

## *Original Paper*

# A Multimodal Intersemiotic Translation Study of Book Covers of Translated Versions of *The Three-Body Problems*

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### **Abstract**

*As The Three-Body Problem is translated into languages overseas, the diversified features that the cover design of the translated version of The Three-Body Problem are worth exploring. The covers of a series of Chinese science fiction with different characteristics construct various narrative styles through different symbols and present the uniqueness and readability of the content of this Chinese science fiction. From the perspective of multi-modality in social semiotics, respecting the representational meaning, the cover design of these translations can be divided into two categories: low-image and high-image, and at the same time, it also presents visual continuum features; In terms of interpersonal meaning, these versions display visual patterns; Concerning compositional meaning, the designers of these covers convey the information values from different countries through layout design and visual salience. The cover design organizes meaningful elements into coherent text and creates new meanings through specific structures. Although some misunderstandings exist in some translated versions of The Three-Body Problem, most of the translated versions originally restore the original grand story about the future of the Earth, the only home to humans, reflecting reality and humanism in a unique manner with Chinese characteristics.*

### **Keywords**

*The Three-Body Problem, Intersemiotic Translation, Multimodality*

## **1. Introduction**

This chapter will introduce the backdrop information about *The Three-Body Problem*, multimodal intersemiotic translation applied to study book covers, research significance and purpose in analyzing the features of multilingual book covers of *The Three-Body Problem*, and the whole structure of the paper in order.

### 1.1 Research Background

Nowadays, to increase the national cultural soft power's influence overseas, it is necessary to step up further efforts to promote Chinese culture, a significant part of which is literary works, especially science fiction, which has been developed abroad for a long time but is developing domestically at home.

Despite the Internet is dramatically changing people's lives in nearly all aspects, especially digital media which have emerged rapidly over the past decade, print media always holds its place in the digital era of exploding quantities of data. And paper books, as one of the major print mediums carrying a variety of civilizations, still serve as an indispensable tool for promoting Chinese culture abroad.

Since people are more and more used to collecting and transmitting information through images and audio symbols on the Internet. Consequently, to follow the trend of picture reading and the Internet era as the traditional media, paper books strive to develop not only high-quality content but also meticulously-designed book covers, leading to more intersemiotic translation activities.

### 1.2 Research Significance

*The Three-Body Problem* by Liu Cixin is defined as a milestone in Chinese sci-fi literature, which effectively changes the one-way flow of Chinese and international sci-fi works. Meanwhile, it also serves as a model for China's outstanding cultural wisdom to enter the global vision. In recent years, Liu Cixin's sci-fi works or their adaptations have been sought after at home and abroad. According to statistics, up to now, *The Three-Body Problem* has been translated into 20 languages and published overseas (Zhao, 2021). Multimodal intersemiotic study on the covers of multilingual versions is an important topic in the field of linguistic and cultural studies. There may be differences in the cover design of *The Three-Body Problem*, a representative Chinese science fiction, in different languages and cultural backgrounds. Through the multimodal study of the covers of these multilingual versions, we can deeply understand the symbolic communication and cultural exchange between various cultures, as well as how translators express and transform their creativity in cross-cultural communication. This study is significant for promoting cross-cultural communication and promoting cultural diversity and cultural innovation. At the same time, it can also provide some enlightenment and reference for publishing and design circles.

### 1.3 Research Purpose

Analyzing the book cover design of the multilingual versions of *The Three-Body Problem*, the research is about studying how verbal symbols are translated into nonverbal symbols in intersemiotic translation and provides practical suggestions for other scholars to make full use of book covers when promoting Chinese science fiction in the world. The paper applies intersemiotic translation to analyze the multilingual book covers of *The Three-Body Problem* in order that the features of the multimodal design of translated book covers of *The Three-Body Problem* can be analyzed and summarized. The general presentation of Chinese sci-fi works' content overseas can thus be examined.

To conclude, the study intends to offer a panorama of the current situation of this book's transmission abroad and provide useful information to develop strategies for further advertising *The Three-Body Problem* as a successful example of promoting Chinese culture and image.

#### *1.4 Structure of the Thesis*

Chapter 1 primarily provides a brief overview of the research backdrops, research purpose, significance, and the thesis's overall framework for studying multimodal intersemiotic translation study of book covers of translated versions of *The Three-Body Problems*.

