the target language audience. In the above nine examples, even though the English address terms are neutral, the source language audience can make the inference of politeness or respect through the combination of these address terms with other multimodal elements. Also, from these nine elements, the source language audience and target language audience can infer the same meaning from the existing multimodal elements in the source text. As it can be seen from the translated text, nine of these twelve translated address terms contain politeness and respect in their own right, so target language audiences can infer this information based purely on the translated address terms. When combined with other multimodal elements, they can gain reinforcement of this information through their process of inference. In other words, these translated words minimise the processing efforts required from their target language audience.

Next, in examples 13 (delightful couple) and 14 (your father) of 4.1.1 of the Appendix, although no specific multimodal elements are used to show politeness in the source text, considering the conversation happens in a hotel, whose staff offer professional service in order to satisfy and show politeness to their guests, the translated text uses Chinese address terms which contain respect. In example 12 (Mr. Daniels; Charlie) of 4.1.1, the translator uses literal translation to translate the address term 'Mr. Daniels', a professional way to address a guest, since the expressions used are the same in English and Chinese.

Secondly, some address terms are used for the purpose of creating a humorous effect, such as in examples 6 (someone), 7 (Good old Sally; the ball crunching bitch) and 9 (sir) of 4.1.1 of the Appendix. When the intention of using these address terms is to create a humorous effect in the conversation, certain reactions from other characters become significant stimuli to the audience, such as smiling facial expressions, laughing sounds in the background, and so on. Additionally, when combined with other multimodal elements, the source language audience can infer

the humorous effect according to the source text. Therefore, this creates a challenge for the subtitler to maintain the humorous effect in the target text. Since other multimodal elements in the source text are maintained the same for the target language audience, smiles or laughter from other characters are also stimuli which can hardly be ignored by their target language audience.


Here is the Multimodal Transcription framework of example 9.

Number & Time	Visual Frame	Visual Image	Kinesic Action	Soundtrack	Chinese Subtitle & Back Translation
1. 00:17:46		CP: Stationary D: CS VC: Guest's room HP: Directly VF: Charlie looks at Mr. Wiltshire	Charlie stands near the table, gets the bottle opener, tries to open the bottle and turns his head to Mr. Wiltshire and the bottle back and forth	FIELD: [♪] setting table FIGURE: Mr. Wiltshire: What's your name, son? n, M	Mr. Wiltshire: 你叫什么名字 Back translation: Mr. Wiltshire: What is your name?
2.		CP: Stationary D: MLS VC: Guest's room HP: Directly	Charlie opens the bottle of wine, Mr. Wiltshire raises his head	FIELD: [♪] setting table FIGURE: Charlie: Charlie, Sir. f, F	Charlie: 查理老先生 Back translation: Charlie: Charlie, old Sir.

		VF: Charlie looks at the bottle, Mr. Wiltshire looks at Charlie			
3.		CP: Stationary D: CS VC: Guest's room HP: Directly VF: Mr. Wiltshire looks at Charlie	Mr. Wiltshire frowns	FIELD: [♪] ☀ setting table FIGURE: Mr. Wiltshire: <b>Charlie Sir?</b> n, S	Mr. Wiltshire: <b>查理先生</b> Back translation: Mr. Wiltshire: <b>Charlie Sir?</b>
4.		CP: Stationary D: MLS VC: Guest's room HP: Directly VF: Charlie looks at the bottle then to Mr. Wiltshire	Charlie opens the wine and pours the wine into a glass and smiles	FIELD: [♪] ☀ setting table FIGURE: Charlie: Charlie, <b>Charlie Edwards,</b> Sir. n, S	Charlie: 查 理 颜查理 Back translation: Charlie: Charlie, <b>Charlie Edwards.</b>

		then back to the bottle, Mr. Wilshire looks at Charlie			
5.		CP: Stationary D: CS VC: Guest's room HP: Directly VF: Mr. Wilshire looks at Charlie then to the table, Charlie looks at the glass	Mr. Wiltshire turns his head from Charlie to the table, Charlie pours the wine into a glass	FIELD: [♪♪] ☀ setting table FIGURE: Mr. Wiltshire: Nobody's called me "Sir" for a long time, so let's drop it. n, S	Mr. Wiltshire: 很久没有人尊称我\你别拘束 Back translation: Mr. Wiltshire: It's been a long time since other people addressed me respectfully. Make yourself comfortable.
7.		CP: Stationary D: CS VC: Guest's room HP: Directly VF: Charlie	Charlie pours the wine	FIELD: [♪♪] ☀ setting table FIGURE: Charlie: Very well, Mr. Wiltshire. n, F	Charlie: 好的 韦先生 Back translation: Charlie: Fine, Mr. Wiltshire.

		looks at the glass then to Mr. Wiltshire then back to the glass, Mr. Wiltshire looks at the table			
8.		CP: Stationary D: CS VC: Guest's room HP: Directly VF: Charlie looks at the table then Mr. Wiltshire back and forth, Mr. Wiltshire looks at the table	Mr. Wiltshire takes a bread stick in his hand, Charlie pours the wine	FIELD: [♪] ☀ setting table FIGURE: Mr. Wiltshire: Mr. Wiltshire ain't my name either, as well you know. n, S	Mr. Wiltshire: 你知道我不是姓韦 Back translation: Mr. Wiltshire: You know that my surname is not Wiltshire.
9.		CP: Stationary D: CS VC: Guest's room	Charlie puts the bottle back on the table and turns	FIELD: [♪] ☀ setting table FIGURE: Charlie: You don't wish for me	Charlie: 那么我应该如何称呼你 Back translation: Charlie:

		<p>HP: his head Directly to Mr. VF: Wiltshire Charlie and the looks at table the table back and and Mr. forth Wiltshire back and forth, Mr. Wiltshire looks at the bread</p>	<p>to call you "Sir" or "Mr Wiltshire"? Then, then what...? n, F</p>	<p>Then what should I call you?</p>
10.		<p>CP: Mr. Stationary Wiltshire D: CS holds the VC: bread Guest's stick in room his hand HP: and Directly raises his VF: Mr. head to Wiltshire Charlie looks at the bread then to Charlie</p>	<p>FIELD: [♪] ☀ setting table FIGURE: Mr. Wiltshire: Oh, you can call me..."bones" n, S</p>	<p>Mr. Wiltshire: 叫我骨头 吧 Back translation: Mr. Wiltshire: Then call me Bones.</p>
11. 00:18:16		<p>CP: Charlie Stationary frowns D: CS and nods VC: his head, Guest's Mr. room Wiltshire HP: breaks Directly off the</p>	<p>FIELD: [♪] ☀ setting table FIGURE: Charlie: "Bones"? As in... n, F</p>	<p>Charlie: 骨 头 Back translation: Charlie: <b>Bones.</b></p>

		VF: Charlie looks at Mr. Wiltshire, Mr. Wiltshire looks at the bread then to Charlie	bread into pieces with his hands and turns his head to Charlie		
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In example 9 (sir), according to the background music, the source language audience can infer that the distance between Charlie and Mr. Wiltshire is not close at this stage and the development of their distance is unknown. In row 3, Mr. Wiltshire sees the opportunity to use the word ‘sir’, which is used by Charlie first, to create a humorous effect so the distance between Charlie and himself can be reduced. ‘Sir’ is used by Charlie as a title to show respect to the addressee in row 2. Furthermore, it is used as a surname by Mr. Wiltshire, for the purpose of creating a humorous effect in row 3. In this row, the guest is speaking at slow speed to emphasise the information as well as draw attention from Charlie. Combined with the verbal element and other multimodal elements in this conversation, the source language audience can infer that the guest is using ‘sir’ as a surname for humorous effect for the purpose of making an effort to relax the conversation environment with Charlie. This is reinforced by the changing speaking speed and smile from Charlie in row 4 after he gets the humour from this guest. However, the translator only keeps the element of respect deriving from the title ‘sir’ in the translated text. Based on the slow speaking speed, the target language audience might infer that the guest is stressing the title ‘sir’ since he has a problem with being called by this title. Therefore, conflict is created between the smile from Charlie in row 4 and the guest feeling uncomfortable at being addressed by this title according to the translated subtitle. In consequence, Charlie having a smile on his face while the guest’s slow speaking speed is reflecting discomfort can cause confusion for the target language audience in their process of inference. Hence, this shows that subtitlers should not only be concerned with the



words' meaning during their translation, but also pay attention to the stimuli which exist in the text to assist inference by their audience.

In example 6, Anna tries to create a relaxed environment through using a bow to point to the addressee, reducing her speaking speed from medium to slow and putting intonation on the word 'someone' instead of using the specific name of the young violinist strictly. Later, in row 3, the smile on the face of Calista also becomes another stimulus to show that Calista likes Anna's instruction to relax and enjoy herself. Combined with these multimodal elements and verbal elements, the source language audience can infer that Anna is trying to help the teenage violinist to relax in a fun way. In the subtitle, the subtitler chooses direct use of the second person pronoun 'you'. The subtitle saves the target language audience from having to infer the personal reference for themselves. Therefore, the processing effort required to read the Chinese subtitle is minimised. Furthermore, in Chinese, 'someone' (某些人) contains three characters, while 'you' only contains one character. From this point of view, this translation also saves some space in the subtitle. However, it should be noticed that using the second person pronoun in this subtitle, combined with Anna's pointing action with the bow, increases the seriousness at the expense of the fun, which reduces the sense of humour. Moreover, the combination of the pointing action and the second person pronoun increases the threat to the negative face of Calista. In consequence, there is a relatively low degree of interpretive resemblance between the source text and the target text.

Next, at the beginning of example 7 (Good old Sally; the ball crunching bitch), when Rebecca first mentions asking for an auditor to come and check the stock, Gino uses 'Good old Sally' to address the coming auditor at a medium speaking speed and a medium speaking volume, in row 2. Also, combined with the body language from Gino and other staff, the source language audience can infer that staff feel comfortable working with this auditor. In the subtitle in row 2, the translator omits the adjective parts 'good old' in the original address term, just keeping the first name of the auditor. However, combined with various multimodal elements, the target language audience can infer the welcome of this person/the auditor among the staff in this conversation. Later, in row 4 of example 7 (Good old Sally; the ball crunching bitch), Gino's body language, changing speaking speed and volume, as well as close shot camera distance, are being used to show his instinctive response

when Rebecca tells them the name of the coming auditor, which makes a distinct comparison with his former attitude in row 2. The nickname of the auditor slips out of his mouth the second he hears the coming auditor's full name. This brings laughter from other staff at his overreaction, which can be heard in the background, thereby creating one more stimulus for the audience to see the humorous effect on other staff caused by Gino. This example will not be discussed in detail here as it has been discussed in point 2.

To sum up, cooperation of the chosen address terms and other multimodal elements from the Appendix to 4.1.1 are being used to represent the differences in social status and social distance between the interlocutors in terms of politeness in audiovisual programmes. Most of the conversations in section 4.1.1 involve communication between hotel staff and their guests, dealing with different situations inside the hotel. Formal address terms are being used in most of the examples to emphasise the differences in social status and maintain adequate social distance between the addresser and the addressee in the specific communication context in the source text (Braun 1988: 258; Wood and Kroger 1991: 145; Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 523), which is similar in Chinese culture (Zhong 2011: 45; He and Ren 2016: 171). Most of the related multimodal elements in this research corpus are also being used cooperatively for the purpose of representing the differences in social status and social distance in *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006). To reach a relatively high degree of interpretive resemblance, it is important to represent the difference in social status and social distance between the speaker and hearer in the process of address terms translation. In addition, in some of the examples from section 4.1.1, it can be seen that social status and social distance are adjusted by some related multimodal elements between the speaker and the hearer for different communication purposes in the source text. In Chinese culture, some address terms can be used directly to show the difference in social status and social distance between the interlocutors. In that case, by adopting these specific Chinese address terms, translated subtitles can be used to minimise the processing efforts required from their target language audience to gain the maximum contextual effects during the conversation.

#### **4.1.2 Unequal intimate dyads in address terms (superordinate to subordinate)**

##### *4.1.2.1 The functions of single multimodal elements in audiovisual programmes*

Subsection 4.1.2 of the Appendix considers nine address terms which are identified in seven selected examples. Among these, six are conversations between Rebecca, who is the general manager of the hotel, and other staff, whereas one involves Charlie, who is the deputy manager of the hotel, and Anna. According to the analysis examples in 4.1.2 of the Appendix, two types of dialogue are involved in the superordinate to subordinate address terms, namely allocating work to staff and pointing out improper behaviour on the part of staff. It can be seen that in all these nine address terms the first name of the staff member is used. However, these address terms are not only used as appellations; the various pragmatic meanings of these address terms are supplemented through the application of other multimodal elements during the conversation. For example, while the superordinate wants to point out the mistake made by the subordinate, they also want to keep things low key in front of other guests. This is an instance in which other multimodal elements are used at the same time to convey the pragmatic meaning, such as lowering the voice to try to solve the problem quietly in example 3. Figure 25 below presents the multimodal elements identified in subsection 4.1.2 of the Appendix.

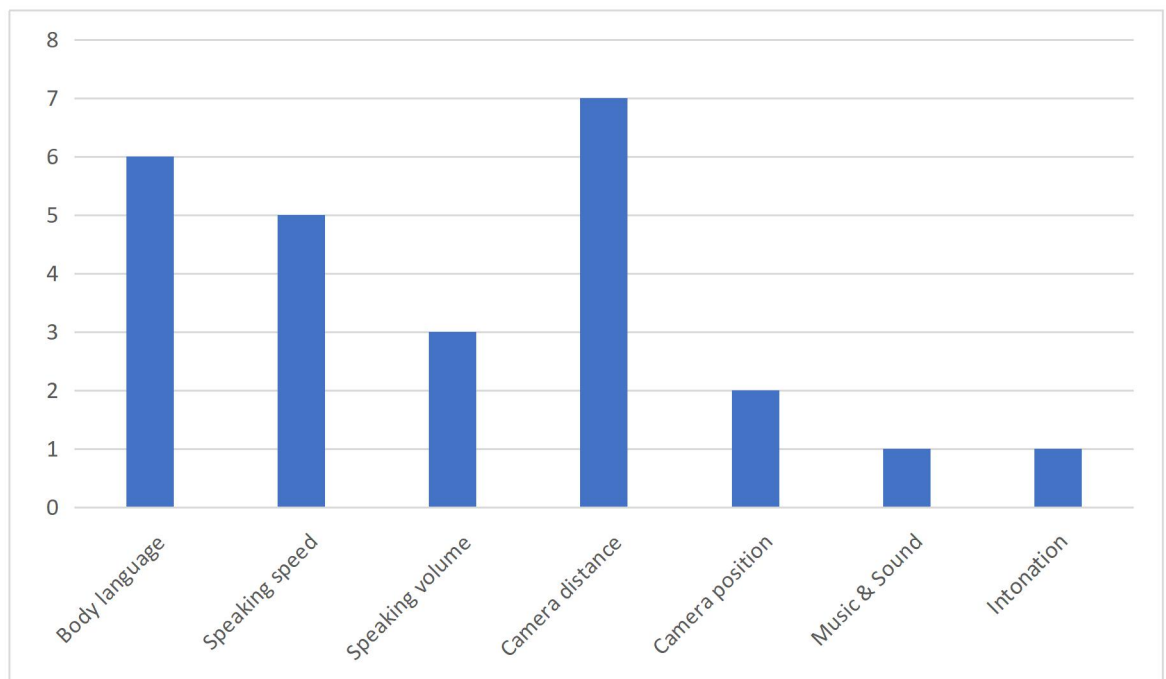


Figure 25. Multimodal elements in subsection 4.1.2 of the Appendix

As can be seen from this chart, camera distance is the most frequently used multimodal element, identified seven times. Among the seven examples where the camera is used to show the distance, in three of these examples the speaker and the

hearer are face to face while the manager is allocating tasks to hotel staff, in examples 2 (Charlie), 4 (Anna), 6 (Ben). In example 2 (Charlie), the camera distance is close shot while Rebecca is making clear that Charlie is the one who is to take charge of Mr. Wiltshire, in row 1. In row 3 of example 4 (Anna), the camera distance is close shot while Rebecca is explaining the importance of a particular guest to Anna. In row 1 of example 6 (Ben), the camera distance changes from medium close shot to close shot while Rebecca is giving Ben and Charlie the information that she will be working late in the hotel on that day. In two examples camera distance is used to show increasing attention from the speaker to the hearer, namely examples 1 (Charlie) and 6 (Ben). In example 1, the camera distance changes from medium long shot to close shot, which shows the increasing attention that Rebecca is paying to Charlie. In a later part of row 1 in example 6 (Ben), the camera distance changes from medium close shot to close shot when Rebecca finishes talking with Charlie and Ben and then turns her head back to carry on asking Ben about Anna. In the remaining two examples, close shot is used to show the strong attitude of the speaker towards the hearer, in examples 5 (Anna) and 7 (Anna). In row 2 of example 5 (Anna), the camera distance changes from medium long shot to medium close shot to show Rebecca's strong attitude while informing Anna of the inappropriateness of having too many buttons of her blouse unfastened at work. In row 2 of example 7 (Anna), the camera distance is close shot to show Charlie's dissatisfied attitude towards Anna since she has spoken inappropriately as a hotel staff member in judging their guests.

The second most frequently used multimodal element is body language, which occurs six times. Among these six instances it is used four times to show the attitude of the speaker towards the hearer, in examples 3 (Gino), 5 (Anna), 6 (Ben) and 7 (Anna). In row 1 of example 3 (Gino), Rebecca frowns, looks at the bar table and then at Gino, forwards and backwards, and shakes her head during the conversation. This body language shows Rebecca's negative attitude towards Gino when she sees him drinking alcohol at the bar table while he is on duty. In row 2 of example 5 (Anna), Rebecca stares at Anna while she is talking, since she considers Anna has too many buttons of her blouse unfastened during working hours. In row 1 of example 6 (Ben), Rebecca turns her head back, sighs and looks at the reception desk. This body language shows Rebecca's disappointment when she suddenly realises

that Anna should be at the desk but is not there. In row 2 of example 7 (Anna), Charlie leans his body towards Anna to correct her attitude to other guests, as a way of showing his negative attitude towards Anna when other people are around. The remaining two are used to clarify to the audience the identity of the addressee, in examples 1 and 2. In row 1 of example 1 (Charlie), Rebecca turns her body to Charlie and looks at him while she is allocating him a work task. In row 1 of example 2 (Charlie), Rebecca raises her eyebrows, tightens her chin and turns her head to Charlie while she is allocating the work task to Charlie. This body language indicates that Charlie is the person Rebecca is talking to at the moment.

The next most frequently used is speaking speed, which occurs five times, including three times to indicate the conversation context of a busy working environment (example 1 (Charlie), 5 (Anna), 6 (Ben, Charlie)), once to make clear the identity of the addressee (example 2 (Charlie)), and once to show the attitude from the speaker (example 7 (Anna)). In examples 1 (Charlie), 5 (Anna) and 6 (Ben, Charlie), Rebecca is speaking at fast speed while she is dealing with work matters with other staff. In the first part of row 1 in example 2 (Charlie), while Rebecca is assigning the task of taking special care of one of their guests, she speaks slowly. By doing this, she is making sure that every staff member at the meeting is clear about the task being allocated. Additionally, in row 2 of example 7 (Anna), Charlie speaks slowly to make it clear to Anna that her attitude towards their guests is not appropriate for a hotel staff member.

Next comes speaking volume, which is used three times. It is used first in example 3(Gino) to correct a mistake made by a staff member without drawing other people's attention, then in example 4 (Anna) to attract the attention of staff, and finally in example 5 to show the attitude of the speaker. In example 3, Rebecca uses low speaking volume in order to avoid attracting other people's attention while she is pointing out to Gino that it is inappropriate for a hotel bar tender to drink behind the bar during his working hours. In example 4 (Anna), since the guest they have been told to take special care of is standing not far away from Rebecca and other staff, Rebecca uses a quiet voice to attract Anna's attention and make sure she will help that guest during his stay at their hotel. In example 5 (Anna), Rebecca uses a louder voice to show her negative attitude towards Anna when she sees that she is inappropriately dressed.

Camera position is used twice, in examples 1 (Charlie) and 5 (Anna). In these two examples, the moving camera position is used to show the conversation context, a busy working environment.

Music and sound and intonation are each used once. In example 1 (Charlie), music played at rapid speed is another strategy used to convey this conversation context. In example 4 (Anna), intonation is used to make sure that all staff are clear about who is in charge of the task. In row 1 of example 4 (Anna), while Rebecca is allocating the task to Charlie, she uses intonation of Charlie's first name to clarify to other staff during the meeting that Charlie is the intended recipient of responsibility for the task.

#### *4.1.2.2 Translation strategies*

Eight of the nine address terms discussed in this subsection are omitted in the target language text, while in the remaining one (example 3 (Gino)), the second person pronoun is used instead of the first name to refer to the staff. There are three main reasons for the translator omitting the address terms in the target language text. Firstly, the camera distances used in these examples are mainly medium close shot and close shot. Therefore, the speaker and the hearer are clearly identified to their audience through the images. Secondly, these are conversations which happen in the workplace and there are differences between English and Chinese in the ways people address each other in the work context. In English, people tend to address each other using their first name. However, in Chinese, when a superordinate addresses a subordinate, normally they will address them by their full name or 'xiao + surname' if the addressee is younger than the addresser or 'surname + the addressee's position'. Therefore, subtitles should be aware of the need for inference by their target language audience in a Chinese working context. Thirdly, other multimodal elements which exist in the conversation offer supplementary information during the conversation. Hence, the target language audience are able to infer the various pragmatic meanings of the address term through the other multimodal elements.

### **4.1.3 Unequal intimate dyads in address terms (subordinate to superordinate)**

#### *4.1.3.1 The functions of single multimodal elements in audiovisual programmes*

In relation to unequal intimate dyads in address terms, 4.1.3 of the Appendix contains eight address terms identified in five selected examples. Apart from one example used among the guests themselves, the others are all used solely among the

staff. In the case of the conversations among staff members, the address terms are used in three kinds of circumstances, namely to accept a task, to acknowledge a mistake pointed out by the superordinate, or to refuse a task allocated by the superordinate.

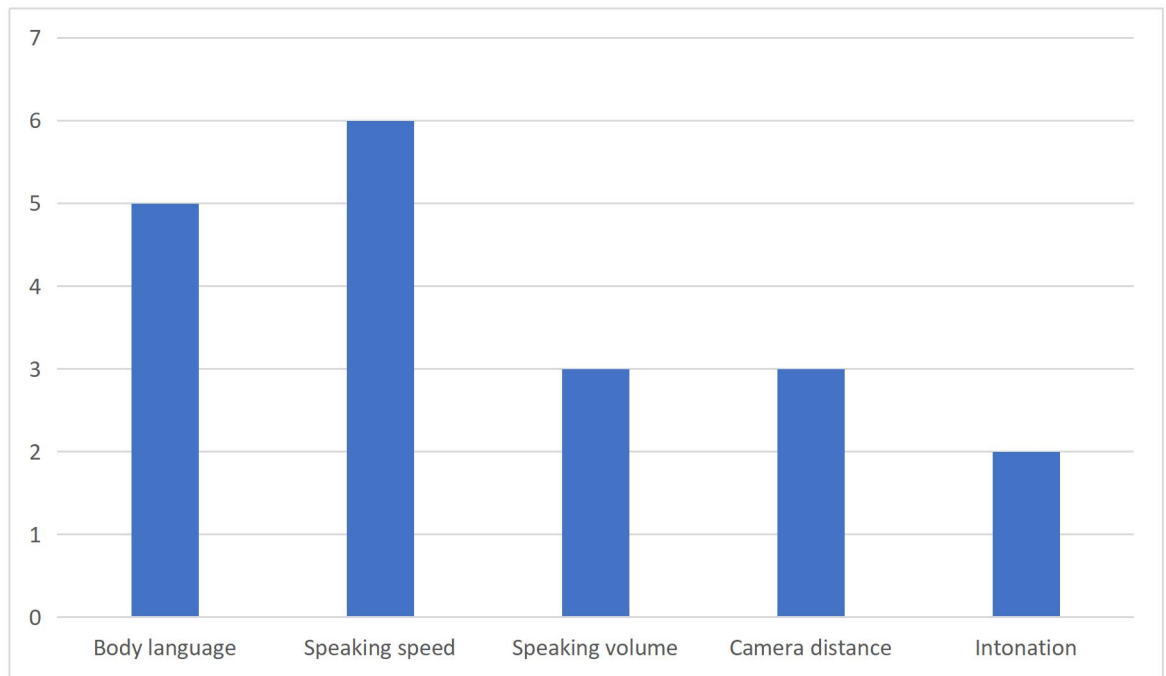


Figure 26. Multimodal elements in subsection 4.1.3 of the Appendix

As can be seen from Figure 26, four types of multimodal elements were identified in 4.1.3 of the Appendix. Among these, speaking speed is used the most frequently, occurring six times. In five of these six instances it is used to show the attitude of the character, in examples 1 (Valdimir; Dad), 2 (Rebecca), 3 (Charlie), 5 (boss). In the other instance it is used by the speaker to stress information, in example 4 (Charlie). In row 1 of example 1 (Valdimir), Alexis speaks at a slow speed to thank his father-in-law for sponsoring his wedding, which shows his relaxed attitude. In row 3 of example 1 (Dad), Alexis is still speaking slowly, which again shows his relaxed attitude during his speech. In row 2 of example 2 (Rebecca), Anna is speaking at a fast speed, which shows her positive attitude towards helping the guest as was specifically requested by Rebecca. Then, in row 1 of example 3 (Charlie), Tanya's slow speaking speed shows her negative attitude about the favour being requested by Charlie. In row 1 of example 5 (boss), at first Derek is speaking at slow speed, which shows his serious attitude in the conversation. In row 2 of example 4 (Charlie), Anna

is speaking slowly to stress her understanding of the warning given by Charlie in their conversation.

Body language is the second most frequently identified element in this subsection, occurring five times in the following examples: 1 (Valdimir; the guy; Dad), 3 (Charlie) and 4 (Charlie). Body language is used here to show the attitude of the character during the conversation. In example 1 (Valdimir; the guy; Dad), the body language of Alexis, such as not standing up straight, smiling and shaking his head, shows his relaxed attitude during his toast. In row 1 of example 3 (Charlie), Tanya crosses her arms in front of her body, nods her head while she is speaking, shakes her head while Charlie is speaking and rolls her eyes. This body language shows Tanya's negative attitude about the favour being requested by Charlie. In row 2 of example 4 (Charlie), Anna smiles and nods her head to confirm that she understands the warning given by Charlie, which shows her positive attitude towards confirming her mistake.

Speaking volume and camera distance are each used three times. In the case of speaking volume, all three instances show the attitude of the speaker, in examples 2 (Rebecca), 3 (Charlie) and 5 (boss (second time)). In row 2 of example 2 (Rebecca), at first Anna's speaking volume is loud, which shows her positive attitude of confirmation towards helping one of their guests as this was specifically requested by Rebecca. In row 1 of example 3 (Charlie), Tanya's speaking volume is loud, which shows her unwillingness to help Charlie. In row 4 of example 5 (boss), Derek's speaking volume is low, which shows his sad attitude once he understands Rebecca's strict attitude.

Regarding camera distance, in row 2 of example 2(Rebecca), the close distance camera shot indicates that Anna is receiving an important task from Rebecca. Moreover, this camera distance shows her obvious positive attitude towards this new task. In row 2 and row 4 of example 5 (boss), the close camera distance reflects that Rebecca and Derek are talking about something serious.

Lastly, there are two examples of the use of intonation to stress certain information in the conversation, in the words 'Vladimir' and 'Dad' in example 1. In row 1 of example 1, Alexis puts the intonation on 'Vladimir' in his toast, which stresses that Mr. Balanovsky is the person who paid for his wedding. Next, in row 3



of example 1, Alexis puts the intonation on ‘Dad’, which indicates that he is trying to reduce the distance between Mr. Balanovsky and himself.

#### *4.1.3.2 Translation strategies*

Analysis of the conversation among staff in this subsection focuses on the use of address terms from subordinate to superordinate. Three of them use the first name of the addressee, and two of them use ‘boss’. In an English working context, it is normal to use first names in conversations among staff regardless of their relative positions, as has been mentioned above. However, in a Chinese working context, the subordinate needs to use ‘surname + position’ or the title of their position, such as department leader or boss, to address the superordinate. Additionally, omitting the address term is an option. Therefore, the subtitler omits the address terms in examples 2 (Rebecca), 3 (Charlie) and 4 (Charlie). Also, in example 5 (boss), the subtitler omits the address term ‘boss’ in the subtitle. There are two main reasons for a subtitler to adopt this strategy. Firstly, the close physical distance between addresser and addressee is shown clearly through medium close shots or close shots during the conversation. Secondly, the other pragmatic meanings which are created through the combination of the address term and other multimodal elements are still supplemented by these multimodal elements for the target audience.

#### **4.1.4 Equal intimate dyads in address terms**

##### *4.1.4.1 The functions of single multimodal elements in the audiovisual programme*

In subsection 4.1.4, Equal intimate dyads of the Appendix, 21 address terms were analysed in relation to ten pieces of chosen conversation. In one example a guest is addressing her lover, while in the others the staff are conversing among themselves or with their relatives. Therefore, it can be seen that in this subsection, there is little social distance between the addresser and the addressee. As a result, instead of being intended to show respect, the address terms are chosen for various pragmatic purposes. Since they are close to each other, certain address terms, even including taboo words, are used for creating the humorous effect in this subsection. This is an effective strategy for showing close relationships between people. Through mocking themselves or people who are close to them, the amusement is increased and the distance between the interlocutors in the conversation is reduced. These address

terms offer various pragmatic meanings during the conversation through the combination with other multimodal elements.

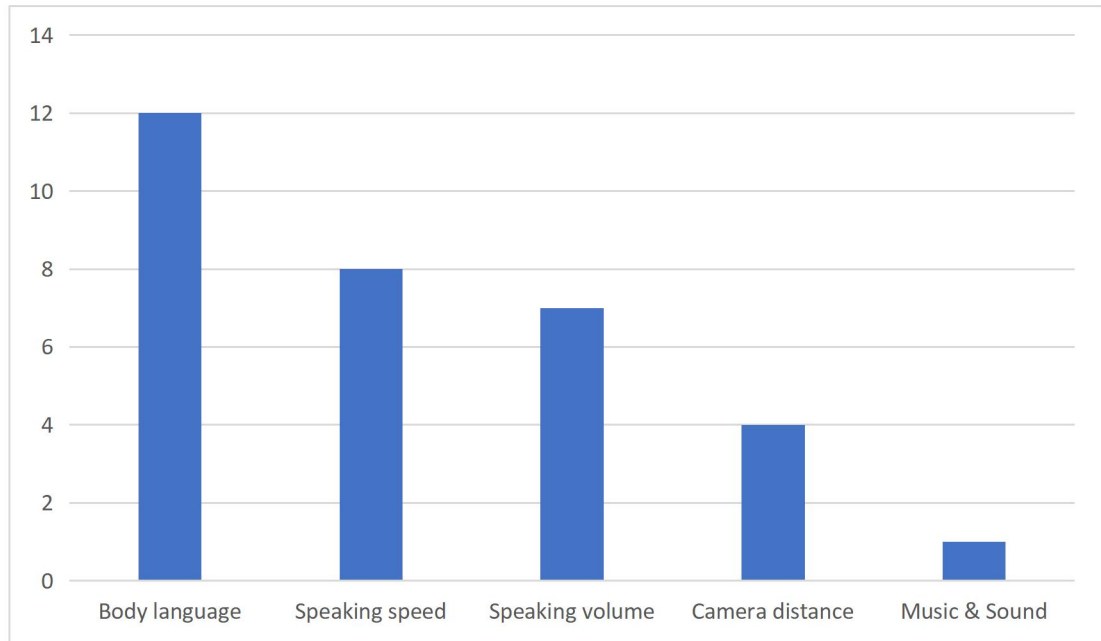


Figure 27. Multimodal elements in subsection 4.1.4 of the Appendix

As can be seen from the above chart, four kinds of multimodal elements are used during the conversation in combination with the chosen address terms, including body language, speaking speed, speaking volume and camera distance. Body language is the main multimodal element in this group of examples, occurring 12 times. In five of the 12 instances it is used to show the attitude of the speaker, in five instances it is used for creating a sense of humour and irony during their conversation, while in the remaining three it is used to attract the attention of the hearers.

The first five examples that use body language are examples 1 (John, my...the other man), 2 (Ben), 7 (Tone), 8 (my friend) and 9 (this woman). In example 1 (John, my...the other man), Liz (hotel guest) shakes her head, tilts her head to her left hand side and points her eyes to the left side. This body language is used to show her hesitation while she is speaking. Specifically, this body language causes her to stop speaking a couple of times, which shows that she is trying to find a proper way to explain her relationship with the other guest to Charlie so she can get help from him. In example 2 (Ben), Anna frowns, stares at Ben and shrugs her shoulders. This body language shows her negative attitude towards Ben, who is not showing enough

interest in the expensive gifts she has received. In row 8 of example 7 (Tone), Charlie smiles and nods his head at Tony, which shows his appreciation and enjoyment of the small talk with Tony. In row 7 of example 8 (my friend), Charlie smiles when he uses 'my friend' to address Tony. Since Charlie is making a joke about giving punishment to Tony if he gets promotion in the future, this body language shows he is just joking with Tony. In row 2 of example 9 (this woman), Charlie shakes his head towards Miss Bailey (the music band manager), which shows his negative attitude towards this lady since she is always picking on him and complaining about the service in this hotel.

In the next five instances body language is used for creating a humorous effect and irony, in examples 3 (children), 5 (boy; the wrong man), 6 (girl) and 8 (bastard). In row 2 of example 3 (children), Ben raises his head to watch Anna's departure and puts on a big smile. This shows he is gloating because Anna and Charlie have to go on night shift just after hearing a murder story. In row 2 of example 5 (boy; the wrong man), Charlie uses his left hand to point to the table side without looking at James. By doing this, he pretends he does not know his colleague. This is a counter back from Charlie to James since James expressed irony in row 1 when he first realised that Charlie and Jackie were staying in their hotel as guests. Next, in row 8 (the wrong man), James raises his eyebrows and uses his right hand to point to the air, which shows he is emphasising his idea and specifically making fun of Charlie. In example 6 (girl), Charlie smiles, raises his eyebrows, nods his head and shrugs his shoulders to show his amusement when he hears that the reason Gino is working on his skill at pretending to be a gay person is that a male guest showed interest in Gino and gave him generous tips the last time he stayed in their hotel. In row 7 of example 8 (bastard), Charlie smiles, nods his head, stands on tiptoes and stretches his neck towards Tony. From this body language it can be seen that Charlie is enjoying a relaxed talk with Tony.

In addition, body language is used by the speaker for the purpose of attracting attention from the hearer in the following two examples, namely 4 (Charlie) and 10 (Charlie). In example 4 (Charlie), Jackie keeps peeking at Charlie while she is speaking, as she wants to know his reaction to her filling him in on her dating information. Also, she smiles, shakes her head and shrugs her shoulders to try to get Charlie's attention, so they can have a conversation instead of travelling in silence in

the lift. In row 7 of example 10 (Charlie), Jackie nods her head and stares at Charlie while she is talking. She does this during the conversation to try to get Charlie's attention and give an implicit hint that Charlie is one of her marriage options. It should be noticed that in the last two examples, attracting attention is not the only function performed by body language, since it also includes some other pragmatic meanings. In example 4 of this subsection, the combination of using Charlie's first name and peeking at him is also used for the purpose of breaking the ice and inviting Charlie to give an opinion in their conversation. In example 10 of this subsection, the combination of using Charlie's first name and staring at him serves as a hint that Jackie could marry Charlie. In these two examples, the combination of body language and the address term is used to construct implicit pragmatic meanings for the source language audience to infer. However, because the address terms are omitted in the target text, the implicit pragmatic meanings cannot be inferred by their target language audience.

Secondly, speaking speed is used eight times through combination with the chosen address terms, which is as many times as speaking volume. In seven of these eight instances it is used to show the attitude of the speaker, namely in examples 1 (John, my...the other man), 3 (children), 5 (Jackie; the wrong man; staff; anybody) and 7 (Charles). In row 2 of example 1 (John, my...the other man), Liz (the guest) is trying to get some help from Charlie. She has to explain to Charlie that the man who came with her the last time was her lover and not her husband. Her slow speaking speed shows that she is trying to find a proper way to explain the complicated situation to Charlie. In row 2 of example 3 (children), Ben uses a quick speaking speed to show his good mood as well as his ironic attitude toward Anna and Charlie. In row 1 of example 5 (anybody), the speaking speed used by James changes from slow to fast, which shows the change in his attitude from pleasant to surprised and jealous when he sees the guests are actually his colleagues. In row 8 of example 5 (Jackie; the wrong man), James then reverts from a fast to a slow speaking speed, which shows his friendly attitude to Jackie and aggressive attitude to Charlie. In row 9 of example 5 (staff), Charlie uses a fast speaking speed, which shows his dissatisfaction with James. Additionally, in row 10 of example 5 (Jackie, Charlie), a fast speaking speed is used to indicate a busy working environment. James is filling in Charlie and Jackie on updated work information before he leaves their room. In row 1 of example 7

(Charles), Tony is speaking at fast speed, which shows his concern toward Charlie. Finally, in one example, in row 4 of example 2 (Ben), Anna uses a fast speaking speed to try to attract Ben's attention, since he is not showing sufficient interest in her newly received expensive gift.

Thirdly, in seven address terms a change of speaking volume is used to provide various information to the audience. It is used three times to show the speaker's attitude (example 5 (staff), 8 (bastard) and 9 (this woman)), twice for the purpose of creating irony (example 5 (boy) and (bloody peasant)), and once to indicate a busy working environment (example 5 (Jackie) and (Charlie) in row 10). In row 9 of example 5 (staff), Charlie raises his voice to show his pretend angry attitude towards James. In row 7 of example 8 (bastard; my friend), Charlie's voice changes from medium to low volume, to show Charlie's happy attitude when pretending to harass Tony during the conversation. Also, it reduces the threat of this harassment by Charlie of Tony. In row 1 of example 9 (this woman), Charlie uses a quiet voice to show his dissatisfaction towards one of the guests since the guest he is talking about is standing not far away from him. In row 2 of example 5 (boy), Charlie uses a voice of medium volume, which shows his happy mood is not being ruined by James's irony and he pretends he did not hear what James said when he came through the door. The use of medium volume shows the calm attitude on the part of Charlie, and he is also using this as a way to counter back to James for his irony. In row 12 of example 5 (Bloody peasants), James's speaking volume changes from medium to low, which creates pretend irony from him to Charlie. Also, doing this reduces the threat to the positive face of Charlie. In row 10 of example 5 (Jackie; Charlie), James raises his voice to convey the updated work information both to Jackie and Charlie, which indicates that Jackie and Charlie will have lots of work to do when they get back to their real life work from their one night of relaxation in their dream life.

Next, camera distance is used in four examples, namely example 8 (hard arse; bastard; my friend) and 9 (this woman). According to the existing differences in camera distance, the source language audience can infer the relative social distance between the speaker and the hearer. In example 8 (hard arse; bastard; my friend), the camera distance is close shot, which shows a close relationship between Tony and Charlie. Therefore, Tony feels free to tell Charlie the real reason why other staff also want Charlie to get the promotion. However, Charlie does not want other staff to

think he is soft, so he feels free as well to tell Tony that he will be a strict boss in the future if he gets the job, in a humorous way. In example 9 (this woman), the close camera distance also indicates the close relationship between Tony and Charlie. They are on the same side, so they feel comfortable to discuss what they think about other guests with each other.

Finally, music and sound is used once in example 3 (children). The background music creates a scary environment for this conversation, which shows that after hearing the murder story from Tony, Anna and Charlie feel panic, though these two still have to do a night shift on that evening. Anna stands up to follow Charlie to start their night shift.

#### *4.1.4.2 Translation strategies*

Regarding the examples from 4.1.4 of the Appendix, it was found that eight out of the 22 address terms, accounting for nearly half of the examples, are omitted in the subtitle. In the cases of examples 2 (Ben), 3 (children), 4 (Charlie), 5 (boy), 6 (girl), 7 (Charles; Tone) and 10 (Charlie), omission of the address terms does not have much effect on the communication since the speakers and hearers are on familiar terms with each other. Through the combination with other multimodal elements in the conversation, the target language audience can infer part of the pragmatic meaning which is created by these address terms. Kozloff (2000: 43-47) mentions that relationships between the characters can also be inferred according to the interplay between the characters during the conversation. For example, in example 2 (Ben), through Anna's fast speaking speed and her body language the target language audience can infer that she wants to attract more attention from Ben. However, in the TT, some pragmatic meanings which are expressed by the address terms are lost due to the address term being omitted. Thus, in example 4 (Charlie), the address term 'Charlie' is used as a hint to invite Charlie to say something so Jackie can find an excuse to get back with him. However, without this address term, it becomes a purposeless explanation from Jackie to Charlie to ease the embarrassment of the two of them travelling in silence in the lift.

A total of ten address terms are rephrased in the following examples, namely 1(John, my...the other man), 5 (the wrong man; bloody peasant; Jackie in row 8), 8 (hard arse; bastard; my friend), 9 (this woman), 10 (George (row 5); George (row 8)).

The analysis demonstrates that in some cases the pragmatic meaning of the address term is lost or changed. In example 1 (John, my...the other man), the continuous changing of address terms to address one person is used to show hesitation on the part of the addresser, but this hesitation is lost in the subtitle. Although her body language serves as a supplement to reflect her hesitation, the pragmatic meaning from the address term is lost in the subtitle.

From the above analysis and discussion of the examples from 4.1.4 of the Appendix, it can be seen that there is little social distance between the speaker and the hearer. Therefore, showing respect or politeness in the address term is not as important or such a priority as it is in the examples in 4.1.1 of the Appendix, where the relations between speaker and hearer are not close. However, in this subsection, the address terms are selected to show various pragmatic meanings, such as to increase or decrease the social distance between the interlocutors to produce humorous effects. The multimodal elements which are used in this subsection are used in general as a reflection of the speaker's attitude. In other words, although multimodal elements are used as supplementary information to work with the address terms, the address terms can also express various pragmatic meanings independently of the multimodal elements.

#### *4.1.4.3 Analysis and discussion of the stimuli which are offered by verbal elements and non-verbal elements with each other during the conversation*

Three main stimuli are provided by the address terms themselves as well as in combination with other multimodal elements in this subsection. Firstly, address terms can be used to reduce the social distance, such as by showing close relationships in the following examples: example 5 (Jackie in row 8), example 7 (Tone), 8 (my friend) and example 9 (this woman). In the translated text, if this kind of address term is omitted or rephrased, the specific pragmatic meaning which is created by these address terms in the source language text is ignored. As a result, it is harder for the target language audience to infer the efforts being made by the interlocutors to maintain their relationship, though the multimodal elements may offer supplementary information such as a friendly attitude through a smile. In row 8 of example 5 (Jackie, the wrong man), James is speaking at a fast speed. Also, he uses Jackie's first name to address her, which shows that he is chatting with a friend

and sharing his opinions with her. However, in the translated text, Jackie's first name is omitted and the translator instead uses the second person pronoun 'you' to refer to Jackie. This makes the distance between the speaker and the hearer hard for the target language audiences to judge.

In row 8 of example 7 (Tone), Charlie uses the diminutive 'Tone' to address Tony, to finish this conversation with a smile on his face. The use of this address term also offers three pieces of information to the source language audience. Firstly, it reinforces that Charlie and Tony are good friends. Secondly, Charlie appreciates Tony's concern for him as a friend. Thirdly, this quick chat is more private and to do with their personal relationship rather than their roles as work colleagues. Using a nickname or diminutive is an effective strategy for reducing distance between people in conversation. In consequence, the source language audience can infer that this conversation is happening between two good friends from the nickname used during the conversation. In the subtitle, the address term 'Tone' is omitted. Without representation of the nickname, the target language can hardly infer directly whether this conversation is being conducted as colleagues or as friends and the closeness that exists in the original conversation between these two characters is therefore reduced.

In row 7 of example 8 (bastard; my friend), in the later part of Charlie's speech, he uses 'my friend' to address Tony to stress their close relationship and reduce the threat to the positive face of Tony. Also, combined with Charlie's body language and the camera distance, the source language audience can infer that Charlie is trying to tell Tony that he will not be a soft boss if he gets promotion in the future, in a humorous way. In the translated text, the translator deletes 'my friend' in the subtitle. Without the initial stress on their good relationship, the last sentence sounds like a formal warning from Charlie to Tony. Therefore, the threat to the positive face of Tony is increased to some extent in the subtitle.

In example 9 (this woman), close shot and a soft speaking volume are used to show a relatively close relationship between Tony and Charlie. Therefore, this conversation environment is comfortable enough for them to express their attitude about some guest with each other. In addition, Charlie uses body language to show his negative attitude toward the music band manager. By using the address term 'this



woman’, Charlie expresses his negative attitude to this guest since she is always picking on Charlie because of her dissatisfaction with the hotel’s service. Furthermore, this address term is used to show Charlie’s negative attitude toward the rude way in which the music band manager has driven those ladies away in an insulting way. Moreover, using this address term shows the good relationship between Charlie and Tony. Since they are good friends, they can complain about something or someone to each other without it being an issue. In the subtitle, the translator just uses a third person pronoun ‘her’ instead of ‘this woman’. Firstly, this subtitle reduces the dissatisfaction expressed by Charlie with the music band manager to some extent. Additionally, because this has become a flat complaint it cannot show the good relationship between Charlie and Tony and could be used with any member of staff instead of just a close colleague.




Furthermore, when the relationships between the speakers and hearers are close, they sometimes use taboo words in their conversations, as in example 8 (hard arse; bastard) and example 5 (bloody peasant). This does not damage their relationship; on the contrary, their confident use of taboo words in these situations is an effective way of showing the closeness of their relationship. However, taboo words are toned down in the translated text. As a result, the function of decreasing the distance between the interlocutors by using taboo words is missed out. In row 4 of example 8 (hard arse; bastard), Tony uses an offensive address term ‘hard arse’ to refer to a kind of boss who is bossy to other staff. The close shot and the relaxed body language in this row indicate that Tony and Charlie are close to each other. Therefore, the source language audience can infer that Tony feels free to talk with Charlie in a friendly environment during the conversation. In the subtitle, the translator translates ‘hard arse’ into ‘严厉的人’ (strict person) instead of maintaining the taboo words and the register in the subtitle in row 4. According to this subtitle, the target language audience can infer that staff would be unhappy about a bossy person becoming their new deputy manager. However, the sense of humour is dismissed. Therefore, the target language audience only can infer a formal complaint from Tony’s words. In consequence, from this term, the target language audience can hardly infer the closeness of the relationship between Charlie and Tony in the same way as the source language audience. Next, in row 7 of example 8 (bastard), Charlie tells Tony that he will become a strict boss if he gets this promotion. He uses

‘bastard’ in a joking way to refer to himself and to make it clear that he will not be a soft boss. Combined with his body language, changing speaking volume and camera distance, the source language audience can infer that Charlie is making clear that he will not be a soft boss to Tony in a humorous manner. In the translated text, the translator translates ‘bastard’ into ‘讨厌的人’ (annoying person). In doing so, the taboo word is deleted in the subtitle. As a result, the sense of humour is also removed. This changes the environment of this conversation from casual to serious. Therefore, the good relationship between Charlie and Tony, which enables them to joke around with each other, cannot be inferred by target language audiences.