Chapter 2 presents previous research relevant to this study. First, the studies about *The Three-Body Problem* are summarized. Secondly, this chapter reviews studies on intersemiotic translation. Based on an analysis of these two kinds of studies, the paper summarizes the contributions of previous studies and points out the limitations of the previous studies on intersemiotic translation and *The Three-Body Problem*, and clearly shows the significance of studying the intersemiotic translation on the multilingual versions of *The Three-Body Problem*.

Chapter 3 briefly introduces the theoretical framework of this paper. This chapter first introduces Jakobson's Tripartite Division of Translation and discusses its value to the new field of translation, laying the foundation for semiotic translation research. On the other hand, the paper introduces the three meanings of multimodal analysis, in which covers coming from different countries are analyzed to conclude the translation patterns of the book cover of the multilingual versions of *The Three-Body Problem*.

In Chapter 4, the paper will analyze the related book covers of *The Three-Body Problem* in terms of intersemiotic translation, and explore the features of different cover designs as well as the general development trend through multimodal analysis of these book covers.

Chapter 5 will conclude the paper with a comprehensive summary of the research findings, and finally, the paper will point out some shortcomings of the study.

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1 The Multimodal Intersemiotic Translation Study*

Nowadays, multimodal intersemiotic translation, which integrates verbal text and non-verbal information, is more suitable for today's diverse non-verbal communication activities at the cultural levels. There is growing concern among researchers studying translation over multimodal intersemiotic translation, despite its complexity as well as interdisciplinarity.

Based on the relatively complete theory system of semiotics, intersemiotic translation study has been developed fully by international scholars in recent years, although it is not a substantially hot topic in academia at home and overseas.

In the theoretical aspect, Hu (2007) discusses the difference between multimodal semiotics and multimedia semiotics and then introduces computer semiotics owning media and modal properties. Mossop discusses the possibility of defining the switch between language and other sign systems as a

kind of translation, given that the comparison is made to interlingual translating that features a high degree of variance (2019).

Some scholars focus on multimodal intersemiotic translation research close to reality.

Some of them explore the translation from literary works to film. Cahir (2006) discusses the process of translating literature to film from the perspective of filmmaking and appreciation. Zhao and Lin (2022) explore the method of translating the metaphor of the novel “The Joy Luck Club” in the process of the film adaptation.

For comic book multimodal translation, by analyzing the intersemiotic translation of the symbols in the pictures of the Chinese classic “Cartoon Confucianism”, Zeng (2022) tries to provide a method and model for analyzing the projection model of intersemiotic translation in terms of interpersonal meaning and its evaluation.

Although there are translation studies on various types of print media, some studies attach importance to the contents, for example, Yang, Le, and Wu (2019) explore how the art forms of “Dream of the Red Chamber” can develop its originals in new global contexts of communication and culture with the help of intersemiotic translations. Fan and He (2020) explore the intersemiotic translation method in Lin Shu’s translation of “Aesop’s Fables”. The article focuses on the cover of print media instead of their contents as the cover of a book is like the “face of the book” and is also seen as an expression of the “condensed theme of the book” (Kohei Urakawa, 2017).

## 2.2 *The Previous Study on The Three-Body Problem*

*The Three-Body Problem* can win the attention of readers all over the world, which owes to its own aesthetic and cultural value. As for its successful “going out of China to the World”, translation is indispensable, so some questions about the background, experience, and acceptance of *The Three-Body Problem*’s transmission overseas appear naturally and deserve attention. In addition, as the first Chinese volume to win the Hugo Award in 2015, *The Three-Body Problem* can also take responsibility for promoting Chinese culture in that science fiction is the ideal medium through which to reveal the “Chinese Dream” (Gaffric & Peyton, 2019).

Plus, *The Three-Body Problem* discusses the present situation and future trends of human civilization by describing the interaction between the three-body civilization and the earth civilization. This kind of thinking helps us to better understand the course of human civilization and make wiser decisions for the future.

By describing the evolution process, technical level, and reaction to the three-body civilization, *The Three-Body Problem* reveals the contradiction between science and technology and human nature. This contradiction exists not only in the novel world but also in reality. Therefore, *The Three-Body Problem* can help us better understand the relationship between science and technology and human nature and promote the coordination between science and technology and society.

As science fiction, it covers many fields of science and technology. Through reading this novel, people can not only understand many novel scientific and technological concepts but also know more about

the existing scientific and technological fields. This kind of technology and the popularization of technology is not only to improve the scientific literacy of the public but also to promote the future development of science and technology.