In row 12 of example 5 (Bloody peasants), before James leaves Jackie and Charlie’s room, he uses ‘Bloody peasants’ to address them. The changing speaking volume also shows James’ dissatisfaction at being asked to leave the room by those two. The lower volume when using this address term shows that James is pretending to be dissatisfied due to not getting tips from the people he is serving. It shows his actually sarcastic attitude toward Charlie and Jackie because they do not deserve to stay in a good place like their hotel. In the subtitle, the taboo words are omitted. The translator uses ‘穷光蛋’ (pauper) to maintain the meaning of James’ sarcasm regarding the poor economic situation of Charlie and Jackie. By combining this translated address term with the changing speaking volume, the target language audience can infer James’ sarcastic attitude.

Secondly, address terms are used to create a sense of humour in the following examples: example 3 (children), example 5 (‘anybody’, ‘boy’, ‘the wrong man’ and ‘staff’) and example 6 (girl). Since the examples in this subsection involve staff who are close to each other, they sometimes use address terms that increase the distance between them in order to express irony towards each other. Here is the Multimodal Transcription framework of example 3.

Number & Time	Visual Frame	Visual Image	Kinesic Action	Soundtrack	Chinese Subtitle & Back Translation
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<p>1. 00:08:22</p>		<p>CP: Stationary D: CS VC: Hotel staff restaurant HP: Obliquely VF: Charlie looks at Anna then down to the table</p>	<p>Charlie uses his head to point to his right side, Charlie smiles, Jackie puts her left hand on the table and smiles</p>	<p>FIELD: [♪] ☀ Hotel staff restaurant FIGURE: Come on. n, M</p>	<p>Charlie: 走 吧 Back translation: Charlie: Let's go.</p>
<p>2. 00:08:31</p>	 	<p>CP: Stationary D: CS VC: Hotel staff restaurant HP: Obliquely VF: Ben looks at Anna</p>	<p>Anna stands up, Ben raises his head and smiles</p>	<p>FIELD: [♪] ☀ Hotel staff restaurant FIGURE: Gino: Have fun, children. n, F</p>	<p>Ben: 你们 好好享受 Back translation: Ben: You do enjoy.</p>



In row 2 of example 3 (children), the scary background music provides a good opportunity for Ben to make fun of Anna and Charlie. Ben's speaking speed and body language show his gloating attitude in this conversation. The address term 'children' is being used to cheer Anna and Charlie up in an ironic way. By doing this, Ben tries to lighten the environment since they have just heard a scary murder story from Tony. However, in the translated text, this address term is omitted. Although the target language audience still can infer the irony from Ben, the meaning of 'to be scared as easily as children' is lost.

In row 1 of example 5 (anybody), James uses 'anybody' to refer to Jackie and Charlie after he turns his back to them, to comment sarcastically that these two

people are staying at a place that is way out of their reach. Also, when combined with the changing speaking speed, the source language audience can infer that James' attitude changes from that of being polite to hotel guests to being sarcastic to his colleague. In the translated text, this address term is literally translated into '什么人' (anybody). When combined with the changing speaking speed from James, the target language audience can infer James' sarcastic attitude toward Jackie and Charlie. Next, in row 2 of example 5 (boy), Charlie uses the general term 'boy' to get back at James using a medium volume. Three pieces of information are provided by this address term. Firstly, Charlie mocks James by pretending that he does not even know him. Secondly, Charlie shows his provisional status as a guest (rather than a colleague) to make fun of James. Thirdly, his mood is not affected by the mockery from James. In that case, the source language audience can infer a sense of humour according to this address term. However, in the subtitle, this address term is deleted. Therefore, only a formal order is retained in the subtitle. In consequence, the target audience can hardly infer the information that Charlie is making fun of James. Later, in row 8 of example 5 (the wrong man), James uses 'the wrong man' to address Charlie in making fun of the latter's lack of the financial resources to offer Jackie a future life spent in five-star hotels. Since James uses a general reference term to refer to Charlie, this reduces the threat to the positive face of Charlie. Additionally, the sense of humour is created through this address term 'the wrong man', since James also pretends that he does not know Charlie, as a counter back to row 2. Also, the changing speed of James' speech emphasises his sarcastic attitude to Charlie. In the translated sentence, the translator uses Charlie's first name to address him. In this sentence, a specific address term is used, which increases the threat to the positive face of Charlie. At the same time, the sense of humour is lost according to this subtitle. After that, in row 9 of example 5 (staff), Charlie uses 'staff', a general term, to address James, still pretending that he does not know James, as a continuing counter back to James who keeps trying to break Jackie's and his own good mood. Also, the speaking volume and speed are kept at medium, which shows that Charlie's mood is not being affected by James. This enables the source language audience to infer that Charlie is having a laugh with James. Using this general term reduces the threat to the positive face of James since he is pretending to criticise the service which is offered by a stranger. In the translation, this address term is retained

in the Chinese subtitle. Therefore, the target language audience can infer that Charlie is joking around with James. The general reference in the subtitle also reduces the threat to the positive face of James.

In row 2 of example 6 (girl), after hearing Gino explain why he is trying so hard to get generous tips from one of their regular guests who is interested in him, the camera distance and body language from Charlie show a range of emotions from surprise to supporting Gino with sarcasm. Here is the Multimodal Transcription framework of example 6.

Number & Time	Visual Frame	Visual Image	Kinesic Action	Soundtrack	Chinese Subtitle & Back Translation
1 00:28:21		CP: Stationary D: MCS VC: Hotel room HP: Obliquely VF: Gino looks around to Tony, Ben then to Charlie, Ben and Charlie look at Gino	Gino looks around, frowns and nods his head	FIELD: staff laugh ☀ Hotel room FIGURE: Gino: Last time he was here he gave me 100 pounds just for a vodka tonic. n, S	Gino: 上次我端他一杯酒 他赏我100镑 Back translation: Gino: Last time he gave me 100 pounds as tips only for one drink.
2 00:28:23		CP: Stationary D: CS VC: Hotel room HP: Obliquely VF: Charlie looks at Gino and Ben back and forth	Charlie smiles, raises his eyebrows, nods his head, shrugs his shoulders and smiles	FIELD: staff laugh ☀ Hotel room FIGURE: Charlie: Jesus. You go, <b>girl!</b> n, M	Charlie: 那你努力了 Back translation: Charlie: Then you need to work harder.

This is a conversation only between staff, so the address term chosen in row 2 is informal. Furthermore, addressing Gino as ‘girl’ shows Charlie’s use of sarcasm.

Charlie uses this address term to express encouragement of the special training engaged in by Gino in order to get the generous tips. This reduces the distance between the two staff. The source language audience can infer the sense of sarcasm and encouragement according to this address term during this conversation. In the subtitle, the translator deletes this address term. When the subtitle is combined with other multimodal elements as mentioned above, the target language audience can infer the staff's encouragement of Gino. However, since the sense of sarcasm is reduced in this subtitle, the original purpose of reducing the distance is lost.

Thirdly, address terms can be used to attract the attention of the addressee (example 2 (Ben) and 7(Charles)) as well as to express other pragmatic meanings implicitly during the conversations (examples 4 (Charlie) and 10 (Charlie)) in this subsection. In the latter two examples, through the use of an address term in the conversation, the source language audience can infer an implicit pragmatic meaning through the stress placed on the address term. However, if these address terms are omitted in the target language text, this makes it harder for the target language audience to infer some parts of the implicit pragmatic meaning. In row 4 of example 2 (Ben), Anna calls Ben by his first name in an attempt to draw Ben's attention to the value of her earrings since these are very expensive trophies from her last date. Additionally, it shows that she notices that Ben is not showing much interest in these earrings and her body language and her fast speaking speed show that she wants him to pay more attention. In the subtitle, the translator omits Ben's first name. Without Ben's name, this sentence becomes a confirmation of the last sentence, which is a confirmation of the value of the earrings. There is a conflict between Anna's verbal meaning and her facial expression. Since she is frowning and staring at Ben, it looks like she is arguing about something with Ben. However, the semantic meaning is a confirmation of the formal information from Ben. Therefore, without the address terms, the target language audience cannot infer that Anna is trying to regain Ben's attention to show off the value of her gift.

In row 1 of example 7 (Charles), Tony uses the formal version of Charlie's first name, 'Charles', to address him. When combined with his fast speaking speed, it shows his concern that something serious might have happened to Charlie according to Charlie's body language in the hotel lobby. In the translated text, this address term is omitted. Therefore, the serious concern from Tony toward Charlie is lost. In row 1

of example 4 (Charlie), the body language from Jackie shows that she is a little bit of nervous about communicating with Charlie as she tries to break the ice between Charlie and herself when they are alone together in the lift. The address term is used as an invitation to ask Charlie to jump into this conversation to give his view. By using this address term, Jackie gives a hint to Charlie that she wants him to stop her meeting the other guy so they can start considering their relationship seriously.

In row 7 of example 10 (Charlie), Jackie uses Charlie's first name to address him when she answers his question. The explicit meaning is that Jackie is answering the question from the person who is asking. Combined with her body language, the implicit meaning is that Jackie is trying to attract Charlie's attention. Therefore, the source language audience can infer from Jackie's specific use of his name that she is attempting to imply to Charlie that she could marry him. This implication can be confirmed later when Charlie does not react to her hints, and she shows her disappointment by standing up from the bed and stopping any further conversation with Charlie. In the subtitle, the translator omits this address term. According to the subtitle, Jackie just answers with what she could do to solve the problem. Therefore, the target language audience cannot infer that Jackie is hinting to Charlie that she could marry him to solve her problem.

As can be seen from the analysis in section 4.1 of the chosen address terms from source text and their translation in target text from section 4.1.1 to 4.1.4, the pragmatic use of address terms in terms of politeness is not exactly the same between English and Chinese in different communication contexts. Address terms are adopted in different conversation contexts for different communication purposes in different cultures and societies, so audiences can infer relevant information on the differences in social status and distance between the addresser and addressee. In addition, the pragmatic use of the adopted address terms can be inferred by their audience based on their cognitive context, which is associated with their culture background and their personal encyclopaedic knowledge of the world (Escandell-Vidal 1996: 634-637; Escandell-Vidal 1998: 47; Chen 2014: 125). Moreover, the cooperation between the chosen address terms and related multimodal elements is important for the inference of relevant explicit and implicit information in audiovisual programmes. The stimuli provided by multimodal elements in the target language audience's cognitive context should be considered in the process of subtitle translation, so their

target language audience can infer the necessary information. By using the combination of Relevance Theory and Multimodal Transcription, this thesis has identified and discussed some of the various multimodal elements that exist in audiovisual programmes, to help translators to figure out the different relationships between verbal elements and different multimodal elements which could affect the inference of the pragmatic use of politeness between English to Chinese in the process of subtitles translation.

There are three commonalities which can be seen in the analysis of the translation of pragmatic use of address terms in section 4.1. Firstly, instead of displaying the various purposes of the pragmatic use of address terms, inference of the differences in social status and social distance between the addresser and addressee is prioritised in the translation of address terms in the process of subtitling. As a result, this could cause the failure of the target language audience to infer some necessary information in audiovisual programmes. This can be seen from the comparison between section 4.1.1 and 4.1.4. In section 4.1.1, when there are relatively big differences of social status and social distance between the addresser and addressee, the adopted address terms and other multimodal elements are being used to provide stimuli to indicate these differences in the source text (Braun 1988: 258; Wood and Kroger 1991: 145; Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 523). Most of the stimuli provided by multimodal elements in section 4.1.1 can be inferred as similar information by their target language audience. Hence, the stimuli which are provided by these multimodal elements could offer a supplement to the translated text in the process of translation. Under these circumstances, the translated address terms maintain these differences in the process of translation to enable cooperation with related multimodal elements since it is also important in Chinese culture to use proper address terms to show politeness when the social status and distance are different between the speaker and the hearer (Zhong 2011: 45; Bogucki 2013: 90; He and Ren 2016: 171). As a result, a relatively high degree of interpretive resemblance between source text and target text is created through maximising the contextual effects with minimising processing effort (Gutt 2000: 105). Meanwhile, in section 4.1.4, most of the address terms are informal due to most of the research corpus consisting of interactions between hotel staff, who are of similar social status and close in social distance to each other. The relationships among staff enable them to adjust their social distance between being



working colleagues and close friends, back and forth with each other in different communication contexts to show their solidarity (Hudson 1996: 122; He and Ren 2016: 171). These address terms are being used to show intimacy between the interlocutors and fulfil other pragmatic purposes explicitly and implicitly during the conversation to display how they work with each other in different kinds of conversation contexts. In consequence, instead of being used as name labels for different individual identities, the address terms in section 4.1.4 are being used to represent various interpersonal relationships between addresser and addressee (Brown & Gilman, 1960; Braun 1988; Allerton 1996; Qin 2008; Bruti and Perego 2010; Zhong 2011; He and Ren 2016). Furthermore, from the analysis of the selected scene and episodes, it can be seen that instead of monotonously showing similar social status and close social distance, these address terms are also being used as a tactful instrument to fulfil various pragmatic purposes implicitly through the cooperation with related multimodal elements in specific conversation contexts in the source text, such as constructing face-saving strategies and creating humour. Since the differences of social status and social distance are not big in section 4.1.4, it can be seen that most of the address terms are deleted in the translated subtitle. As a result, the stimuli which are provided by multimodal elements might become obstacles to the inference of various interpersonal relationships and feelings of emotion towards interlocutors from their target language audience, which will be discussed in more detail in relation to the following second commonality.

Secondly, the stimuli which are provided by some body languages could cause difficulties for target language audience to infer a similar interpersonal relationship among the interlocutors in the target language text compared with that represented in the source language text. This difficulty is mainly shown in section 4.1.4, in which a variety of interpersonal relationships have been displayed in the source language text. Compared to other multimodal elements, the stimuli which are provided by body language can hardly be ignored in audiovisual programmes since they can be observed directly by their audience, no matter whether they are familiar with them or it is the first time they have seen them. In some examples of section 4.1.4, different face-saving strategies are being constructed implicitly through the cooperation between the specific chosen address terms and related multimodal elements to reduce the threat to the hearer's face. The fact that staff are doing this implicitly

shows that they are putting a great deal of effort into flexibly transferring their relationship between that of professional working colleagues to intimate friends according to the specific communication context. Also, it is an effective way to express information in a humorous way to reduce the threat to the speaker or hearer's face and to give rise to comedic or otherwise entertaining sequences. Additionally, the way in which different characters convey information is an opportunity for them to display their personality or indicate that there might be some specific reason for the character to express the information implicitly (Kozloff 2000: 43-45). Two different ways are being adopted to reduce the threat to the hearer's face implicitly in this research corpus. One is using address terms to claim common ground between interlocutors, so to some extent it implicitly reduces the degree of face-threatening from information which is being brought up by the speaker to the hearer. At the same time, other multimodal elements are being used to offer similar stimuli for the same purpose of reducing the threat to the hearer's face. The other way is using address terms to increase the distance between the speaker and the hearer, so when the speaker speaks out the information which threatens the hearer's face, it sounds like the threat is targeting a stranger instead of the hearer directly. Some body language are being used to offer stimuli which construct a threat to the hearer's face, such as pointing fingers to emphasize the aggressive from the speaker to the hearer in example 5 (the wrong man). Thus, the implicit information is constructed through the connection of opposite stimuli which are provided by multimodal elements and the chosen address term in the process of communication (Gutt 1996). In that case, when multimodal elements can be used to infer similar information in the target language based on their cognitive context, the collocated stimuli which are specifically provided by address terms become crucial to the target language audience to infer the necessary information from the conversation. In consequence, to offer ostensive relevance stimuli becomes necessary for the inference of adequate contextual effects with the proper amount of processing effort from their target language audience (Gutt 2000: 31-32). For the first way, when using address terms to claim common ground, the stimuli offered by the pragmatic use of an address term and its related multimodal elements overlap to some extent. That being the case, the supplementary information which is offered by other multimodal elements can be used to support the information which is deleted due to address terms' omission in the process of translation. However, the omission of the address terms in the second

kind of face-saving approach will affect the inference of the pragmatic use of address terms by their target language audience. This is because the audience would pick up the ostensive stimuli which are provided by multimodal elements spontaneously since they would presume that the stimuli provided in audiovisual programmes are there specifically for them to use to infer both informative and communicative intention while they are watching these programmes for the purpose of reaching a successful ostensive-inferential communication (Sperber and Wilson 1995: 163-171). However, in the second kind of situation, when using address terms to increase the distance between interlocutors, the stimuli provided by other multimodal elements for capture by the target language audience cannot on their own offer the complete stimuli to their target language audience to infer a similar communication intention. From the comparison of these two different face-saving strategies, it can be seen that for the purpose of reaching a high degree of interpretive resemblance of the pragmatic use of an address term between source text and target text, translators should consider the communication intention which is expressed through the chosen address term and other multimodal elements and how one element affects other elements to express information explicitly and implicitly in the process of translation. As we discussed in section 2.5.1 before, it is of pivotal importance to make sure optimal relevant stimuli can be offered to their target language audience, so they can infer the original communicative intention which is offered through the cooperation between the translated address terms and the existing related multimodal elements, without any unnecessary effort (Gutt 1998: 43; Hatim and Mason 2000: 433). This observation is consistent with the claim made by some studies related with the address terms translation in audiovisual programmes that simple omission of address terms in translation could affect the representations of the pragmatic use of these chosen address terms in audiovisual programmes, such as interpersonal meaning between the interlocutors and their personal characteristics (Hatim and Mason 2000: 444; Arnaiz 2006: 128-129; Bruti and Perego 2010: 65; Tomaszekiewicz 2010: 93; Szarkowska 2011: 79; Bogucki 2013: 90-91). Through the comparison of the chosen address terms and their translation in section 4.1.4, it can be seen that the pragmatic use of address terms has a strong relationship with other related multimodal elements in audiovisual programmes.

Last but not least, social distance is being represented differently in the workplace between English and Chinese. This can be seen from both section 4.1.2 and 4.1.3. In these two sections, most of the conversations happen between hotel staff and their hotel manager to communicate information about the daily working arrangements in their hotel. The social distance is not close between the interlocutors in these two sections. Also, the stimuli which are provided by other multimodal elements show that the proper social distance between the hotel manager and other staff is maintained when they communicate on work subjects in these two sections, which are similar in both culture contexts. However, the use of address terms in a working context between superior and inferior statuses is different between English and Chinese (He and Ren 2016: 171). In Chinese society, differences of authority and power are essentially expressed in people's communication, while in British society, independence and equality are rooted in their culture (Yu and Ren 2013: 38). In that case, translators need to make some adjustments to cooperate with the stimuli which are provided by other multimodal elements in the process of translation.

#### **4.2 Data analysis and discussion of the translation of humour**

This section will focus on the analysis and discussion of the examples which relate to the translation of humour. First, in subsection 4.2.1, the use of individual multimodal elements in examples will be analysed and discussed according to their frequency. In this subsection, the stimuli relating to humour expression which are offered by these single multimodal elements will be discussed. It will thereby be ascertained what kinds of stimuli can be offered by multimodal elements to allow us eventually to evaluate the influence of multimodal and verbal elements on humour. Second, in subsection 4.2.2 attention will turn to the examples which relate to the use of images and body language as the main stimuli in the conversation, as these two elements tend to be easily noticeable and offer essential stimuli for audiences in the process of making inferences. Third, subsection 4.2.3 will consider the examples which relate to the use of puns. Since puns are normally used to offer more than one meaning of the same word, the stimuli offered by multimodal elements which are related to this polysemy should be taken into account by translators. Fourth, subsection 4.2.4 will consider examples related to the use of implicit or explicit information. Last, subsection 4.2.5 will concentrate on examples involving taboo words in relation to humour.

A reminder of the overall premise of this multimodal analysis may be useful here. Considering the complex restrictions associated with the translation of audiovisual programmes, translators often have to make modifications or adjustments during this process. In such cases, translators need to pay attention to the balance of contextual effects and the processing efforts required by the target audience. Through analysis and discussion of examples in subsections 4.2.2. to 4.2.5, this study attempts to figure out the relationship between verbal elements and multimodal elements in humour expression in audiovisual programmes. Thereby, this research tries to determine the effects of multimodal elements, in interaction with both the source text and the translated text, on the inference of meaning by the respective audiences.

#### **4.2.1 Analysis of data on the use of multimodal elements in creating a humorous effect**

Fourteen examples have been selected from the first season of the *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006) and then categorised into three groups in the Appendix, namely equal intimate dyads (nine examples), equal non-intimate dyads (four examples) and unequal intimate dyads (superordinate to subordinate) (one example). This classification is borrowed from the classification of the address terms set out in section 4.1 of this chapter, but has been trimmed down from four to three categories due to the limited number of examples collected from the corpus of the study. As explained in section 2.3.3, this classification shows the differences in social distance and social status between the speaker and hearer. By using this classification in this section, this study tries to balance the number of the collected examples from different groups of people to maximise the variety of the examples. Most of the humour examples derive from the conversation among staff. The next largest group of humour examples derives from conversations between staff and the guests. In terms of conversations between superordinates and subordinates, the number of humour examples is relatively small, with only one example of superordinate to subordinate, while none were identified of subordinate to superordinate.

In section 4.2.1.1 of the Appendix, nine examples were selected for analysis. The interlocutors in these nine examples are all members of the hotel staff. Three examples involve discussions about their guests behind the guests' back. The remainder involve face to face conversations among the staff. The multimodal

elements used to supplement humour in these examples are presented below in Figure 28.

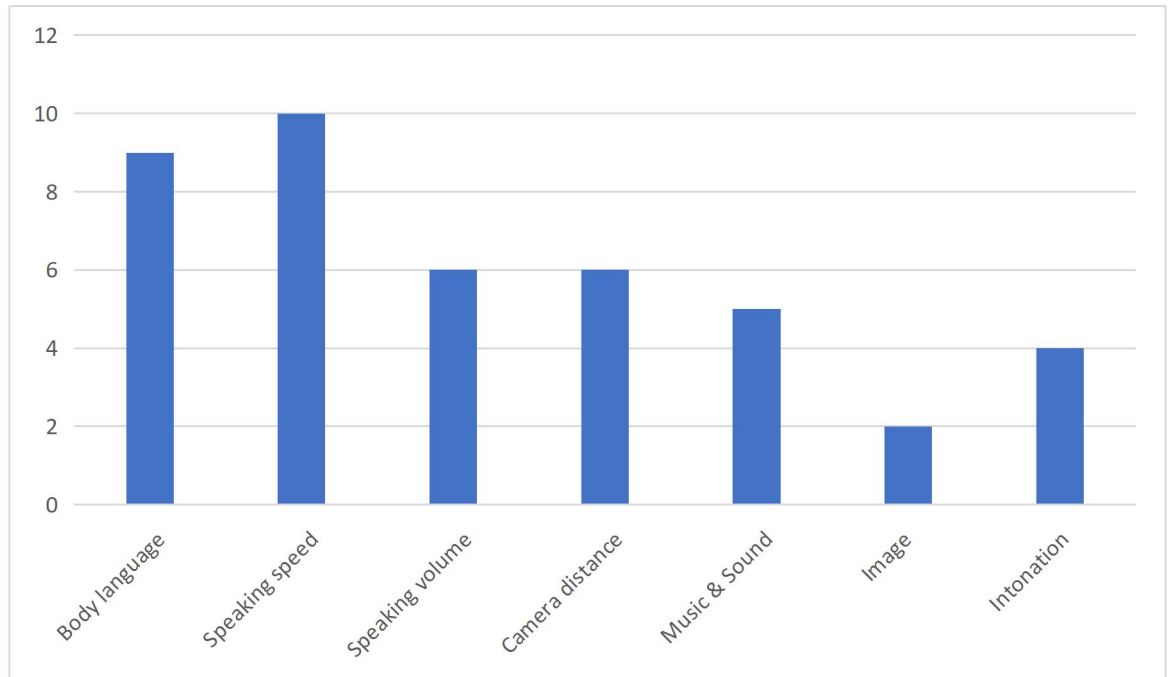


Figure 28. Multimodal elements in subsection 4.2.1.1 of the Appendix

Actors sometimes need to ‘create’ a voice based on their study of, and assumptions about the character whom they ‘meet’ in the script. Neves (2005: 222) states that some prosodic characteristics which are provided by sound, such as speaking speed, speaking volume and intonation, are used to create a strong or subtle effect on the audience, as for instance in the case of irony. As can be seen in Figure 28, the multimodal element used most frequently among these examples is speaking speed, occurring ten times. A number of examples will be discussed to show the range of ways in which speaking speed, as one of the multimodal elements, can affect the process of creating the sense of humour.

First, speaking speed is used seven times to show the attitude of the speaker in the following examples: example 1 (You’re hilarious; Thank you); 3 (Santa’s tacky Christmas list); 4 (boss); 6 (high fiving); 8 (cheap) and 9 (Do I look like I have the word ‘Stupid’ written on my forehead?). In row 6 of example 1 (You’re hilarious), Anna is speaking slowly, which, in combination with the compliment sentence: ‘You’re hilarious’, implies her ironic attitude towards Tony, who has just scared her. This speaking speed offers the stimulus to infer the implicit meaning that is being expressed by a neutral word, which reduces the threat to Tony’s positive face. By

contrast, in row 7 of example 1 (Thank you), Tony's speaking speed is fast, which shows his pleased attitude since he has succeeded in scaring Anna. By accepting the ironic compliment from Anna, he tries to create humour to save his own positive face. Next, in row 2 of example 3 (Santa's tacky Christmas list), Ben's speaking speed changes from fast to normal, which shows his ironic attitude towards the guests during the conversation. Combined with his metaphor use, this stimulus reinforces his attitude in this conversation. In row 9 of example 4 (boss), Tony is speaking fast, which shows his positive attitude in accepting Charlie's decision during their conversation. The use of this fast speaking speed reduces the threat to the positive face of Charlie. In row 4 of example 6 (high fiving), Anna's speaking speed is fast, which shows that she thinks Ben and Charlie are too slow to understand the reason for Rebecca's happiness. Similarly, in row 6 of example 8 (cheap), Anna's speaking speed is fast, which shows her strong attitude towards a guest about whom Charlie has related a story. In row 9 of example 9 (Do I look like I have the word 'Stupid' written on my forehead?), Tony is speaking fast, in this case to show that he is not affected by the question from Charlie. This speaking speed reduces the threat to the positive face of Charlie.

Second, the speaking speed is used twice for attracting attention in example 2 (intestines). In rows 1, 3, 5, 7 and 8 of example 2 (intestines), Tony's speaking speed changes from fast to slow when he tells other staff members a story about a murder that happened recently in another hotel for the purpose of trying to create a reaction from his colleagues. When he realises that Gino is not paying attention to his story, he initially keeps this slow speaking speed at the beginning of row 10 and then changes to fast when he begins the second sentence, as he tries to grab more of Gino's attention.

Third, the speaking speed is used once to indicate the busy working context in example 7 (not just kicking him in the balls). In row 4 of the same example, Anna is speaking fast while she and Ben are collecting files at the back of the reception area, and Anna therefore only has a couple of seconds to make her complaint about the guest to her colleague, which also shows the busy working environment in this conversation.

Last, the speaking speed is used once to emphasise information in example 5 (single). In row 1 of this example, Anna's speaking speed changes from slow to medium, to interrupt the conversation between Charlie and Tony and to attract their attention so that she might get an answer to her question.

The second most frequent multimodal element in the chosen examples from subsection 4.2.1.1 of the Appendix is body language, which is used nine times. It is used seven times to show the speaker's attitude (example 1 (You're hilarious; Thank you); 2 (intestines), 4 (boss), 5 (single), 7 (not just kicking him in the balls ) and 9 (Do I look like I have the word 'Stupid' written on my forehead?)) and twice to emphasise information (example 3 (Santa's tacky Christmas list), 6 (high fiving)). In row 6 of example 1 (You're hilarious), Anna forces a fake smile and shakes her head while she is speaking. By using such body language, she shows her ironic attitude towards Tony. In row 7 of example 1 (Thank you), Tony carries on putting away the files in his hand, smiles and avoids making eye contact with Anna. By using this body language, Tony feels satisfied with his prank and tries to save his own positive face in this conversation. In example 2 (intestines), while Tony is telling the murder story, other staff frown, wrinkle their brows or raises their eyebrows to show they are discomforted by this story. However, Gino does not adopt any specific facial expression, which shows he is not interested in Tony's story. Later, in row 12, Gino finally uses some body language after Tony finishes his story, nodding his head, waving his right hand in the air with a fork and knitting his eyebrows to show his strong attitude. However, he is using the above-mentioned body language to pay a compliment to the spaghetti bolognese instead of to react to the story, which also creates a humorous effect. In row 9 of example 4 (boss), Tony nods his head and smiles, which shows his positive attitude towards Charlie's decision. Since Charlie is suspicious that Tony is offering to help because Rebecca asked him to keep an eye on Tony while she is on holiday, Tony tries to prove that he is only offering to help because he wants to help the hotel. Therefore, by using this relaxed body language, Tony tries to show his friendly attitude and intention towards Charlie. Hence, Tony's body language is used to reduce the threat to the positive face of Charlie. In row 1 of example 5 (single), Anna leans on the reception desk and points her finger in the air while she asks a question, which shows that she is trying to interrupt the conversation between Tony and Charlie in order to get an answer to her question. In



row 4 of example 7 (not just kicking him in the balls), Anna smiles and waves her hand to Mr. Green, who has earlier shown interest in her, while he is looking at her. However, when he is no longer looking at her Anna stops smiling. This body language shows that Anna is pretending to be nice to the guest since she is in competition with Ben to be the best member of staff at the reception. In row 9 of example 9 (Do I look like I have the word 'Stupid' written on my forehead?), Tony carries on changing his clothes while he answers a question from Charlie, which shows that he does not find Charlie's question offensive. By using this body language, Tony reduces the threat to the positive face of Charlie. In example 3 (Santa's tacky Christmas list), Dave points to the box while he is talking with Ben, which shows supplementary information about the complimentary gifts for their guests which they are talking about during this conversation. Finally, in row 4 of example 6 (high fiving), Anna raises her right hand and makes a high five gesture as supplementary information to the words 'high five' in her explanation to Ben and Charlie that Rebecca's over-friendly behaviour is due to her happiness at getting back with her husband.

The third most frequent is camera distance, which is used six times, once to stress the speaker's attitude (example 1 (You're hilarious)), once to create a humorous effect (example 2 (intestines)), once to highlight the information and to show that the hearer's attention has been caught (example 6 (high fiving)), while on the other three occasions it is used to indicate that the speaker and the hearer are in a safe conversation environment with each other (examples 3 (Santa's tacky Christmas list), 4 (boss) and 8 (cheap)). This strategy can be used to show that the information is being discussed only among staff, and it is also a useful tool to indicate closeness of the relationship between the speaker and the hearer. In row 6 of example 1 (You're hilarious), the camera distance is close, which shows Anna's ironic attitude towards Tony, who scared her while she was already feeling nervous about the shortage of hotel security on her night shift. By showing her attitude through non-verbal multimodal elements, she reduces the threat to the positive face of Tony. In example 2 (intestines), the first part of the conversation is mostly presented in long and medium shots. While Tony is telling the murder story, to show that Tony has captured the attention of the other staff, the camera distance changes to close-up. The use of close-ups also enables the staff's different facial expressions, as reactions to

the story, to be seen on the screen. This creates a comparison between the scared facial expressions of the other staff and the calm expression of Gino. The contrasting reaction from Gino creates a humorous effect in this conversation. In row 4 of example 6 (high fiving), the close-up shot is used when Anna is helping Ben and Charlie to understand why Rebecca is being over friendly to them through her body language and verbal elements. Through this close-up, Anna's high five gesture can be seen clearly. Furthermore, this camera distance also allows the audience to see Anna catching the attention of Ben and Charlie as she explains Rebecca's actions towards them. In example 3 (Santa's tacky Christmas list), the camera distance changes from a medium close shot to close-up. This change in camera distance shows that Dave is moving closer to Ben to start a conversation with him. It also indicates they are in a safe environment to discuss their guest since they are the only two people at the desk at that moment. In row 9 of example 4 (boss), the close camera distance is used to show that Charlie and Tony are discussing something between themselves. Its use thus reduces the threat to the positive face of Charlie. In rows 5 and 6 of example 8 (cheap), while Charlie and Anna are talking with each other, a medium close shot shows Anna and Charlie at the reception desk having a conversation about the guests who have just come through the hotel door. It indicates that Anna is in a safe conversation environment to give Charlie her honest opinion about the guest.

Next, camera distance, like speaking volume, occurs six times. It is used three times to show the speaker's attitude (example 4 (boss), 6 (high fiving), 9 (Do I look like I have the word 'Stupid' written on my forehead?)), twice to convey information that it is for the staff's ears only (example 7 (not just kicking him in the balls), 8 (cheap)), and once to attract attention (example 5 (single)). In row 9 of example 4 (boss), Tony's speaking volume is low, which shows that he accepts Charlie's idea and that the content of their discussion is only known to each other, which reduces the threat to the positive face of Charlie. In row 4 of example 6 (high fiving), Anna's speaking volume is loud, which shows her ironic attitude towards Charlie and Ben, who are finding it difficult to understand Rebecca's friendly attitude, although the reason is obvious. In row 9 of example 9 (Do I look like I have the word 'Stupid' written on my forehead?), Tony maintains the same speaking volume, which shows that he is not affected by the question from Charlie, which reduces the threat to the

positive face of Charlie. In row 4 of example 7 (not just kicking him in the balls), Anna is speaking at a low volume when she and Ben both go behind the desk to get some files. This is because she only wants her complaint to be heard by Ben, though they are busy at the desk and some guests are standing in front of the desk at that moment. In row 6 of example 8 (cheap), Anna is having a conversation with Charlie at the reception desk and other people are coming and going around them. Therefore, Anna adopts a low speaking volume during this quick conversation with Charlie as some guests are coming towards their desk. In row 1 of example 5 (single), Anna's speaking volume changes from low to medium because she is trying to attract the attention of Charlie and Tony, who are in the middle of a conversation in front of her.

The fifth most frequent is music and sound, which occurs five times, twice in example 2 (intestines), once in example 3 (Santa's tacky Christmas list), once in example 6 (high fiving) and once in example 7 (not just kicking him in the balls). In example 2 (intestines), horror music, from row 5 to row 11, is used as background music to create a sense of tension while Tony is telling a story about the murder in another hotel, while the staff are having their dinner together. This tension during the conversation is hard for the source language audience to ignore. However, in row 12, this music suddenly stops, which shows that the tense environment disappears when Gino starts talking. It also shows that Gino is enjoying his own bolognese without being affected by the murder story. Also, in row 12, Jackie can be heard laughing. This shows that the reaction from Gino makes Jackie laugh since his reaction to the murder story is totally different from that of the other staff members. Use of the laughing sound also provides a direct stimulus to the audience so they are able to notice and infer the humour in this conversation. In example 3 (Santa's tacky Christmas list), the background music sounds relaxing during the conversation between Ben and David, which shows that this conversation is a casual conversation, conducted only between these two staff members. Again, in example 6 (high fiving), relaxing background music is used when Anna is giving her explanation to Charlie and Ben, which shows that it is a casual chat among themselves. In row 4 of example 7(not just kicking him in the balls), Ben's laugh, having heard Anna's complaint, offers a stimulus that he gets her sarcasm.

The sixth most frequent multimodal element is intonation, which is used four times. By using intonation, the speaker stresses the verbal elements which he/she is

trying to emphasise to the hearer. As a result of catching the intonation, the hearer will try to identify the stimuli offered by the emphasised words and other elements which can be connected with the emphasised word to make a further information inference. In examples 1 (You're hilarious; Thank you) and 8(cheap), the intonation used by the characters shows their attitude during the conversation. In row 6 of example 1 (You're hilarious), Anna emphasises the neutral word 'hilarious' to stress her ironic attitude towards Tony, who has suddenly made a loud sound to scare her, which reduces the threat to the positive face of Tony. In row 6 of example 8 (cheap), Anna uses intonation to express her strong attitude after Charlie explains the complex relationships between two women and one of the guests, who has just stepped inside the door of the hotel. In row 10 of example 2 (intestines), intonation is used to attract Gino's attention, so Gino can make the connection which is specifically created by Tony between intestines and bolognese, to make him feel sick. Tony puts emphasis on two words ('imagine' and 'looking'), and by doing so, he tries to drop hints to encourage Gino to make a connection between his bolognese and the victim's intestines. Later, in row 12 of example 2 (intestines), Gino uses intonation at the start of his dialogue on the words 'at last' after Tony has told his long story. This intonation foregrounds the remainder of his dialogue. However, he ends up simply paying compliments to his food, reacting differently to his colleagues upon hearing Tony's story. Humour emerges from this comparison.

Finally, the least frequently used multimodal element is images of specific items, which is used twice. In example 2 (intestines), images of the spaghetti provide a cultural reference that appears three times during the conversation, reflecting another important aspect in constructing stimuli for creating a humorous effect in the source language text. Spaghetti bolognese appears for the first time in row 7, which indicates that Tony has realised that Gino is paying more attention to eating his food than to the murder story, unlike his colleagues. Consequently, Tony takes the opportunity to add to his story the victim's missing organ (intestines), creating a connection between the shape of the spaghetti and the body part, with the intention of attracting Gino's attention away from his food, which appears for the second time in row 10. However, unlike his colleagues, Gino still does not show any sense of feeling disturbed or nauseous. In row 12, the image of the pasta is shown a third time when Gino finally speaks, to compliment his food. Gino's reaction is starkly

contrasted to the disturbed and nauseous reaction of his colleagues. Next, in example 3 (Santa’s tacky Christmas list), the image is a box, which is clearly a neutral image. However, later in row 2, Ben uses a metaphor, which contains a cultural reference, comparing the low-quality gifts for hotel guests (inside the box) to tacky presents received from Santa Claus.

In the examples from subsection 4.2.1.2 of the Appendix, four examples were analysed. Three of these involve conversations between the staff and the guests, while the other one involves only hotel guests, specifically the leader of a computer training group talking to his group members.

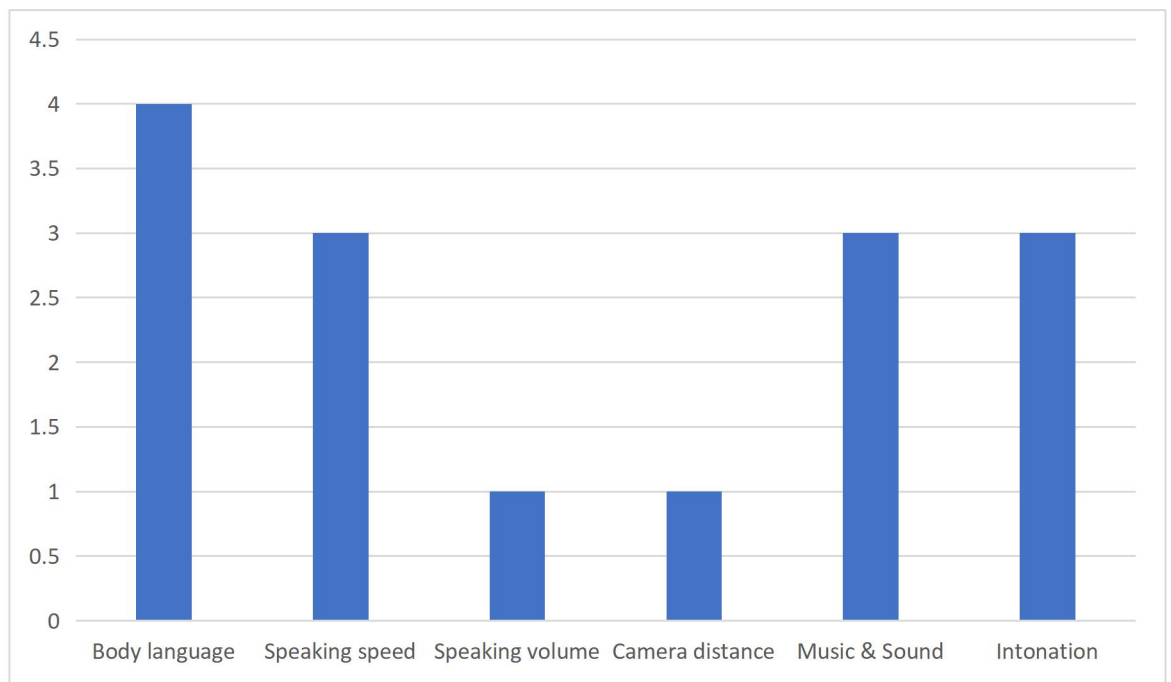


Figure 29. Multimodal elements in subsection 4.2.1.2 of the Appendix

From Figure 29 above, it can be seen that body language is the most frequently used multimodal element among these examples, occurring four times. In three of these instances it is used to show the attitude of the speaker (example 1 (short; little), 3 (*Pretty Woman*) and 4 (maybe they sent us some dead fish just to help out in the restaurant)), while it is used once to connect the information from the conversation with an image for the purpose of emphasising information (example 2 (internal processor)). In example 1 (short; little), from row 1 to row 2, while Anna talks with a guest who is small in stature and has just arrived at the reception desk, she is also busy looking at some files in front of her. She glances at the guest and then turns back to her files, which shows that she is not paying much attention to the guest. The

guest leans his elbow on the reception desk to support his body and uses his right hand to rub his eyes while he is waiting. The body language of the guest shows that he does not give much thought to the phrase 'a short while', which is used by Anna, and he calmly accepts this sentence as a standard expression. Also, it is clear that he is tired. A couple of seconds later, in row 3, Anna realises that the word she has said might be interpreted as a pun and cause offence to the guest, given his short stature. As a result, she turns her head to the guest, smiles and shakes her head as she explains herself to the guest by clarifying that she meant to say 'little' not 'short'. From here, it can be seen that Anna is trying to make up for her unintended mistake, thereby trying to reduce the threat to the positive face of the guest. As a response, the guest waves his right hand and shakes his head, uses his eyes and head to point to the keyboard. From his body language, it can be seen that Anna's explanation has caused the guest to lose his patience. In addition, in response to Anna, the guest uses the same word ('little') to refer to the keyboard. This reduces the threat to the positive face of Anna since the implicit meaning is inferred through the combination of verbal elements and body language during their conversation. After that, in row 5, Anna leans her body towards the guest, shakes her head and raises her eyebrows, which shows her negative attitude towards the guest. The guest, likewise, leans his body towards Anna and then shakes his head and smiles provocatively, which in turn shows his negative attitude towards Anna. In row 2 of example 3 (*Pretty Woman*), Rebecca throws the clothes to Mrs. Radley piece by piece, which implicitly shows her strong attitude desire to kick this young lady out of the hotel, since she is suspicious that this woman is not the wife of Mr. Radley (the guest), though she cannot find any proof. By so doing, she reduces the threat to the positive face of Mrs. Radley. In row 7 of example 4 (maybe they sent us some dead fish just to help out in the restaurant), Tony shifts from side to side on his feet and stares at the police officer to show his negative attitude towards the police officer who is insisting on using the hotel to hide a dangerous prisoner who is awaiting a call to trial as an important witness, thereby risking the lives of other people in the hotel. In so doing, he reduces the threat to the positive face of the police officer. In row 2 of example 2 (internal processor), the speaker uses his right hand to point to his head when he compares people's brains to a computer's internal processors. By using this body language, the speaker connects his spoken words with a specific visual supplement

to emphasise this information to his group members implicitly. He thus reduces the threat to the negative face of the computer training group's members.

The second most frequent element is speaking speed, which occurs three times, in examples 1 (short; little), 3 (*Pretty Woman*) and 4 (maybe they sent us some dead fish just to help out in the restaurant). This is a useful tool used by speakers to show a particular attitude. In row 3 of example 1 (short; little), Anna's speaking speed changes from slow to fast, which shows her awkward attitude as she tries to explain herself, although she is in fact making things worse. Also, it reduces the threat to the positive face of the guest, Anna having realised she has inadvertently created the puns. Later, in row 5 of example 1 (short; little), Anna's speaking speed is slow, which shows her negative attitude towards the guest. In row 2 of example 3 (*Pretty Woman*), Rebecca uses a slow speaking speed to implicitly show her negative attitude towards Mrs. Radley, which reduces the threat to the positive face of Mrs. Radley. Finally, in row 7 of example 4 (maybe they sent us some dead fish just to help out in the restaurant), Tony's fast speaking speed shows his ironic attitude towards the police officer, which reduces the threat to the positive face of this police officer.

Additionally, intonation is used three times, in two examples, twice in examples 1 (short; little) and once in example 3 (*Pretty Woman*). In row 3 of example 1 (short; little), Anna uses intonation on the words 'short' and 'little' in attempting to explain to the guest that she is not implicitly mocking his height. In so doing, she tries to reduce the threat to the positive face of the guest. Then, in row 5 of example 1 (short; little), Anna uses intonation on 'sarcasm' and 'lowest' to show her negative attitude towards the guest. In row 2 of example 3 (*Pretty Woman*), Rebecca uses intonation on the name of the film *Pretty Woman* (Marshall 1990) to indicate implicitly that instead of being the real wife of Mr. Radley (the guest), Mrs. Radley is a prostitute like the character in that movie. Therefore, it can be seen that in this example intonation is used to emphasise information in the conversation.

Equally frequent is music and sound, which is used on three occasions, once in example 1 (short; little) and twice in example 2 (internal processor). Background music is used to make a connection with the conversation in order to show the environment of the conversation. In the beginning part of example 1 (short; little),

the background music is relaxing. After the argument breaks out between the characters, at the end of row 6, the background music becomes sharp and intense, which shows the conflict between the characters. Next, in example 2 (internal processor), the background music is fast paced, which indicates that the conversation is happening in a busy environment. In addition, the sound of laughter, coming from other staff in example 2 (internal processor), is used to reflect a happy conversation.

The least used multimodal elements in these examples are speaking volume and camera distance, used once each, in example 1 (short; little). Both of these elements are useful instruments for showing the attitude of the speaker. In row 3 of example 1 (short; little), Anna's speaking volume changes from normal to low when she realises that her explanation is making things even worse. This shows that Anna is trying to reduce the threat to the positive face of the guest in this conversation. Hence, in the end, it is almost as if she is talking to herself since she feels so awkward. From row 1 to row 4, the camera distance is medium close, before the conflict has arisen between the characters. Next, from row 5 to row 6, the camera distance changes to close up, once the conflict between Anna and the guest has erupted. Thus, the change in the camera distance shows the strong negative attitudes that the two characters in this conversation have formed towards each other.

The last subsection, 4.2.1.3, unequal intimate dyads of the Appendix, contains only one example (Any of that coffee going spare?) of multimodal humour, involving the European director talking to the hotel general manager. Speaking volume and speaking speed are used in this conversation as multimodal elements to offer stimuli. The director's speaking volume is normal, which shows his calm attitude. At the same time, his speaking speed is fast, which shows his casual attitude when asking for an additional coffee during the meeting. The use of these two multimodal elements shows the attempt from the director to try to reduce the threat to the positive face of other staff.

To sum up, this section presented an analysis of the use of multimodal elements for the purpose of expressing humour in the selected examples. Multimodal elements become connected within the conversation by offering various kinds of stimuli. There are differing relationships between multimodal and verbal elements. Firstly, some multimodal elements are used to offer stimuli for the audience to infer the



implicit meaning of verbal elements. Next, some multimodal elements are used to stress or reinforce the verbal elements during the conversation. In conversation, humour is used to offer entertainment but also sometimes to indirectly express dissatisfaction. In addition, some humorous expressions are used for specific face-saving strategies during the conversation. As a consequence, existing multimodal elements also offer stimuli for the kind of face-saving strategy which is being adopted by the character. In this section, single multimodal elements have been discussed to identify the kinds of stimuli they offer. The following subsections will discuss how these multimodal elements work together to offer stimuli during conversation, both in the source text and in the translated text.

#### **4.2.2 Multimodal elements as stimuli in the translation of humour**

Yus (1998: 298) indicates that in verbal-visual media discourse, non-verbal elements are used flexibly to offer contextual information to the audience for different purposes. Information offered by non-verbal elements can be used to reinforce or create the opposite effect to the related verbal elements according to the specific situation in a film or television drama. Desilla (2012) has studied the importance of this combination of verbal and non-verbal elements in audiovisual programmes. Based on research on effects created by multimodal elements in film, Desilla (2012: 50) identifies the implicit creation of romance and humour through the simultaneous use of verbal and multimodal elements in films.


From the analysis of examples related to the translation of humour, it can be seen that images are used in combination with verbal elements as an important multimodal element in creating a humorous effect in the conversation. The images are used in three different ways according to the analysis of the examples of humour in translation in this research. Firstly, images that do not contain any specific cultural references are used as supplementary information which is relevant to the related verbal elements during the conversation. In example 4 of 4.2.1.2 (maybe they sent us some dead fish just to help out in the restaurant), a parcel containing fish is shown in row one, which is the discussion item in this conversation. This pack of fish is being used to offer a stimulus to the characters involved in the conversation as well as to the audience. The pack of fish is sent to the hotel by a gangster as a threat to Mr Wiltshire. It signals that the gangsters are going to kill him at the hotel because he is going to betray them by testifying against them in court. The context of this


conversation is that Mr. Wiltshire, a former gang member, is now imprisoned in this hotel as he waits to be called as a witness in a trial against his former fellow gangster. Due to the loss of income it would entail, the management team of the hotel will not expel Mr. Wiltshire unless it is absolutely necessary. The explicit meaning of Tony's words in row 7 is that the gangsters have sent dead fish to the hotel as a gift to the restaurant. Other stimuli are being expressed through Tony's body language and speaking speed to show his irritated attitude towards the police officer. It should be noticed that through the combination of these multimodal elements and verbal elements in row 7, the opposite meaning is being inferred. The implicit meaning, therefore, is that Tony is expressing his dissatisfaction and sarcastic attitude indirectly to a police officer who does not care about other people's safety. By using non-verbal elements to express his dissatisfaction, Tony reduces the threat to the positive face of the police officer. In the subtitle, the translator uses a rhetorical question to express the explicit meaning, that these dead fish were certainly not sent to the hotel restaurant by the gangsters without a particular reason. When combined with Tony's body language and sound, the target language audience can infer that Tony expresses his ironic and dissatisfied attitude to the police officer in an indirect way for the purpose of reducing the threat to the positive face of the police officer.


Secondly, the images may not contain cultural references but the verbal elements that accompany the image do. In example 3 of 4.2.1.1 (Santa's tacky Christmas list), a box of complimentary gifts is shown in rows 1 and 2. This box does not present any specific cultural reference as part of this conversation. However, in row 2, Ben uses a metaphor to compare this box of poor-quality gifts with Santa's tacky Christmas presents with the intention of creating a humorous effect. In Western culture, Christmas is one of the most important festive holidays. On Christmas Day, children get gifts which they believe are sent from Santa as a reward for good behaviour over the last year. However, in recent decades, Chinese people, mostly the younger generations, have also celebrated Christmas. The use of this metaphor in Ben's sentence represents an off-record strategy to reduce the threat to the negative face of the referenced guests, in this case, their guests who will be receiving the hotel's gifts. The context of this conversation is that Ben and Dave, two hotel staff, are at the reception desk, alone, talking about a box of hotel gifts. The explicit meaning of the sentence in row 2 is that Ben is going to check which hotel guests'



names are on Santa’s tacky Christmas list. The background music and camera distance offer stimuli that the conversation environment is secure and that Ben and David are alone. Additionally, the speaking speed of Ben and the body language of these two staff members offer stimuli that they are being sarcastic about the guests who feel happy when they receive complimentary gifts from the hotel, despite their poor quality. Therefore, the source language audience can infer that Ben is implicitly expressing sarcasm and is going to check the list of names to see which guests are due to receive these gifts from the hotel. The translator, aware that Chinese people may not be familiar with this festival, has removed the cultural references to Santa and Christmas in the subtitle. Instead, direct clarification, in the form of ‘low quality gifts’, is given in the Chinese subtitle to make a connection between the verbal elements and the image of the box in row 2. Therefore, the subtitle reduces the processing effort needed on the part of the target language audience by removing the cultural reference. However, the humour is lost in the subtitle. Furthermore, the subtitle becomes an on-record threat to the negative face to the potential guests who are going to receive these low quality products as gifts, which is different from the original, reducing the threat to the negative face of potential guests.

Thirdly, images can contain cultural references on their own. Moreover, the verbal elements which are connected with the image may also involve cultural references, such as in example 2 of 4.2.1.1 (intestines). To supplement the analysis and discussion of this example, I have included a Multimodal Transcription of the sequence (see below).




Number & Time	Visual Frame	Visual Image	Kinesic Action	Soundtrack	Chinese Subtitle & Back Translation
1 00:07: 15		CP: Stationary D: LS VC: Staff	Tony smiles, pulls a chair in front of the table; other staff eat	FIELD: ☀ Canteen FIGURE: Tony: So who wants to hear a really	Tony: 谁想听故事 Back translation: Who wants to listen to a

		<p>canteen</p> <p>HP: Directly</p> <p>VF: Tony looks at the chair, other staff look at their own food</p>	<p>their food</p>	<p>good story?</p> <p>n, M</p>	<p>story?</p>
2		<p>CP: Stationary</p> <p>D: LS</p> <p>VC: Staff canteen</p> <p>HP: Directly</p> <p>VF: Tony looks at other staff, Charlie looks at Tony then back to</p>	<p>Tony sits on the chair and puts his hand on the table; other staff eat their food</p>	<p>FIELD: ☀ Canteen</p> <p>FIGURE: Charlie: Go on then.</p> <p>n, F</p>	<p>Charlie: 说来听听</p> <p>Back translation: Charlie: let's hear it.</p>


		his food, other staff look at their food and Tony from time to time			
3		CP: Stationary D: LS > CS VC: Staff canteen HP: Directly VF: Tony looks at Charlie sidelong , Charlie looks at Tony	Tony raises his right hand in the air, Gino raises his forehead, nods his head and eats his food, Charlie nods his head	FIELD: ☀ Canteen FIGURE: Tony: Remember that cleaner from The Burlington who went missing? n, F	Tony: 那个 伯灵顿酒店 的失踪清洁 工人 Back translation: Tony: That The Burlington's missing cleaner.

4		<p>CP: Stationary</p> <p>D: MCS</p> <p>VC: Staff canteen</p> <p>HP: Obliquely</p> <p>VF: Anna, Jackie and Ben look at Tony; Gino looks at Anna; Jackie and Ben look at Anna</p>	<p>Anna stops eating, leans her body towards Tony, shakes her head, waves her right hand in the air with a fork and avoids eye contact with Jackie, Jackie and Ben eat their own food and look at Tony at the same time then turn their heads to Anna, Gino turns his head up from the food to look at Anna</p>	<p>FIELD: ☀ Canteen</p> <p>FIGURE: Anna: What cleaner? Well, why would I know anything about a cleaner?</p> <p>f, F</p>	<p>Anna: 什么清洁工人\我为何会认识工人</p> <p>Back translation: Anna: What cleaner? Why should I know a cleaner?</p>
5		<p>CP: Stationary</p> <p>D: LS</p>	<p>Anna leans her body toward Tony, nods her head</p>	<p>FIELD: [♪] ☀ Canteen</p> <p>FIGURE: Tony: Okay,</p>	<p>Tony: 数星期前他值夜班后失踪\钱包和个人物</p>


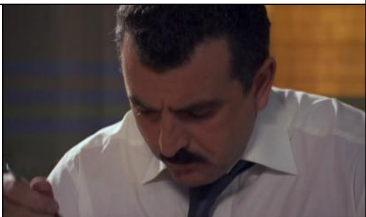
		<p>VC: Staff canteen</p> <p>HP: Directly</p> <p>VF: Anna looks at Tony, Tony looks at Anna and other staff, other staff look at Tony and their food from time to time</p>	<p>and looks fearful of the story; Tony waves his hand in the air; Other staff eat their food</p>	<p>a few weeks ago, there's this Cleaner. Does the night-shift then disappears. Leaves his wallet, all his personal items in his locker. His family never hears from him again. He's vanished into thin air until now. They found him this morning, in a cupboard in a disused storeroom.</p> <p>n, F &gt; S</p>	<p>品全在储物 柜内/家人再 没听过他的 消息\他人 间蒸发\最 近才出现\他 早上被发现 藏在废弃贮 物室的壁橱 内</p> <p>Back translation: Tony: Few weeks ago, he was missing after finishing his night shift. Wallet and personal stuff are all in his locker. His family did not hear anything from him. He vanished. Until recently he appeared. In a morning, he was found in a disused cupboard in</p>
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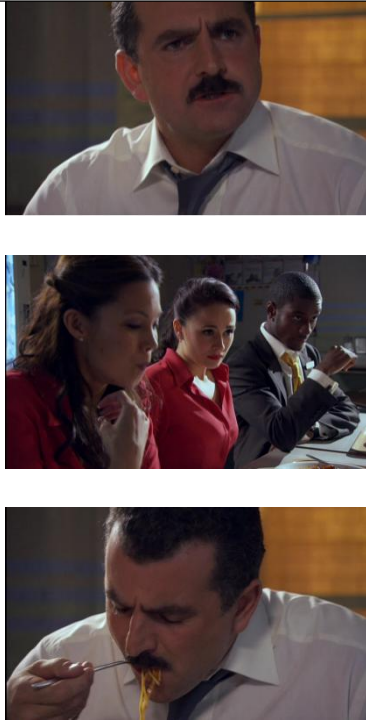
					the store room.
6		<p>CP: Stationary</p> <p>D: CS</p> <p>VC: Staff canteen</p> <p>HP: Obliquely</p> <p>VF: Ben looks at Tony</p>	<p>Ben frowns his forehead, shakes his head and holds a cup</p>	<p>FIELD: [♪]</p> <p>☼ Canteen</p> <p>FIGURE:</p> <p>Ben: Why was he in a cupboard?</p> <p>n, F</p>	<p>Ben: 他怎会在壁橱内</p> <p>Back translation: Why he was in a cupboard?</p>
7	  	<p>CP: Stationary</p> <p>D: CS</p> <p>VC: Staff canteen</p> <p>HP: Directly &gt; Obliquely</p> <p>VF: Tony looks at Ben then to</p>	<p>Tony lowers his head towards Ben, Jackie frowns her forehead, Ben turns his head to his left-hand side, Gino eats his pasta with big mouthfuls and looks at his own plate</p>	<p>FIELD: [♪]</p> <p>☼ Canteen</p> <p>FIGURE:</p> <p>Tony: Because somebody has slit his throat and stuffed him in there.</p> <p>n, S</p>	<p>Tony: 他遭人割喉后被藏进壁橱中</p> <p>Back translation: Tony: His throat was cut by someone and then hidden in the cupboard.</p>




		<p>other staff, Jackie, Anna and Ben look at Tony then look elsewhere, Gino looks at his own food</p>			
8		<p>CP: Stationary D: CS VC: Staff Canteen HP: Directly VF: Tony looks at Gino</p>	<p>Gino eats his food without paying attention to Tony's story, Tony looks at Gino, sips his drink and nods and turns his head from the right hand side to the left hand side</p>	<p>FIELD: [♪] ☀ Canteen FIGURE: Tony: Do you want to hear the bad bit? n, F</p>	<p>Tony: 想不想听最糟糕的部分  Back translation: Tony: Whether want to hear the worst part?</p>

9		<p>CP: Stationary D: CS VC: Staff Canteen HP: Obliquely VF: Anna looks at the table then to Tony, Tony looks at Anna</p>	<p>Anna wrinkles her brow and waves her right hand and her body leans to the table, one of the other staff walks past behind Anna</p>	<p>FIELD: [♪] ☼ Canteen FIGURE: Anna: Because having your throat slit and being stuffed in a cupboard isn't the bad bit? n, F</p>	<p>Anna: 被人割喉后塞进壁橱还不算糟糕 Back translation: Anna: Having the throat slit by other people and being stuffed in a cupboard still is not bad?</p>
10	  	<p>CP: Stationary D: CS VC: staff canteen HP: Directly VF: Tony looks at Anna</p>	<p>Tony frowns and shakes his head, Anna blinks her eyes and turns her head back to the table, Jackie lowers her eyelids and turns her head away from Tony,</p>	<p>FIELD: [♪] ☼ Canteen SI Gino eats his Bolognese FIGURE: Tony: He'd been disembowelled...Now imagine somebody doing that to</p>	<p>Tony: 他的腹部被剖开\试想有人这样对待你\警方仍在搜查酒店 想找回肠子 Back translation: Tony: His belly is cut open. Try to think if</p>

		<p>then back and forth to Gino and Charlie, Anna looks at Tony, Gino looks at his food then to Tony, Charlie looks at Tony then to the table</p>	<p>Tony turns his head to Gino then to Charlie, Charlie directs his eyes away from Tony and turns to the table, Tony moves his eyes away from Charlie and turns back to Gino, Gino chews pasta with his mouth full and looks up to the side of Tony; Tony smiles and keeps his head toward Gino</p>	<p>you. The police are still searching the hotel, looking for his <b>intestines.</b> n, S &gt; M</p>	<p>someone does this to you. Police is still searching the hotel and want to find <b>the intestines.</b></p>
11		<p>CP: Stationary D: CS VC: Staff</p>	<p>Gino nods his head toward his food</p>	<p>FIELD: [♪] ☀ Canteen SI Gino eats his Bolognese</p>	<p>Jackie &amp; Ben: 好恶心 Back translation: Jackie &amp; Ben: So</p>

		<p>canteen</p> <p>HP: Obliquely</p> <p>VF: Gino looks at Tony then to his food, Tony looks at Gino</p>		<p>FIGURE:</p> <p>Jackie: Urghh...Yuk. ..</p> <p>Ben: Disgusting... f, M</p>	<p>gross.</p>
12		<p>CP: Stationary</p> <p>D: CS</p> <p>HP: Obliquely</p> <p>VC: Staff canteen</p> <p>VF: Gino looks at Tony and then to his food, Jackie, Anna and Ben</p>	<p>Gino waves his right hand in the air with a fork, frowns his eyebrows, uses his head to point to his plate and takes another big bite of his food;</p> <p>Jackie, Anna and Ben raise their eyebrows;</p> <p>Jackie laughs</p>	<p>FIELD: ☀ Canteen</p> <p>SI Gino eats his Bolognese &amp; Jackie laughs</p> <p>FIGURE: Gino: At last, a decent <b>Bolognese!</b> Bloody good. n, M</p>	<p>Gino: 终于有像样点的香肠\真好吃</p> <p>Back translation: Gino: Finally some decent <b>sausage.</b> Delicious.</p>

		look at Gino			
13 00:08:1 8		CP: Stationa ry D: CS VC: Staff canteen HP: Obliquel y VF: Anna, Jackie and Ben look at the table	Anna uses a napkin to wipe her mouth and frowns and crumples the napkin and throws it onto the table	FIELD: ☀ Canteen SI some staff sigh FIGURE: Anna: I feel sick. n, M	Anna: 我想 吐 Back translation: Anna: I want to throw up.

In example 2 of 4.2.1.1 (intestines) above, the image of spaghetti bolognese appears three times, in rows 7, 10 and 12. This image offers multiple stimuli in this conversation. First, the image is shown in the middle of Tony telling a murder story to other staff in a close shot in row 7. Also, through the close shot in the same row, the scared faces of the other staff are shown while they are hearing the story from Tony. In addition, accompanied by the scary music background, these multimodal elements are used to show that the murder story which Tony is telling is very scary. This constructs an obvious comparison with Gino's reaction, as he is the only one not affected by the story and is still enjoying his spaghetti. Gino's reaction stimulates Tony to raise his game and give it another shot by adding more specific detail to attract Gino's attention.

Secondly, the image of the spaghetti bolognese in a close shot in row 10 offers Tony an incentive to talk about the victim's missing intestines and drive his chilling murder story towards a gruesome finale. The close shot in this row makes a clear comparison of the reaction after hearing Tony's story, between the other staff's sick facial expressions and Gino's calm facial look. Additionally, the close shot shows Tony is observing the different reactions among the staff while he is telling the story. This row includes three sentences from Tony. After the first two sentences, other staff are looking nauseous, while Gino keeps on eating his food. Tony stops here and looks at Gino. As this sentence is uttered, we see a close-up shot of Gino looking at Tony while he is eating, which shows that Gino is still following Tony's story even though he is unaffected by it. After the eye contact with Gino, Tony utters the third sentence ("The police are still searching the hotel, looking for his intestines"), where the detail 'intestines' is added to attract Gino's attention. Tony's intonation on the word 'looking' is used to stress that the police are still searching for the intestines. After finishing this sentence, Tony smiles and keeps looking at Gino, which shows that he is expecting some reaction from him, having made an effort to add this specific detail to his story. The scary background music is still going until this point.

Thirdly, the image of the spaghetti bolognese in row 12 in relation to Gino's dialogue creates a humorous effect. The close-up camera shot and the intonation on 'at last' used by Gino at the beginning of the sentence foreground the compliment he is going to pay his spaghetti bolognese. By complimenting the spaghetti bolognese, Gino is reacting differently compared with his colleagues upon hearing the murder story. This scene also shows that Tony was right to choose the potential link to the spaghetti bolognese as a way of attracting Gino's attention. Additionally, Jackie's laughter shows that the reaction from Gino is unexpected, which offers the stimulus that what Gino said before is used humorously. It also draws the audience's attention to the humour in this conversation. The scary music stops in row 12 when Gino starts to speak, which shows that Tony's scary murder story has not worked on Gino at all. The explicit meaning of row 12 is that Gino compliments the spaghetti bolognese. The implicit meaning is that Gino ignores the hints which are chosen specifically by Tony to attract his attention, though his colleagues find his actions humorous. From the above three stimuli offered by the spaghetti bolognese, it can be

seen that this food is one of the essential elements used in connection with other multimodal elements and verbal elements to create the humour in this conversation.

However, spaghetti bolognese is not Chinese food. For people who are not familiar with this food, it is hard to make the connection with intestines through the subtitle. Therefore, the translator uses 'sausage' instead of 'bolognese' in the subtitle, as it also has some commonality with intestines. Therefore, when Chinese audiences read this subtitle, they will infer the humorous intention through the comparison of the sickening images of sausages and intestines and Gino's obsession with spaghetti bolognese, as well as other multimodal elements, as mentioned above. Here, the translator has attempted to replace the image with another which has a connection with the verbal elements in the original conversation. However, there is a problem here. The image actually looks very similar to Chinese noodles; at the same time, no sausage can be seen during the scene. Since there is more than one close-up shot of the food, the processing efforts needed by the target language audience to make a connection between sausage and the image on the screen will increase. Considering the cognitive context of Chinese audience, I would suggest translating 'bolognese' into 'noodle', since according to the image of spaghetti shown on the screen, the food looks like Chinese noodles. Also, the shape of noodles is similar to that of intestines, which are mentioned several times during the conversation. In that case, Chinese audiences can infer the intention that Tony is trying hard to connect the food which is being eaten by Gino with the scary information from the story that he is telling, to try to attract the attention of Gino and make him feel sick.

From the above analysis of three kinds of images found in audiovisual programmes, it can be seen that there are various difficulties which translators could face. Regarding the use of images to represent information to target readers, He (2010: 91) stresses that in the translation of puns, according to Relevance Theory, the contextual effects provided by the image are more important to their target language audience than semantic accuracy. In the case of literary translation, sometimes words are used to construct a relative image or item which is familiar to the source language audience. In the case of puns, He (2010: 92) suggests that if a pun is translated using a new image that is appropriate to a given context and requires minimum processing effort, the target language audience can then infer a relatively high degree of interpretative resemblance to the source text. The following

is an example given by He (2010: 91) that relates to the translation of puns in Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*:

“The master was an old Turtle—we used to call him Tortoise.”

“Why did you call him Tortoise, if he wasn't one?” Alice asked.

“We called him Tortoise because he taught us,” said the Mock Turtle angrily; “really you are very dull!”

In the source text, the author uses ‘Tortoise’ and its homophone ‘taught us’ to create a humorous effect for the source language readers through near homophony. However, in Chinese, the same animal homophone does not exist for the word ‘Tortoise’. Therefore, the image of the original animal was replaced with that of another animal, ‘glue fish’ (胶鱼). The word ‘胶’ (glue) and its homophone ‘教’ (teach) were used to produce a humorous effect for the target language readers (He 2010: 91). Since this is a literary work, the humorous effect created through the image of the animal is constructed by words. As a result, no specific image can be brought into view for the target language readers. By contrast, in audiovisual programmes, some images shown on the screen offer a more specific visual supplement, which can hardly be ignored by the audience or the translators. The obstacles to connecting words and images to create a humorous effect are hence more complex in the process of Audiovisual Translation.

Although He (2010) is specifically referring to the translation of puns in literary works, her work does however indicate that enabling the target language audience to infer the final contextual effects based on their own cognitive context is more important than the fidelity of the meaning of words. In an audiovisual programme, the image of an object, as a non-verbal element, is also sometimes used to enable the source language audience to infer a specific cognitive context directly. In such cases, presenting a new image based on a specific context so that the target language audience might correctly infer the meaning while spending minimal processing effort becomes a more delicate task for the subtitler. Furthermore, considering the complexity of cultural meanings which combine non-verbal and verbal elements in a text, Zabalbeascoa (2005: 195) indicates that the culture-related non-verbal elements represented in the source language text sometimes need to be modified in the process of translation. Otherwise, the communication gap created by the culturally related non-verbal elements will cause problems for the target language audience in



attempting to make inferences. Moreover, Yus (2012: 128) states that when dealing with the translation of culture-related humour, the term that exists in the source language text might not have an equivalent in the target language. In such cases, cautious decisions are necessary regarding whether to keep the humour of the source language text in the translated text or to make modifications for the purpose of maintaining the contextual effects in the target language text.

The following is an example discussed by Chiaro (2010: 7) which relates to the use in a movie of a visual pun on the word 'seal' to create a humorous effect. In the movie *Horse Feathers* (McLeod, 1932), Groucho Marx's character, Professor Quincy Adams Wagstaff, asks for a seal to stamp the document he is signing. Instead of bringing a stamp to seal the document, the other person brings him a real live seal. This is because one of the two meanings of seal relates to the animal, which is shown in the image. Here, the humour is created for the source language audience through the combination of the image and the seal pun. As a result, the translator needs to figure out how to connect the translated text with the image of the seal to create a humorous effect in the subtitle for the target language audience. However, it might be hard to find a word that can connect with the image and be used as a pun to create a humorous effect in the target language text. The use of puns will be discussed in more examples in section 4.2.3.


Sometimes, images are expressed or presented through body language, another essential instrument used to offer stimuli to the audience. In people's daily conversations, they use body language to offer visual supplements, so that what they are saying might be easier to follow and understand. This strategy is also used widely by characters in audiovisual programmes. As was emphasised in the above analysis, body language is the most frequently used element in subsection 4.2.1.2 of the Appendix and the second most frequently used in subsection 4.2.1.1 of the Appendix. The purpose of using body language differs from situation to situation. In this subsection, we will focus on body language which is used to offer a visual supplement to a character's dialogue. In example 2 of 4.2.1.2 (internal processor), Mr. Green, the manager of a computer training group, uses his right hand to point to his head, as direct visual information, when he uses a metaphor to compare people's heads to a computer's internal processors. In addition, he uses a disjunctive question as an indirect way of persuading the team members to stay lucid during their training




period instead of making a direct order, which is an effective approach to reduce the threat to the negative face of the other group members. Additionally, the computer term ‘internal processors’ is used as an effective way to make the suggestion more relevant, given their own computer training background. The explicit meaning of his dialogue is that drinking wine could interfere with the group members’ brains and, as a result, with their training session. The context of this conversation is that Mr. Green is hurriedly taking a group of people through the hotel lobby, on their way to eat some food before starting their training session. The laughter from the team members offers stimulus that this humorous phrase has been acknowledged by the group members. The implicit meaning of Mr. Green’s words is that drinking wine is not allowed.


In the subtitle, the translator keeps the metaphor, which maintains the humour in the translated text. Also, by using a metaphor in the translated text, Mr. Green expresses his suggestion indirectly, which reduces the threat to the negative face of other training group members. Retaining the computer term in the translated text maintains the connection to the computer training group’s background. This also enables the target language audience to associate words with the body language of Mr. Green to infer that he is warning his members that drinking will affect the ability of their brains to learn new skills from their training. Regarding the disjunctive question, a difference exists between English and Chinese. In Chinese, there is no comparable “Don’t..., do we?” structure. Therefore, the translator presents the information in the form of a declaration. In the source text, the computer training manager includes himself by using ‘we’ in his disjunctive question, which reduces the distance between the group members and himself. In the target text, the speaker omits the subject in this sentence to make a general declaration, which makes Mr. Green’s suggestion more general. Therefore, this subtitle allows reduction of the threat of the negative face to the group members.

The above example shows that body language can be used as an effective approach to offer a direct visual supplement that allows for a connection with the indirect verbal expression during a conversation, which is one of the effective approaches used by characters to draw attention to their words. It should be noted that sometimes the represented body language might just be used to supplement a specific part of the character’s dialogue, such as in example 6 of 4.2.1.1 (high fiving)

below. What is being expressed through body language complements what is said by the character. In that case, Taylor (2004: 161) points out that multimodal elements, such as body language, can be used by translators to help them make specific decisions during their translation. For example, when a character suddenly explodes with emotion, the amount of verbal content can dramatically increase in a relatively short period of time, while some of the meaning expressed by the body language might overlap with the words they just said during the conversation. In this case, translators generally prioritise retaining the semantic information which is not being expressed by any other semiotic elements during the conversation in the translated text. Various types of information can be provided by body language, such as the flow of emotion from the character, providing supplementary information to reinforce verbal elements. In addition, body language can be culturally specific, which might bring more challenges to the translators. Example 6 of 4.2.1.1 (high fiving) is an example which shows that the speaker's body language is being used as supplementary material to her speaking content. The Multimodal Transcription framework will be used to supplement the analysis and discussion of this example.

Number & Time	Visual Frame	Visual Image	Kinesic Action	Soundtrack	Chinese Subtitle & Back Translation
1. 00:04:57		CP: Stationary D: MCS VC: Hotel lobby HP: Obliquely VF: Charlie looks in the direction in which Rebecca is leaving, Ben looks at the desk	Ben opens his right hand, frowns and turns his body to Charlie, Charlie leans his head a little back to check the direction in which Rebecca is leaving	FIELD: [♪] ☀ Hotel lobby FIGURE: Ben: Hold me. I'm frightened. n, S	Ben: 吓死我 Back translation: Ben: Scared me.

2		<p>CP: Stationary</p> <p>D: MCS</p> <p>VC: Hotel lobby</p> <p>HP: Obliquely</p> <p>VF: Charlie looks at Anna, Ben looks at Anna</p>	<p>Charlie frowns and turns his body to Anna, Ben turns his head towards Anna</p>	<p>FIELD: [♪]</p> <p>☀ Hotel lobby</p> <p>FIGURE: Charlie: What's the matter with her?</p> <p>n, F</p>	<p>Charlie: 她怎么了</p> <p>Back translation: Charlie: What's the matter with her?</p>
3		<p>CP: Stationary</p> <p>D: CS</p> <p>VC: Hotel lobby</p> <p>HP: Directly</p> <p>VF: Anna looks at Charlie, Charlie and Ben looks at Anna</p>	<p>Anna turns her head to Charlie</p>	<p>FIELD: [♪]</p> <p>☀ Hotel lobby</p> <p>FIGURE: Anna: Oh please. Do you need a diagram?</p> <p>n, S</p>	<p>Anna: 这还用说吗</p> <p>Back translation: Anna: Do you need explanation?</p>
4		<p>CP: Stationary</p> <p>D: CS</p> <p>VC: Hotel lobby</p> <p>HP: Directly</p> <p>VF: Anna looks at Charlie, Charlie looks at Anna, Ben looks</p>	<p>Anna raises her right hand, making a high five, Ben turns his head from Anna to Charlie</p>	<p>FIELD: [♪]</p> <p>☀ Hotel lobby</p> <p>FIGURE: Anna: If she was a man, she'd <b>be high fiving</b> us all and <b>burping</b>.</p> <p>f, F</p>	<p>Anna: 若他是男人早就跟我们<b>击掌</b></p> <p>Back translation: If she was a man, she'd <b>slap hands</b> with us.</p>

		at Anna then to Charlie			
5. 00:05:14		CP: Stationary  D: CS  VC: Hotel lobby  HP: Directly  VF: Anna looks at Charlie, Charlie looks at Anna, Ben looks at Charlie then to Anna	Anna nods her head heavily, Ben turns his head from Charlie to Anna	FIELD: [♪]  ☀ Hotel lobby  FIGURE:  Anna: She and her husband have obviously got back together.  n, S	Anna: 明显 地她和丈夫 已复合  Back translation: Anna: Obviously she got back with her husband.

In row 4 of this example, Anna makes a high-five gesture using her right hand when she is mentioning two common ways in which men tend to celebrate, which are ‘high fiving’ and ‘burping’. The context of this conversation is that the three characters (Anna, Ben and Charlie) are working together at the reception desk and discussing why their manager is in a good mood. At the same time, the background music indicates that this conversation is a casual chat. In addition, Anna’s speaking volume and speaking speed reflect her perplexed attitude towards Ben and Charlie. The close camera shot highlights the high five gesture as a visual supplement to make her explanation more direct and clearer. By showing this celebratory hand gesture apparently commonly used by men, Anna tries to make her explanation as relevant as possible to her two male colleagues. The explicit meaning is that Rebecca would be high fiving and burping if she was a man. The implicit meaning is that Rebecca cannot help but display an overfriendly attitude towards other staff member since she feels happy at the moment.

In the subtitle, the translator translates ‘high fiving’ into ‘击掌’ (slap hands), which means the body language is explained in the subtitle. Also, the word ‘burping’

is omitted since it does not obviously relate to Anna's high five. This helps the target language audience to connect Anna's body language to the translated text, although there is one problem that should be noted. While this use of body language might be recognised as a celebratory Western gesture by most of the younger generation in China, it did not exist in Chinese culture until recently. Nevertheless, by combining other multimodal elements as mentioned above with Anna's words, the target language audience can infer that Anna is using her body language as information that is supplementary to words so as to help Ben and Charlie understand why Rebecca was overly nice to them.

#### **4.2.3 Pun translation**

Using a pun, a form of wordplay, is an effective strategy for creating humour. He (2010: 81) states that this can involve using homophony and polysemy for the purpose of creating humour. Wang (2014: 276) indicates that hyponymy can be used in puns as an effective way to produce ambiguity or euphemism needed to produce a humorous effect, which might require increased processing effort on the part of the hearer. In that case, Díaz-Perez (2013: 286) suggests that the positive cognitive effects achieved through inference by the hearer offer a reasonable reward for the processing effort the hearer has made. The following examples will show how puns are used to make connections with other multimodal elements to create humour in this audiovisual context.

Among the excerpts analysed, three examples are related to pun translation: examples 4 (boss) and 8 (cheap) of 4.2.1.1 and example 1 of 4.2.1.2 (short; little). In these three examples, puns express at least two different meanings. The humorous effect is produced not only linguistically, but also through the combination of the linguistic pun and other multimodal elements. In some cases, one of the meanings produced by the pun can be connected with some image shown on the screen, such as the example of 'seal' which was mentioned in section 4.2.2. Multimodal elements draw the attention of the viewers, so they will be able to make inferences about the pun's different meanings. This is the reason why puns are particularly challenging for subtitlers. Puns also used to contribute to the development of the conversation, such as by stimulating reflection on the part of the characters, as in example 1 of 4.2.1.2 (short; little), which will be discussed further down in this section.

When puns are used to offer stimuli in people's conversation, the inferences made by the hearer are based on their own cognitive context. Words which are homophonic or polysemous in the source language might or might not be so in the target language. To be more precise, He (2010: 86) points out that the lexical and phonological features which are used in puns for the purpose of producing a humorous effect in the source text could raise a major challenge for translators. In example 4 of 4.2.1.1 (boss), the word 'boss' is used to express two meanings in the source text, namely boss as a noun and as a verb meaning to take control of things. Also, this pun is used for the purpose of expressing politeness in this conversation, instead of just to add fun to the conversation. The context of this conversation is that Tony offers his help voluntarily to work at the hotel on a night shift while one of the security guards is missing. Prior to this conversation, Rebecca had secretly met Tony and asked him to look after the hotel with Charlie. However, Charlie insists he has everything under control, so he lets Tony go back home when he has finished his shift. In this conversation, the camera distance indicates the close relationship between Tony and Charlie. Also, Tony's body language, speaking speed and speaking volume, as seen in row 9, show that he readily accepts Charlie's decision as also indicated by his use of a pun on the word 'boss'. The explicit meaning in row 9 is that Charlie is the boss of this hotel. The implicit meaning is that Tony is accepting Charlie's authority as a deputy manager and also believes him to be capable of making the right decisions for the smooth running of the hotel. Using a pun lightens the conversation environment and also reduces the threat to the negative face of Charlie.

In the subtitle, the translator makes the implicit explicit, translating it as 'You decide'. Combined with the other multimodal elements mentioned above, the translation allows the target language audience to infer that Tony amicably accepts Charlie's decision, though the reference to Charlie as a boss is lost, as is the humorous wordplay. In addition, the effort of trying to reduce the threat to the negative face of Charlie in a friendly environment by using the pun is omitted. From this example, it can be seen that sometimes two meanings which are expressed by one English word cannot be contained in one Chinese word. That being so, the translator has to decide whether to sacrifice certain secondary information in the process of translation. He (2010: 92) states that in adopting this strategy, translators

need to make a choice between maintaining the specific context and making the preserved information accessible to their target language audience based on their target audiences' cognitive environment. Díaz-Perez (2013: 291) further points out that if all the meanings represented by the original word cannot be preserved in the process of translation, then the most relevant meaning needs to be conserved in the target language text. It can be seen that in this example the humorous effect, as part of the communication intention in the source text, is sacrificed in the translated conversation.


By contrast, in example 8 of 4.2.1.1 (cheap), the polysemy of the puns in the source text is correspondingly maintained in the target text. The context of this conversation is that Charlie and Anna are standing at the reception desk. Charlie fills in Anna about the man who just walked through the hotel door with a woman and had brought another woman to the hotel the day before. When Anna hears what Charlie said, she makes an exclamation: 'How cheap!' (see row 6). In this conversation, the word 'cheap' is used polysemically. The volume and speed at which Anna speaks, as well as her intonation, offer stimuli to make Charlie think that Anna is shocked by what he just told her about the man. Therefore, when Charlie hears the word 'cheap', he thinks that Anna is referring to the low moral quality of this man. After hearing the response from Charlie, Anna makes clear that she is using the word 'cheap' to refer to the low quality of the woman's dyed hair (see row 8). The changing volume and speed at which Anna speaks show that Anna tries to finish her explanation as quickly as possible. This is because the lady she is talking about is walking towards to her, as shown by the moving camera position and the changing camera distance. Anna's usage of the word 'cheap' in her response also reflects one of her main characteristics: money worship. Therefore, when she mentions their guest's dyed hair, out of the blue, which has no connection with the story Charlie has just told, it creates another humorous effect through its connection to Anna's money-driven personality. As a result, it can be seen from the above comparison that the humour is created through Charlie's assumptions regarding Anna's use of the word 'cheap'.


In the subtitle, the translator needs to deal with the polysemous 'cheap' in the Chinese subtitle. The word '低级' (low grade) is chosen. In Chinese, this word can be used to either describe a person with low moral standards or to describe a poor-





quality product. Therefore, the target language audience can infer the different meanings from the same word through the combination with other existing multimodal elements in the conversation. As a result, the semantic meaning is retained in the target text, along with the communication intention in the original conversation, namely, the creation of a humorous effect through the use of a pun.

The effects created by puns need to be considered in terms of a bigger picture rather than just in relation to the immediate word or sentence. Zabalbeascoa (2005: 193) also indicates that translators need to consider the complete context instead of merely the present surroundings in the process of translation. The communication intention in using puns in the source text needs to be considered not only in terms of the particular word or sentence or immediate surroundings but also in relation to the whole conversation, or maybe even in a broader context, such as the whole episode of the television drama. Furthermore, puns are sometimes used in connection with specific items or images in audiovisual programmes. The ‘seal’ pun, which is discussed in section 4.2.2, is an example of this kind of pun. In example 1 of 4.2.1.2 (short; little), which is discussed next, the polysemous words ‘short’ and ‘little’ as used by the addresser refer to the height of the addressee who can be seen on the screen. These words create a humorous effect, but trigger a specifically targeted retort by the addressee using the very same words.

Number & Time	Visual Frame	Visual Image	Kinesic Action	Soundtrack	Chinese Subtitle & Back Translation
1 00:19:41		CP: Stationary D: MCS VC: Hotel lobby HP: Obliquely VF: Guest	Guest comes to the front of Anna, leaves his luggage on the floor and puts his arms on the reception desk and crosses his	FIELD: [♪] ☀ Hotel lobby FIGURE: Guest: Good morning, I'd like to check in.	Guest: 早安 我想登记 Back translation: Guest: Good morning. I

		looks at Anna, Anna looks at her files on the desk	hands, Anna is checking the files on the reception desk and she raises her head to look at the guest and then looks back to her files again	n, F	want to check in.
2		CP: Moving D: MCS VC: Hotel lobby HP: Obliquely VF: Anna looks at the computer	Anna closes the files folder and walks to the other side of the reception desk to reach the computer. Guest leaves his elbow on the reception desk and leans his body towards the desk and uses his right hand to rub his eyes	FIELD: [♪] ☀ Hotel lobby FIGURE: Anna: One moment sir, I'll be with you in a <b>short</b> while... n, F	Anna: 等等\短时间内替你办妥 Back translation: Anna: Wait a <b>moment</b> . Will help you to check in in a short period of time.
3		CP: Stationary D: MCS>MLS VC: Hotel	Anna turns her head to the guest and smiles awkwardly and shakes	FIELD: [♪] ☀ Hotel lobby FIGURE: Anna: I	Anna: 我不是说你矮小\是叫你等一会\不我不是

		lobby HP: Obliquely VF: Anna looks at the guest then down to the desk, Guest looks at Anna	her head, lifts her right hand up and moves it down a little bit. Guest turns his head towards Anna, Anna turns her eye view down to the desk	didn't mean <b>short</b> , I meant... <b>little</b> . No. I didn't mean that either. $n > p, S > F$	那个意思 Back translation: Anna: I am not saying you are <b>short</b> . Asking you to wait for a <b>moment</b> . No, I did not mean that.
4		CP: Stationary D: MCS > CS VC: Hotel lobby HP: Obliquely VF: Anna looks at guest, Guest looks at Anna then to the keyboard	The guest uses left hand and right elbow on the desk to support his body and waves his right hand and shakes his head, uses his eyes and head to point to the keyboard; Anna puts on a sour face and walks a little bit towards the	FIELD: [♪] ☀ Hotel lobby FIGURE: Guest: Could I just have a room, please? Is that possible? Could you just reach over, press those <b>little</b> buttons of yours, and make it happen? $p, F$	Guest: 我想登记房间可以吗\能请你按几个按钮替我办妥吗 Back translation: Guest: I want to check in, is that fine? Could you please press a <b>couple of</b> buttons and make

			guest		it done for me?
5		CP: Stationary D: CS VC: Hotel lobby HP: Obliquely VF: Anna looks at the guest	Anna leans her body towards the guest, shakes her head and raises her eyebrows	FIELD: [♪] ☀ Hotel lobby FIGURE: Anna: Sir, sarcasm is the lowest form of wit. n, S	Anna: 先生冷嘲热讽一点也不风趣 Back translation: Anna: Sir, sarcasm is not funny.
6 00:20:07		CP: Stationary D: CS VC: Hotel lobby HP: Obliquely VF: Guest looks at Anna, Anna looks at the guest	Guest leans his body towards Anna a little bit and shakes his head and smiles provocatively, Anna goes back behind the computer and presses the keyboard hard	FIELD: [♪] ☀ Hotel lobby FIGURE: Guest: I'm tired, and it's all I've got. Now give me a room! p, S	Guest: 我很累\只会嘲讽人\马上给我房间 Back translation: Guest: I am tired. So I only know sarcasm. Now give me a room.

In this conversation, the word ‘little’ is used to express three meanings: a small amount of time (row 2), a person’s short stature (row 3), and the size of computer keyboard buttons (row 4). The first two meanings are produced by Anna, while the

last one is created by the guest. The context of this conversation is that Anna is in the middle of her work when a guest comes into the hotel and asks to check in. In row 2, the speaking speed and speaking volume offer the stimulus that Anna is busy at her work, so she just gives a standard response to the guest subconsciously. In row 3, Anna realises that her words might cause offence to the guest and tries to make amends, but she only makes things worse. Her reduced speaking volume offers the stimulus that she realises the word 'little' still can also be used to indicate the height of the guest. The camera distance and the background music offer stimuli that the conversation is in a relaxed environment. The explicit meaning of row 2 and row 3 is that Anna will come back to help the guest to check in just a short amount of time. The implicit meaning of row 2 and 3 is that Anna uses 'short' or 'little' instinctively to refer to the amount of time, instead of using them specifically to mock the height of the guest. Anna realises that her word choice might be misunderstood, so she tries to reduce the threat to the positive face of the guest by using a different word, though she ends up making it even worse. In row 4, the guest uses 'little' as a retort to Anna, which shows that he has noticed the puns used by Anna. By using this word, he shows an off-record threat to the negative face of Anna since the guest is using Anna's own word to counter her. The explicit meaning of row 4 is that the guest is asking Anna to press little buttons on the keyboard to help him to check in. The implicit meaning is that the guest noticed that the word 'little' used by Anna refers to his height and he therefore uses the same word when making his request. Right after he uses this word (little), from row 5 to row 6, through the change in camera distance and Anna's speaking speed and body language, it can be seen that the conflict between Anna and the guest increases. As seen in this example, using puns can be an effective approach for expressing dissatisfaction and sarcasm implicitly, which in turn is an effective approach for reducing the threat to the hearer's negative face. At the same time, multimodal elements are being used to indicate the acceptance and reaction of the chosen puns by the speaker and the hearer in this conversation. Therefore, these multimodal elements are also being used to offer stimuli regarding the changing direction of conversation environment.

In Chinese, there is no corresponding collocation word in this instance. As a result, the translator changes the implicit meaning expressed by the word 'little' to an explicit meaning in the translation. Doing this causes the removal of the humorous

effect since the ambiguity in meaning which is created by the same word in the original text is lost. Furthermore, after translation, the connection of three different meanings within the same word in the source text is also lost. As a result, from row 2 to row 3, Anna's unintentional implicit reference to the guest's short stature becomes a bold and offensive attack on the guest, which deviates from the communication intention in the source text. The calm conversation environment which is offered by the multimodal elements also becomes conflicted in the translated text. In row 4, the guest uses a new word rather than repeating Anna's word to ask for help from Anna, according to the translated text. As a result, the original connection to Anna's own word, used by the guest as a retort, is dismissed. This allows the target language audience to infer that the guest is making a bold threat to Anna's negative face in this conversation, which is also different from the original communication intention in the source text.

The point of this discussion is to demonstrate that the communication intention behind the use of puns in the source text should be a major consideration in the process of translation. This applies also to other multimodal elements used in the source text that offer stimuli regarding the conversation environment and are essential for audiences to draw the right inferences. Otherwise, conflict could be created between the existing multimodal elements and the translated text that would increase the processing effort required by the target language audience.

#### **4.2.4 Implicit information and explicit information**

In audiovisual programmes, information may be given in explicit or implicit form. In the latter case, audiences need to make inferences according to the existing multimodal elements in the audiovisual programme as well as their own cognitive environment to access the implicit information. Four examples will be analysed and discussed in this section, namely example 1 of 4.2.1.1 (You're hilarious; Thank you), example 5 of 4.2.1.1 (single), example 9 of 4.2.1.1 (Do I look like I have the word 'Stupid' written on my forehead?) and example 1 of 4.2.1.3 (Any of that coffee going spare?). As can be seen from the examples, offering information implicitly is a useful way to create humour. Therefore, the audience needs to infer the information in order to understand the humour of the conversation and to enjoy it, as a result.

In example 1 of 4.2.1.1 (You're hilarious; Thank you), the context of this conversation is that Anna and Charlie are on a night shift in the hotel. They have just

heard a murder story told by Tony while they were having dinner in the staff canteen during a break. Things get worse that night as one of the security staff disappears. Therefore, Anna gets very tense. Tony is at the desk and notices the tension in Anna. He sees the opportunity to make fun of Anna, so he makes a sudden roar to scare her, which works. In row 6, Anna uses ‘You're hilarious’ as a compliment to refer to Tony as a funny guy. Other stimuli become essential for inference by the audience. Anna’s body language, speaking speed, intonation, and the camera distance suggest that Anna does not like the prank played by Tony, which expresses her ironic attitude towards Tony. The expression of Anna’s attitude through her body language and sound reduces the threat to the positive face of Tony. The explicit meaning in row 6 is that Tony is fun. The implicit meaning is that Tony is very childish to have pranked her.

In the subtitle, the translator uses the word ‘幽默’ (humorous), which is also a word that can be used either positively or negatively depending on the context. The translator added ‘真’ (really) to stress Anna’s attitude, though this is not used in the original conversation. Therefore, relying on the existing aforementioned multimodal elements, the target language audience can infer that Anna is expressing an ironic attitude towards Tony. As a consequence, expressing this attitude through multimodal elements is an effective approach to reduce the threat to the positive face of Tony.

In row 7, Tony’s body language and speaking speed and the camera distance offer stimuli suggesting that Tony feels pleased that he has successfully scared Anna through his prank. Also, Tony avoids eye contact with Anna, which is a stimulus suggesting that he notices her irony. As a result, it can be inferred that Tony’s response (Thank you) is used to create humour in order to save his own positive face. By accepting the irony positively, both the hearer and the speaker end up as winners in this conversation, which brings an end to this little farce between colleagues.

In the Chinese subtitle, the words ‘Thank you’ in row 7 are translated into ‘过奖’ (overpraise). This is a polite way to accept a compliment from other people and to show one’s gratitude to the giver in Chinese. Based on this subtitle, combined with the other aforementioned multimodal elements, Chinese audiences can also infer that

Tony accepts the ironic compliment from Anna in a humorous way and tries to save his own positive face.

In example 5 of 4.2.1.1(single), the context of this conversation is that Tony and Charlie are discussing and worrying about whether the hotel is going to cut some staff because they have just received a poor report from an inspector. However, Anna does not appear to be concerned about the danger of losing her job. Instead, she shows her interest in Adrian, who just showed up in their staff meeting. The changing speaking speed and volume offer stimuli that she cannot wait to get the answer that she is looking for and interrupts the conversation between Tony and Charlie. The explicit meaning of row 1 is that Anna wants to know whether Adrian is single. The implicit meaning is that Adrian, as their hotel European director, is attracting Anna's attention. Therefore, Anna's question diverts from the main theme of the story to create humour through highlighting Anna's worship of money.

In the subtitle, the translator uses a specific Chinese phrase '王老五' (single man), which is a term to describe a man who is single, to make explicit the implicit meaning from the original text. Using this strategy reduces the processing effort needed by the target language audience to get the humorous effect as well as infer the implicit meaning of the speaker in asking this question. Therefore, the contextual effects are kept to a high degree in the target language text.

In example 9 of 4.2.1.1 (Do I look like I have the word 'Stupid' written on my forehead?), the translated text makes explicit the implicit information in the source language text. The context of this conversation is that Tony looks at the picture which has been left on the bench by Charlie. He used to work with the man in the picture, so he fills in the information about this man to Charlie while he is changing his clothes to prepare to go back home. To answer Charlie's question, Tony answers with a rhetorical question "Do I look like I have the word 'Stupid' written on my forehead?" The unchanged speaking speed, speaking volume and body language in row 9 offer stimuli that Tony is unaffected by the question from Charlie. The explicit meaning of Tony's rhetorical question is that the word 'stupid' is not written on his forehead. The implicit meaning of Tony's answer is that he was not stupid enough to lend money to a Russian cleaner. When combined with other multimodal elements, the source language audience can infer that by using this rhetorical question, Tony is



making a joke with Charlie in a casual way while he is busy preparing to go home. Also, by using this rhetorical question, Tony tries to reduce the threat to the positive face of Charlie.

In the translated text, the form of a rhetorical question is maintained in the subtitle ‘我像是笨蛋吗’ (Do I look like an idiot?), so Tony’s answer to Charlie remains indirect. Although the content becomes more direct, when combined with other multimodal elements, the subtitle allows the target language audience to infer the humour present in Tony’s response. Also, by maintaining the rhetorical question in the subtitle, it reduces the threat to the positive face of Charlie.

In example 1 of 4.2.1.3, the context of this conversation is that Adrian, the European director, comes to the hotel with no notification after the hotel receives an unsatisfactory report from an inspector. Adrian’s speaking volume and speed offer stimuli that he is trying to calmly start a casual conversation. The explicit meaning of row 2 is that Adrian is asking Rebecca whether there is any leftover coffee. The implicit meaning is that Adrian tries to release the tension among staff due to his sudden visit to the hotel. Through the combination of verbal elements and multimodal elements, the source language audience can infer that Adrian tries to use humour to ease the tension and thereby to reduce the threat to the other staff members’ positive face.

In the subtitle, this conversation is translated as a direct request for a coffee. Without the adjective 'spare' to describe coffee, it reduces the humour to some extent. However, combined with other multimodal elements, as per the discussion above, the target language audience can still infer that Adrian is trying to start a conversation in a friendly way for the purpose of reducing the threat to other staff members’ positive face.

From the above four examples, it can be seen that implicit information is essential to the creation of humour in conversations. Moreover, implicit information is also an effective approach to reduce the threat to other people’s face. There are two main kinds of relationship between the implicit information, the multimodal elements and the context of the conversation, according to the examples of humour in translation which have been analysed in this research. Firstly, in some examples, the inference of implicit meaning depends on the existing multimodal elements and context, as in

example 1 of 4.2.1.1 (You're hilarious; Thank you) and example 5 of 4.2.1.1 (single). In these cases, the implicit meaning is either contrary to the explicit meaning or is expressed for some specific purpose. Therefore, translators need to consider the stimuli offered by the existing multimodal elements and context to see whether these stimuli can be replicated in the subtitle. Secondly, in some cases information is expressed implicitly for the purpose of creating humour for various reasons, such as releasing tension, reducing the threat to other people's face and so on. Other multimodal elements are used to reinforce this function during the conversation in example 9 of 4.2.1 (Do I look like I have the word 'Stupid' written on my forehead?) and example 1 of 4.2.1 (Any of that coffee going spare?). For translators, it is essential to find a balance between the processing effort required from the audience and the preservation of contextual effects in the translated text. Sometimes, making the implicit information explicit can reduce the processing effort required from the target language audience. Furthermore, other existing multimodal elements can be used as supplementary information in order to enable the target language audience to elicit the right inferences.

#### **4.2.5 Taboo words translation**

In this section, example 7 of 4.2.1.1 (not just kicking him in the balls) will be analysed and discussed. The context of this conversation is that Anna and Ben are having a competition to see who works more efficiently at the reception desk. They are keeping a record by sticking stars on a sheet of paper under their own name whenever they serve a customer. When Anna and Ben both go to collect files from behind, they have a brief conversation. Anna's speaking speed, speaking volume and body language offer stimuli that she feels antipathy towards Mr. Green. The explicit meaning of row 4 is that Anna deserves at least two stars for not just kicking Mr. Green in the balls. The implicit meaning is that Anna has to accept the business card which is offered by Mr. Green and pretend to be happy, though she dislikes him. Also, she has to keep offering Mr. Green good service due to her competition with Ben over who is better at the reception desk. In addition, the laughing sound from Ben offers a stimulus that he gets Anna's sarcasm.

In the subtitle, considering the sensitivity of the taboo word 'balls' used in the English conversation, the subtitle uses a more general description of the punishment, 'punching hard', instead of the specific part of the male body mentioned in the

source text. Therefore, combined with the subtitle and the other aforementioned multimodal elements, the target language audience can infer that Anna is making a sarcastic comment about Mr. Green to show her dislike of him to her colleague Ben.

Taboo words are used for various purposes in *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006) such as to show antipathy, to enhance relationships with colleagues, and so on. From the analysis of taboo word translations, it can be seen that although all these taboo words are toned down in the target language text, the contextual effects in most of the target language text are similar to those in the source language text. Han and Wang (2014: 4) suggest that in audiovisual programmes, some multimodal elements are used to provide more information that reinforces and supports the application of swear words so that the audience can infer the relevant information. It should be noted that the functions of some of these taboo words are reduced, such as by toning down the level of aggression. One of the main reasons is that as a publicly available product, a DVD can be accessed by a large number of people from various backgrounds. It is thought that the language used has to be acceptable for as many people as possible, including teenagers. In addition, in China, the censorship of imported foreign audiovisual programmes is relatively strict. Qian (2009: 16-17) indicates that, according to one of the standards set by the China Film Distribution Company, the department in charge of importing as well as distributing foreign media products in China, films cannot be imported if they contain violence, pornography or religious propaganda. Wang (2015: 204) further states that under the high level of censorship of audiovisual programmes in China, any such content needs to be removed before the imported audiovisual products can be shown to general audiences.

### **4.3 Conclusion**

Chapter 4 has focused on the discussion of the pragmatic subtitle translation of politeness and humour in Season 1 of *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006) from English to Chinese. This British television drama was chosen as a case study because of the variety of the stories, characters and social situations depicted, and because it was imported into China as one of the pioneer English programmes with translated subtitles. The multimodal analysis of the selected scenes stressed the importance of non-verbal elements for the understanding of the relationships between the characters. The chapter specifically discussed the pragmatic use of politeness and humour and explained how they contribute to the development of the story plot. The

purpose of the analysis has been to identify possible challenges during the translation process. Indeed, we found that the differences in cognitive context between the source language audience and target language audience should affect translation decisions, and that translators should notice the stimuli offered by multimodal elements and the way they interact with source text and target texts.

More specifically, section 4.1 discussed various aspects related to the translation of address terms in terms of politeness. The research corpus was divided into four subsections to explore how different social status and social distance could affect the choice of address terms in different contexts. In these subsections, the multimodal elements were analysed qualitatively according to their application frequency to compare how they work individually and in combination with verbal elements in different contexts. This process highlighted the various complicated relationships which are constructed by verbal elements and other multimodal elements in the process of expressing politeness in research corpus. That being the case, consideration of the connections between the translated text and existing multimodal elements in the process of inferring politeness becomes important in the process of translation.

Next, section 4.2 discussed various aspects related to the translation of humour. In subsection 4.2.1, the individual multimodal elements in this thesis research corpus used to offer stimuli related with the creation of humour in audiovisual programmes were analysed quantitatively according to frequency. In this subsection, the multimodal elements were analysed qualitatively for the purpose of finding out which kinds of stimuli can be offered by the individual multimodal elements. Following a specific analysis of the multimodal elements in isolation from the verbal elements of the conversation, an investigation was conducted into the extent to which the stimuli from the multimodal elements in the source language text were maintained in the target language text. It can be seen from these selected examples that several multimodal elements might simultaneously contribute to the production of humour. Moreover, some multimodal elements can be used to offer direct stimuli in people's conversation to create humour independently of the dialogue. In addition, multimodal elements can be used to offer stimuli for the adoption of different kinds of face-saving strategies during conversations. In the current Chinese version of *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006), the overall meaning, whether inferred or explicit, is

successfully transferred. However, in a few instances, lack of awareness of non-verbal elements leads to incorrect interpretations. Subsections 4.2.2 to 4.2.5 discussed the interplay and mutual influence between multimodal elements and verbal elements during conversations in the source language text as well as in the target language text. The present research found that the stimuli from the combination of verbal and non-verbal elements influenced the inference of the expression of politeness and humour by the audiences.

In subsection 4.2.2, further discussion was provided of the stimuli offered by verbal and non-verbal elements in the examples of humour and their translation. In this subsection, the stimuli offered by objects and body language were analysed in relation to relevant verbal elements. It was found that in certain cases, verbal elements are used to express meaning indirectly, so the hearer needs to make inferences based on images and body language. Moreover, since cultural references are sometimes included as verbal or multimodal elements, it was necessary to explore ways in which audiences are able to infer cultural connotations in different cognitive contexts. Humour effect, which is created through the combination of verbal elements and other multimodal elements in the source language text, is provided based on the presumption that adequate contextual effects can be inferred by their source language audience according to their cognitive context (Yus 2012: 117).

In subsection 4.2.3, analysis of examples of puns and their translation indicated that homophonic and polysemous meanings created by puns need to be inferred according to the stimuli which are offered in a conversation. By using one word to express various meanings for the purpose of creating ambiguity during the conversation, the sense of humour is created through the combination of different meanings from the same word and different related multimodal elements in audiovisual programmes (Tanaka 1994: 60-62). In consequence, there is a risk that the connections between the various meanings and the multimodal elements that were present in the source text might not be transferred in the translated text. In that case, translators have to make a decision in the process of subtitle translation on which meaning should remain in order to maximise the remaining contextual effects and minimise the processing efforts required from their target language audience.

In subsection 4.2.4, problems relating to dealing with implicit or explicit information during the translation of humour were discussed. The analysis showed that implicit expression is used to indirectly express meaning for a specific purpose, for example by using a compliment to express irony in order to reduce the conflict between the speaker and the hearer. In such cases, the stimuli from other multimodal elements, which are used to offer direct information, become essential for the inference of the implicit meaning.

In subsection 4.2.5, the translation of taboo words was discussed. Under the strict standards set by the China Film Distribution Company, taboo words are toned down in the translated subtitles. Through the combination of verbal elements and other multimodal elements, the contextual effects, such as expression of irony, can be maintained in the translated text, although the levels of aggression are reduced.

From the analysis of examples in the above sections from 4.2.2 to 4.2.5, it can be seen that nine out of fourteen examples contain use of humour for the purpose of creating different face-saving strategies tactically between the interlocutors, namely examples 1 (You're hilarious; Thank you), 3 (Santa's tacky Christmas list), 4 (boss) and 9 (Do I look like I have the word 'Stupid' written on my forehead?) of subsection 4.2.1.1 of the Appendix, examples 1 (short; little), 2 (internal processor), 3 (*Pretty Woman*) and 4 (maybe they sent us some dead fish just to help out in the restaurant) of subsection 4.2.1.2 of the Appendix and example 1 of subsection 4.2.1.3 (Any of that coffee going spare?) of the Appendix. From these nine examples, it can be seen that humour is expressed implicitly through the cooperation between the verbal element and related multimodal elements, so that different face-saving strategies are constructed to maintain the relationship between the speaker and hearer effectively, such as showing dissatisfaction indirectly, giving suggestions indirectly, reducing the conflicts indirectly and so on (Lakoff 1973; Leech 1983; Brown and Levinson 1987; Barbe 1995; Dews, Kaplan and Winner 1995; Zajdman 1995; Holmes 2000; Holmes and Stubbe 2003; Norrick 2003; Holmes and Schnurr 2005; Arnaiz 2006; Matthew, Hancock and Dunham 2006). One option is to translate the connoted meaning which is represented by the verbal element into explicit meaning in the subtitles, so the target language audience can infer the semantic meaning without too much effort. Since using culture references or puns can express meaning implicitly, these two approaches are being adopted in the expression of irony as an

off-record strategy so the threat to the hearer's face can be reduced effectively (Barbe 1995: 89; Dews, Kaplan and Winner 1995: 365). In some examples, although some multimodal elements, such as body language, are being used to provide stimuli to construct the threat to the hearer's face directly, with the alleviating stimuli of the indirect expression from verbal elements, some humour expression still can be used to reduce the threat to the hearer's face to some extent. If translators translate the implicit meaning explicitly, the increasing threat to the hearer's face will be inferred through a double strike from the verbal element and other multimodal elements in the target language text, such as in example 3 (Santa's tacky Christmas list) of subsection 4.2.1.1 of the Appendix and example 1 (short; little) of subsection 4.2.1.2 of the Appendix.

## Chapter 5. Conclusion

The pragmatic use of politeness and humour is essential for maintaining the relationship between the speaker and the hearer in people's daily communication as well as in audiovisual programmes, as we discussed in Chapter 2. In audiovisual programmes, the pragmatic use of politeness and humour is not only being expressed by characters' conversation, but also combined with other multimodal elements during interlocutors' conversation. Considering the importance of these elements, this thesis aimed to investigate the interlingual subtitling of the pragmatic use of politeness and humour in audiovisual programmes, specifically from English to Chinese. Although the application of Relevance Theory into audiovisual translation has drawn an increasing amount of attention from researchers in the past two decades (Bogucki 2004a, 2004b, 2013, 2020; Desilla 2012; Díaz-Perez 2013, 2014; He 2010; Kovacic 1994; Yus 1998, 2003, 2012, 2016), there is still a gap in applying Relevance Theory into the pragmatic translation of politeness and humour, especially regarding using humour for the purpose of expressing politeness, in subtitling from English to Chinese. As discussed in Chapter 3, Multimodal Transcription, which displays the various multimodal elements in an organised framework, provides a systematic framework for translators to figure out the stimuli which are provided through the combination of verbal elements and other multimodal elements in terms of Relevance Theory in the process of pragmatic translation of politeness and humour in audiovisual programmes. To the best of our knowledge, the combination of Relevance Theory and Multimodal Transcription into audiovisual programmes translation has only been applied by Desilla (2012) in research on how multimodal elements are being used to infer the implicatures for the purpose of constructing humour in comedy films. Chapter 4 examined how the combination of Relevance Theory and the adapted Multimodal Transcription framework can be applied into the analysis and discussion of the pragmatic translation of politeness and humour, specifically from English and Chinese.

Chapter 4, section 4.1 mainly focused on the analysis and discussion of examples which are related to the pragmatic use of politeness and their related translation in *Hotel Babylon*. In section 4.1, the examples contained the use of various address terms, since the application of address terms is closely linked with the application of politeness during conversation. The pragmatic use of address terms in people's



conversation displays various functions and purposes through combination with other multimodal elements in the source language text. The examples in this section are classified into four parts according to differences of social distance and social status between the speakers and the hearers. By using this classification, this research has attempted to understand how such differences in social distance and social status affect the application of address terms and their relationship with other multimodal elements during conversations in audiovisual programmes. This will be further discussed in section 5.1. In addition, we examined how existing multimodal elements affect inferences when they are combined with the translated address terms in the target language text. Section 4.2 mainly focused on the analysis and discussion of examples which are related to the pragmatic use of humour and their translation in *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006). In addition, some examples which contain use of humour for the purpose of being polite and their translation were also included in this section. How existing multimodal elements affect their target language audience's inference of humour in the translated text was another question addressed, which also will be discussed in more detail in section 5.1.

Chapter 5 is divided into three sections. Section 5.1 will summarise the major findings of this study; section 5.2 will discuss the contribution of this research; finally, section 5.3 will identify limitations of this study. Additionally, some suggestions for further research will be given.

### **5.1 Major findings of the study**

From the analysis of examples in Chapter 4, it can be seen that the combination of Relevance Theory and Multimodal Transcription helps the translator to figure out the influence from multimodal elements on the inference of the pragmatic use of politeness and humour expression in audiovisual programmes, both in the source language text and target language text. Multimodal elements have an influence on verbal elements in the process of implicit meaning inference during interlocutors' conversation. In consequence, translation of the pragmatic use of politeness and humour cannot only rely on verbal elements, but also needs to consider related multimodal elements during the conversation in different cognitive contexts. Five major findings will be discussed in this section, which will also help to answer the research questions which were proposed in section 1.3.

Research question 1 sought to investigate why and how a new framework based on Relevance Theory and Multimodal Transcription can be used to explore the pragmatic use of politeness and humour in the interlingual subtitling of audiovisual programmes.

In relation to Question 1, in the translation of the pragmatic use of politeness and humour in audiovisual programmes, attention needs to be paid to information and meanings conveyed through related multimodal elements in various cognitive contexts during the conversation. As can be seen in Chapter 4, usually more than one multimodal element is being used simultaneously to offer stimuli in each example, which affects the inference of the pragmatic use of politeness and humour in each conversation. Evidently, the combination of verbal and multimodal elements comprising explicit and implicit methods increases the appeal of the programme (Kozloff 2000: 6-18; Bordwell, Thompson and Smith 2017: 75-76). That being the case, the stimuli which are being arranged during the conversation have optimal relevance to their source language audience based on the principle of relevance, as discussed in section 2.5.1. These stimuli are being prepared in advance to guide audiences to infer the adequate contextual effects with a minimal processing effort in the presumed source language context. Therefore, it is essential for translators to consider the differences in cognitive context between source and target language audience since the stimuli which are being provided in the source text might not work in the same way for the target audience. Differences of cognitive context between source language text and target language text are affected by differences in culture background. The importance of cognitive context also can be seen based on the results from some reception studies which have been done on audiovisual programmes translation in different countries, which indicated that culture differences can significantly affect the degree of comprehensiveness of the translated audiovisual programmes and therefore the inference by the target audience (Gambier 2018: 44; Hill 2018: 9; Tuominen 2018: 72).

Taking into account the differences in the cognitive context between source text and target text, translators need to balance contextual effects and processing effort for the purpose of reaching a relatively high degree of interpretive resemblance in the process of translation according to Relevance Theory. Although some critics have pointed out that the degree of relevance is vague, as discussed in section 2.5.1.3,

the adaptation of Multimodal Transcription in this study, as a framework which is proposed based on the specific characteristics of audiovisual programmes, is used to offer guidance to help translators figure out the related multimodal elements which could affect the inference of the necessary information in a clearer and more organised way (Gambier 218: 50). Using the adapted Multimodal Transcription framework from this thesis could help translators figure out the information which is provided by single elements during the conversation. At the same time, this framework can help translators to further uncover the interplay among different elements in audiovisual programmes. This adapted framework can also help translators to assess whether or not the existing related multimodal elements can be used to infer similar information in the target text and make adjustments with the aim of helping their target audience infer information related to the pragmatic use of politeness and humour. Although certain limitations or rules will exist in relation to every specific subtitle translation project, the combination of Relevance Theory and Multimodal Transcription can help translators reach a relatively high degree of interpretive resemblance in the process of subtitling from English to Chinese.

Research question 2 sought to explore how address terms are used as pragmatic elements in audiovisual programmes for the purpose of expressing politeness and indicating social distance and difference in social status; and to examine how multimodal elements affect the relevant inferences differently for English-speaking and Chinese-speaking audiences.

In relation to Question 2, we have noted that address terms cooperate with other multimodal elements in order to express politeness in audiovisual programmes. However, in different cultures, different address terms will be adopted in different kinds of situation. Translators need to make certain adjustments according to the particular communication environment to help their audience understand the characters. In section 2.3.1, this thesis discussed the importance in both British and Chinese culture, of choosing the appropriate address term according to differences in social status and social distance between the addresser and addressee. Social distance is a dynamic element which can be reflected through the using of different address terms and/or combined with other related multimodal elements during the conversation. This can be seen from the analysis and discussion of examples in section 4.1. Formal address terms are used most often in the section 4.1.1 examples

to display relatively wide differences in social status and social distance between the speaker and the hearer, while in section 4.1.4 examples informal address terms are used more frequently, to reflect relatively small differences in social status and social distance among characters. As can be seen from the translated address terms in these two groups of examples, translators put much more effort into maintaining the social status and social distance when the differences between the addresser and the addressee are relatively wide, as in section 4.1.1, compared to the effort apparent in the section 4.1.4 examples. Omitting address terms in the translated text might make it difficult for the target language audience to infer the dynamic use of address terms between the interlocutors during the conversation. Although their friendly and relaxed attitude towards each other can be partly remedied by other multimodal elements, such as smiles, the degree of their closeness and the efforts which they put into decreasing the distance and developing their relationship by using specific address terms during every communication opportunity can hardly be inferred by their audience according to the translated subtitle.

The chosen address terms are not only being used to represent the differences in social status and social distance among characters in audiovisual programmes, but also to represent the speakers social abilities and personalities and to offer various types of information through the combination with other related multimodal elements. For instance, implicitly provided information may include creating an atmosphere of humour to maintain the relationship among friends. The thesis has proposed ways to help the translator make appropriate adjustments when such implicit meanings are being expressed through the cooperation of verbal elements and other multimodal elements during the conversation.

Some studies have already been done on address terms translation from Chinese to English in audiovisual programmes (Yuan 2016; Chen 2018). Two previous researchers, Yuan (2016) and Chen (2018), highlighted that the use of address terms is affected by the different culture backgrounds between English and Chinese. That being the case, both Yuan (2016) and Chen (2018) point out the difficulties in keeping the equivalence of address terms from Chinese to English in subtitling due to these cultural differences. Chen (2018: 193-221) focused on analysis of verbal use of address terms, which are used to represent Chinese culture, especially in relation to the usage of address terms in federal society which existed around the 1920s of

China, both in the source text and target text. Based on three of Zhang Yimou's films, she compared the differences between audiences of Chinese native speakers' and British audiences' understanding of the use of address terms related with power and solidarity in the Chinese cultural period covered in these films. On the other hand, Yuan (2016: 77-100) concentrated on the translation of address terms in terms of politeness from Chinese to English in two costume films and two films set in around the 1940s in China, which were also all directed by Zhang Yimou. Yuan (2018: 95-100) also showed how non-verbal elements play an important role in showing politeness in Chinese culture in the two films associated with ancient Chinese culture through use of polite gestures or body language compared with the other two films. Yuan (2016: 99) further suggested that translation of address terms is a very challenging task in terms of keeping the representation of politeness in the process of subtitling from Chinese to English. However, with the information which is provided by non-verbal elements through the scene in these ancient time movies, such as polite body gestures of bowing, kneeling and kowtowing, English audiences can speculate on the polite meaning to remedy the omission of politeness terms from the verbal elements in the translated subtitles, even though they might not be familiar with Chinese culture. From these two academic researchers' theses, it can be seen that the using of address terms is rooted in Chinese culture and brings unavoidable challenges to subtitlers. Compared with their research, this thesis aimed to figure out the usage of the address terms in terms of politeness with a relatively modern story background that happened around the 2000s in the British television drama *Hotel Babylon* (Riley 2006) and the programme's subtitling into Chinese. As Yuan (2016: 99) points out, the way of showing politeness through body language in modern times is not as obvious compared with ancient times, and the contribution of these non-verbal elements to the pragmatic use of politeness cannot be observed easily. In that case, this thesis attempted to conduct the research on subtitling from a different angle by starting in the area of translation of the pragmatic use of politeness through the cooperation of the using address terms and other multimodal elements in subtitles from English to Chinese, as was discussed above.

Research question 3 sought to investigate how different face-saving strategies are deployed through the pragmatic use of address terms in audiovisual programmes and

how multimodal elements may affect the inference of these face-saving strategies in the Chinese subtitled target text.

In relation to Question 3, cooperation between the chosen address terms and other related multimodal elements is a pivotal factor in the process of constructing various face-saving strategies for different communication purposes. There are different ways of constructing different face-saving strategies through the different relationships between the chosen address terms and related multimodal elements in audiovisual programmes. To be more precise, the inference of different face-saving strategies does not only rely on the stimuli which are provided by verbal elements, but also on other multimodal elements during the conversation. When face-saving strategies have been constructed explicitly and similar information is being provided through the cooperation of verbal elements and other multimodal elements, it can be possible to delete some overlapping information which is provided through the verbal elements since the stimuli which are provided by other multimodal elements can be used as supplementary information to help their audience to infer the similar communication intention based on a concise translated text. However, if the speaker should want to adopt an off-record strategy to reduce the threat to the hearer's face, that speaker could increase his/her social distance implicitly in relation to the hearer through the adopted address term, such as in example 5 (the wrong man) of 4.1.4, to pretend the hearer is irrelevant to the speaker as well as the coming information during the conversation. However, other multimodal elements are being used directly to indicate the threat, such as the speaker pointing a finger. In that case, the speaker tries to reduce the threat to the hearer's face to some extent through the cooperation of verbal elements and other multimodal elements. However, in the translated text, if the implicit information provided by adjusting the social distance between the speaker and the hearer cannot be reflected through the translated address term, with the accompanying stimuli which provide the existing other multimodal elements from the audiovisual programme, the result is to construct a bold threat to the hearer's face. This example shows that the pragmatic translation of an address term is not a task involving only the transfer of the semantic meanings of the address term from one language to another, it also shows that the communication intention, which is to reduce the threat to the hearer's face implicitly during the conversation, should also be noticed by translators. This is because when the target language audience

watch this conversation, they would assume the ostensive stimuli which are provided by other multimodal elements are necessary, with the related address term, for them to infer further information during the conversation (Gutt 2000: 31-32), such as the relationship between the interlocutors. Also face-saving strategies can be used in different ways for making other assumptions, on such as the personality of the interlocutors. In that case, it can be seen that the address term is not only being used to identify different characters, it also serves other pragmatic use purposes during the conversation.

Research question 4 sought to investigate the pragmatic use of humour in audiovisual programmes, and how multimodal elements may affect the inferences associated with the use of humour in the Chinese subtitled target text.

From the research corpus in 4.2 of the Appendix in this thesis, it can be seen that humour is being expressed implicitly in most of the examples through the cooperation of verbal elements and other multimodal elements during the conversation. As it can be seen from the research corpus of humour translation examples, the use of humour is more frequent when the differences in social status and social distance between the speaker and the hearer are relatively small, compared with their frequency when the differences in social status and social distance are relatively wide. With regard to the translation of humour, as it can be seen from the research corpus, some words, such as puns, are chosen because they can express more than one meaning, and the translator's task is made even more challenging when a those verbal elements in the source language contain references from the source culture. Clearly, the use of polysemy increases the difficulty of information inference. In such cases, figuring out the related multimodal elements becomes even more important, since these elements are being used during the conversation to offer essential stimuli to enable the audience to infer an acceptable meaning, representing humour expression in this case, instead of accessing the meaning only from the chosen words (Yus 2003:1320). However, these kinds of words might not be used in the same way in the target language text. Hence, the connection which is constructed between the verbal elements and other multimodal elements could be affected in the translation.

The question therefore arises as to how to best reconstruct the connection between the translated text and the existing multimodal elements. As just mentioned, the differences in terms of cognitive context between source language audience and target language audience could create a challenge for the translator if the existing multimodal elements contain cultural references. Considering the processing effort needed from the target audience, translators need to be sufficiently flexible to deal with the connections between the translated text and existing multimodal elements in the process of translation. Translators need to consider what kinds of information can be inferred from the multimodal elements by their target audience and how to connect this with the translated text for the purpose of constructing humour expression. When multimodal elements cannot be used to infer related information in the target text, translators might need to make explicit some information which has been expressed implicitly in the source text, so to replace the missing information which was provided by multimodal elements for the purpose of humour expression. It may be that by using multimodal elements to provide some of the information in the target language text, translators might use the semantic meaning from humour expression to make a new connection with the existing multimodal elements for the purpose of humour expression in the process of translation.

There have been some previous studies on the translation of humour in subtitling between English and Chinese (Yuan 2016; Liang 2017). Studies by Yuan (2016) and Liang (2017) both point out the difficulties of translation of humour expression from one language to another language due to the different culture backgrounds of their audiences. Yuan (2016: 57-76) focused on the subtitling of verbal humour from Chinese to English in a Chinese movie. The effect of creating humour from some non-verbal elements was also discussed, such as through flamboyantly coloured costumes or the exaggerated makeup of the characters, which is separate with verbal expressed humour. Liang (2017: 203-238) also concentrated on the translation of verbal expressed humour from English to Chinese, through pointing out some visual elements, such as a weird hair styles, which are used to create humour in some examples. In audiovisual programmes, other multimodal elements are used in efforts to provide stimuli to create humour either alongside or in cooperation with verbal elements in some humour translation examples. Compared with these two academic researchers' work, this thesis focused on the subtitling of humour which is created



through the interplay with verbal elements and other multimodal elements from English to Chinese in audiovisual programmes as was discussed above.

Question 5 sought to investigate the pragmatic use of humour for the purpose of being polite in audiovisual texts, and how multimodal elements may affect audience's inferences related to humour for the purpose of being polite in the Chinese subtitled target text.

In relation to Question 5, from the research corpus in this thesis, it can be seen that in some examples humour is used, for various purposes, as a face-saving strategy during people's conversation. As was discussed in section 2.4, and can also be seen from the analysis of the research corpus in section 4.2, people use humour as an effective approach for showing politeness in their conversation. In this kind of example, the stimuli which are provided by other multimodal elements might contain aggressive information, which might be recognised by their target language audience. With the cooperation of the implicit expression, an off-record strategy is constructed to reduce the threat to the hearer's face. Adopting different face-saving strategies during people's conversation is thus an effective approach to reduce conflict or ease embarrassment between the speaker and the hearer. Hence, it is important for translators to notice the specific relationship of the existing multimodal elements and translated text as well as the specific purpose of adopting this kind of humour expression during conversation.

To sum up, this research has answered the five research questions and focused on the research aims which are proposed in section 1.3 of Chapter 1. From the above five main findings which emerged from the analysis of the research corpus in this thesis, it can be seen that the pragmatic use of politeness and humour can be observed not only in conversation but also in other multimodal elements which are used in audiovisual programmes. Thus, it is important for audiences to unravel the complicated relationships among these various elements in order to infer the related information while they are watching audiovisual programmes. That being the case, with supplementation by Multimodal Transcription, the stimuli which are provided through verbal elements and other multimodal elements in the audiovisual programme can be organised and displayed systematically. Doing this will help translators to figure out, under the guidance of Relevance Theory, the various

communicative intentions and informative intentions which are provided by the pragmatic use of politeness and humour in different communication contexts and to balance the contextual effect and processing effort to reach a relatively high degree of interpretive resemblance in the translated subtitle.

## **5.2 The contribution of this study**

Academic research in the area of audiovisual translation has developed rapidly in the past two decades. There are five main contributions of this study. Firstly, although a large number of academic studies exist in the area of pragmatic translation in audiovisual programmes (Hatim and Mason 1997, 2000; Díaz-Cintas 2001; Asimakoulas 2004; Bartrina 2004; Bogucki 2004a, 2004b, 2013, 2020; Bruti 2006, 2009, 2015, 2016; Guillot 2010, 2016, 2018; He 2010; Díaz-Perez 2013), little research has been done on the pragmatic translation of politeness based on the combination of Relevance Theory and Multimodal Transcription to construct a framework to figure out the influence between verbal elements and other multimodal elements in the process of the pragmatic translation of politeness, specifically in address terms translation in subtitles from English to Chinese. Breaking away from the mainstream of merely transferring semantic meaning in audiovisual translation research, the methodological framework proposed herewith for the investigation of the explicit meaning and implicit meaning of the pragmatic translation of politeness and humour in subtitling combines insights from multimodality and pragmatics translation. In addition, this research confirms that Relevance Theory can be used through the conjunction with politeness theory to explore the pragmatic use of politeness between different cultural backgrounds, as discussed by Esandell-Vidal (1996, 1998), Jary (1998a, 1998b) and Christie (2007) in section 2.5.2 of this thesis, from the angle of the pragmatic translation of politeness in audiovisual programmes. Furthermore, the adaptation of different address terms is important in both British and Chinese culture (Braun 1988; Wood and Kroger 1991; Huddleston and Pullum 2002; Pan and Kadar 2011; Zhong 2011; He and Ren 2016). In audiovisual programmes, address terms can be adapted to show various information to their audience (Hatim and Mason 1997, 2000; Arnaiz 2006; Bruti and Perego 2010; Tomaszewicz 2010; Szarkowska 2010; Bogucki 2013), such as different social distance, interpersonal meaning and so on. In such cases, the combination of Relevance Theory and Multimodal Transcription could offer substantial support for

inferring the necessary information from the pragmatic use of address terms for the purpose of expressing politeness among different characters in target language text.

Secondly, although a large number of studies have been done related with humour translation in audiovisual programmes (Delabastita 1990, 1996; Zabalbeascoa 1996, 1997, 2008; Yus 1998, 2003, 2012, 2016; Vandaele 1999, 2002, 2011; Díaz-Cintas 2001, 2007; Asimakoulas 2004; Bruti 2006, 2009; Chiaro 2006, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2014a, 2014b; Jiménez-Carra 2009; Díaz-Perez 2013, 2014; Wang 2014; Dore 2020), to the best knowledge of the writer, only two scholars, Yus (1998, 2003, 2012, 2016) and Díaz-Perez (2014), have applied Relevance Theory to the translation of humour in audiovisual programmes. These products offer the opportunity to use different elements to express various information in different ways to attract the attention of their audiences, and combining Multimodal Transcription with Relevance Theory, as proposed as one of the thematic in this thesis, provides adequate support for translators to figure out the affection between the stimuli which are provided from verbal elements and other multimodal elements in the inference of humour in audiovisual programmes in different cognitive contexts in the process of subtitling. Moreover, the differences in cultural background between Great Britain and China make the transfer of pragmatic inferences of humour even more difficult in the process of subtitling. Linguistically and culturally, transferring these culturally specific forms of expression, which are accorded different emphasis in each culture, is particularly challenging. That being the case, translators could apply Relevance Theory and Multimodal Transcription to detect the information which is provided by various elements that are affected by culture differences in the process of translation.

Thirdly, another thematic of this thesis is that this is the first study to explore the pragmatic translation of using humour for constructing different face-saving strategies in audiovisual programmes. While the importance of the role of humour in maintaining polite interactions has been documented elsewhere (Dews, Kaplan and Winner 1995; Zajdman 1995; Arnaiz 2006; Holmes 2000; Attardo 2001; Holmes and Stubbe 2003; Holmes and Schnurr 2005; Matthews, Hancock and Dunham 2006), to our knowledge no other study has examined this issue in an audiovisual context. The combination of Relevance Theory and Multimodal Transcription makes possible the close analysis of the influence of multimodal elements on verbal elements for the expression of humour with the specific intention of expressing politeness. This has

often taken the form of stimuli offered by multimodal elements working with verbal elements to produce different face-saving strategies. The analysis has shown that translators should pay attention to the connection of all these elements so that the relationship between implicit and explicit meanings is transferred in the best possible way in the subtitles. Such an approach will ensure that the target audience gain the utmost comprehension from the use of humour to express politeness in audiovisual programmes.

Fourthly, the framework proposed through the combination of Relevance Theory and Multimodal Transcription in this thesis could be a useful component of training for audiovisual translators. Compared with other methodologies which are used to analyse audiovisual programmes, the multimodal essence from audiovisual programmes has been effectively exploited by the Multimodal Transcription framework (Taylor 2018: 46-49). The Multimodal Transcription framework enables decoding of audiovisual programmes, within a proper amount of time, into various semiotic modes in a systematic way, to guide trainers to gain familiarity with the unique and complicated way of meaning expression through the interplay among various semiotic modes in audiovisual programmes (McLoughlin 2010: 168).

Last but not least, the combination of Relevance Theory and Multimodal Transcription proposed in this study not only has potential for application in the pragmatic translation of politeness and humour in subtitling, but also in other areas of interlingual transfer which contain stimuli relating to the interplay of various elements in one product. There are some other kind of texts, such as comics, which are also constructed by combining various semiotic modes in one text. With the conjunction of these two theories, through the framework of Multimodal Transcription, proper adjustments could be made according to the specific generic which is used in that kind of text, to provide a systematic framework for translators to figure out the stimuli which are provided through verbal elements and related multimodal elements from source text and help translators to make proper modification to balance the contextual effect and processing efforts for reaching a relatively high degree of interpretation resemblance between source language text and target language text.

### **5.3 Limitations of the study and implications for further study**

Although this research has attempted to be as thorough as possible, certain limitations need to be highlighted.

First, a single British television drama was selected for study, which may have created limitations in terms of the quantity of research corpus and the chosen genre. Inevitably, different genres of audiovisual programmes will reflect different features regarding the use of verbal elements and other multimodal elements to fit the requirements of their own product. Future researchers should therefore apply the proposed combination of Relevance Theory and Multimodal Transcription to the translation of a larger research corpus and different genres of audiovisual programmes.

Second, since this research only analyses politeness and its translation in relation to address terms, future research should explore the translation of other ways of expressing politeness in audiovisual programmes. At the same time, other elements which are related to pragmatic translation should also be explored in light of the crucial need to provide related information that will enable target audiences to infer information which could affect their view of the audiovisual programme as a whole.

Third, most of the conversations in this research take place within a fictional hotel environment, the "Hotel Babylon". The original stories in the novel were provided by a staff member, who spent a lifetime working in the luxury hotel industry in the centre of London, and the series was written by Imogen Edwards-Jones (Edwards-Jones 2005:9). With these first-hand resources, the writer recreated the stories as much as possible in a fictional hotel due to legal reasons. In this novel, people from all over the world come to live in this hotel for different reasons. This novel describes the stories that happened daily among different hotel customers and staff. It represents how these staff had to deal with all the different interactions with their customers and how they got along with each other as colleagues and friends in their daily lives. Hence, the conversations in these stories were produced to be as real as possible among different people within the background of a five-star hotel. Future research could explore the pragmatic use of politeness and humour in different or broader conversation settings and contexts, for example, universities, courts, or the military. That would give rise to different situations in which the interrelation

between verbal and pragmatic elements in the audiovisual text would require the translator to take different sets of data into account.

Fourth, there is a minor drawback relating to the limited research corpus in this thesis. To be more precise, some multimodal elements are underrepresented during the conversations in Chapter 4 in this research corpus, such as music. There is no doubt that all multimodal elements play their part in providing stimuli to enable their audience to infer necessary information in the specific communication environment of the audiovisual programme. Music is an important multimodal element that has been used to offer various pivotal stimuli implicitly within the development of stories in audiovisual programmes, such as to strike a sympathetic chord among audiences (Brown 1994; Van Leeuwen 1999; Di Giovanni 2008; Chalkho 2015; Desblache 2019, 2020). To address this gap, it might be helpful for future studies to collect more examples containing music to see how this element affects translation of audiovisual programmes from one language to another.

Fifth, this research has only analysed the translation of pragmatic use of politeness and humour from English to Chinese, in an attempt to figure out the importance of the cognitive context in the process of inferring information in audiovisual programmes in relation to these two languages. Further research could consider translation between other language pairs.

Next, future researchers could make use of an audience reception approach to collect useful data to further observe the influence of different multimodal elements and verbal elements in pragmatic translation between English and Chinese or indeed in other language pairs. This thesis only focuses on theoretical aspects of pragmatic translation of subtitling politeness and humour in audiovisual programmes. As a result, the research corpus has been analysed only by the writer; hence, the data analysis may to some extent be subjective. It is possible that different researchers may view different multimodal elements as offering different stimuli in an audiovisual programme. That being the case, conducting audience reception studies could help future researchers collect more objective data from research corpus observation.

Finally, since the use of Multimodal Transcription can involve consideration of many different elements which exist in audiovisual programmes, it might be argued

that this framework could be too complicated to use because of the vast amount of detail requiring assessment for inclusion in the frame. However, with many audiovisual programme translators already working under enormous pressure due to the complicated temporal and spatial limitations, as we discussed in section 2.5.5, as well as high competence pressure and tight deadlines from their commissioner in the audiovisual translation industry (Kuo 2015: 181-182), this method of assembling the various elements could help the translator to identify and organise the useful information in a more coherent way. In addition, using this framework could help translators to consider the relationship between source text and existing multimodal elements in a direct way. Furthermore, it could enable them to think meaningfully about whether the omission or adjustment of a subtitle could affect the existing multimodal elements in a similar way. That being the case, individuals who are just starting their audiovisual translation training should at first keep to the main elements of the frame. More detailed elements could be included once they have gained more experience. They would thereby benefit from getting to know this framework gradually and learning to use it in an efficient way. In addition, by applying a combination of Multimodal Transcription and Relevance Theory, the translator could gain a broader view to figure out how the elements that are used to provide information in audiovisual programmes could be affected by the different cultural background of the target audience. Hence, this approach emerges as pivotal and essential for translators to learn and apply in the process of pragmatic translation, in order to maintain a balance between effective transfer of contextual effects into the translated text and the processing effort required from target audiences.

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### **Filmography**

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*Downtown Abbey* (2010) ITV. 26 September.

*Dracula* (1931) Directed by Tod Browning & Karl Freund. [Feature film]. United States: Universal Pictures.

*Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* (2016) Directed by David Yates. [Feature film]. United Kingdom and United States: Warner Bros. Pictures & Heyday Films.

*Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald* (2018) Directed by David Yates. [Feature film]. United Kingdom and United States: Warner Bros. Pictures & Heyday Films.

*Finding Dory* (2016) Directed by Andrew Stanton. [Feature film]. United States: Walt Disney Pictures & Pixar Animation Studios.

*Four Weddings and a Funeral* (1994) Directed by Mike Newell. [Feature film]. United Kingdom: PolyGram Filmed Entertainment & Channel Four Films & Working Title Films.

*Furious 7* (2015) Directed by James Wan. [Feature film]. United States: Original Film & One Race Films & MRC & China Film.

*Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (2001) Directed by Chris Columbus. [Feature film]. United Kingdom and United States: Warner Bros. Pictures & Heyday Films & 1492 Pictures.

*Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (2002) Directed by Chris Columbus. [Feature film]. United Kingdom and United States: Warner Bros. Pictures & Heyday Films & 1492 Pictures.

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*Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (2005) Directed by Mike Newell. [Feature film]. United Kingdom and United States: Warner Bros. Pictures & Heyday Films.

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*Inglorious Bastards* (2009) Directed by Quentin Tarantino. [Feature film]. United States & Germany: A Band Apart & Studio Babelsberg.

*Iron Man 3* (2013) Directed by Shane Black. [Feature film]. United States: Marvel Studios & Paramount Pictures & DMG Entertainment.

*Kung Fu Panda* (2008) Directed by John Stevenson and Mark Osborne. [Feature film]. United States: DreamWorks Animation.

*Kung Fu Panda 2* (2011) Directed by Jennifer Yuh Nelson. [Feature film]. United States: DreamWorks Animation.

*Kung Fu Panda 3* (2016) Directed by Jennifer Yuh Nelson and Alessandro Carloni. [Feature film]. United States and China: DreamWorks Animation & Oriental DreamWorks.

*Lights of New York* (1928) Directed by Bryan Foy. [Feature film]. United States: Warner Bros. Pictures.

*Loaded* (1994) Directed by Anna Campion. [Feature film]. New Zealand/UK: British Film Institute (BFI) & British Screen Productions & Geißendörfer Film- und Fernsehproduktion (GFF)

*Love Actually* (2003) Directed by Richard Curtis. [Feature film]. United Kingdom and United States and France: StudioCanal & Working Title Films & DNA Films.

*Mission: Impossible III* (2006) Directed by Jeffrey Jacob Abrams. [Feature film]. United States and Germany and China and Italy: Paramount Pictures & Cruise/Wagner Productions & MI 3 Film.

*Moana* (2016) Directed by Ron Clements and John Musker. [Feature film]. United States: Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures.

*Mr. Bean* (1990) ITV. 1 January.

*Mulan* (1998) Directed by Barry Cook and Tony Bancroft. [Feature film]. United States: Walt Disney Pictures & Walt Disney Feature Animation.

*Paddington* (2014) Directed by Paul King. [Feature film]. United Kingdom and United States and France: Heyday Films & StudioCanal UK & TF1 Films Production.

*Paddington 2* (2017) Directed by Paul King. [Feature film]. United Kingdom and United States and France: Heyday Films & StudioCanal UK.

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*The Fugitive* (1993) Directed by Andrew Davis. [Feature film]. United States: Kopelson Entertainment.

*The Grapes of Wrath* (1940) Directed by John Ford. [Feature film]. United States: Twentieth Century Fox.

*The Importance of Being Earnest* by O. Wilde (1895) Directed by G. Alexander. Performed in St James's Theatre [London. 14 February].

*The Lion King* (1994) Directed by Roger Allers and Rob Minkoff. [Feature film]. United States: Walt Disney Pictures & Walt Disney Feature Animation.

*The Lion King* (2019) Directed by Jon Favreau. [Feature film]. United States: Walt Disney Pictures & Fairview Entertainment.

*The Sound of Music* (1965) Directed by Robert Wise. [Feature film]. United States: Argyle Enterprises.

*Transformers: Age of Extinction* (2014) Directed by Michael Bay. [Feature film]. United States: Hasbro & Di Bonaventura Pictures.