At present, the translation academic circle mainly chooses to start their studies on this sci-fi work from the text.

Analyzing translators' translation strategies, translators can decipher the reasons why it goes to the international stage smoothly. Different translated versions of the sci-fi works are studied to investigate the factors that Chinese contemporary sci-fi works gain popularity abroad, according to the large circulation of Liu Cixin's sci-fi works in Russian, American, German, etc., and develop strategies to promote Chinese literature to "go out of China and enter the International community" (Zhao, 2021; Wu & He, 2019; Sun & Chen, 2020; Gu, 2017).

As a classic science fiction, its research significance is far-reaching, covering many fields such as science, technology, culture, and philosophy. Therefore, it is not only a science fiction worth reading, but also a precious resource for deep thinking and exploration.

Adopting various theories, scholars probe into new translation strategies to lift the translation quality of *The Three-Body Problem* to the next level. With the help of Steiner's translation hermeneutics, Zhang and Qin (2018) dedicate their energy to studying Ken Liu's English translation of *The Three-Body Problem*, summarizing feasible approaches to preserving the literary elements of original sci-fi works and enhancing the target audience's acceptance of Chinese literature. Yuh-Wen Huang (2022) applies the manipulation theory to study the strategy of translating culture-loaded words in Ken Liu's English translation of *The Three-Body Problem*. Bai (2018) emphasizes the establishment of Chinese cultural context in the translation of Chinese sci-fi works. Wang (2019) advocates that the core idea of translation should be transformed into "entering" the target language readers' minds and the ideological concept of the international literary world.

Corpus-based translation studies are also conducted to study sci-fi work. For example, the translated text of *The Three-Body Problem* is analyzed in terms of translation universals, such as implication and explication (Chen & Wang, 2017); Cai (2023) constructs a corpus to analyze the translation norms followed by the translated version from the perspective of linguistic features.

According to the previous studies, it is obvious that the text and translation strategy is the center of research on translated *The Three-Body Problem*. The multimodal translation studies on *The Three-Body Problem* are not enough, although multimodal studies can create totally different strategies to disseminate Chinese literature. Therefore, this paper will offer a completely new vision to develop translation strategies by studying the book cover of *The Three-Body Problem*, an expression of the text meaning in another form, namely, image.

### 3. Theoretical Framework

#### 3.1 Intersemiotic Translation

Jakobson (1959) divides translation into three categories: intralingual translation, interlingual translation, and intersemiotic translation from the perspective of semiotics. (Jakobson's Tripartite Division of Translation)

1) Intralingual translation or rewording is an interpretation of verbal signs employing other signs of the same language. That is to say, intralingual translation happens in the same language, translating from one type of language symbol to another type of language symbol, for example, *Beowulf* is translated from old English to modern English.

2) Interlingual translation or translation proper is an interpretation of verbal signs using some other language. In other words, it means that translation activities are conducted between different languages, for example, “我是中国人” in Chinese is translated into “I am Chinese” in English.

3) Intersemiotic translation or transmutation is an interpretation of verbal signs using signs of nonverbal sign systems.

The basis of intersemiotic translation is built upon the similarity of different semiotic systems between culture and meaning construction (Dusi, 2015). And intersemiotic translation aims to make the same meanings in different forms similar to each other (Kress & Leeuwen, 2006), therefore, its key lies in trying to maintain the same semiotic meanings among various semiotic systems. As we all know, it is common that verbal signs to be translated into nonverbal images. When the images are chosen to express the original meanings of language, what translators should take into consideration includes not only original meanings but also the forms of images, such as colors, layouts, fonts, etc.

In a word, intersemiotic translations, just as any other analysis centering on the transformational passage (or otherwise) between levels, whether intratextual or intertextual, promote discussion of the dynamic nature of cultures and languages (Dusi, 2015).

#### 3.2 Three Meanings of Visual Multimodality

Guided by Halliday's social semiotic approach to language, Kress and Leeuwen (2006) divided the meaning of visual multimodality into a model of three different accounts, including representational meaning, interpersonal meaning, and compositional meaning.

According to Kuang Ping (2018), representational meaning refers to the faithful reproduction of the objective world of people, human activities, places, and even the inner world of people. It is related to the application of colors, image elements, and visual continuum. The elements, included in the interactive meaning, are contact, attitude, distance, and modality. Modality is grouped into a visual continuum of three kinds: high modality, middle modality, and low modality which can be demonstrated by color, illumination, etc. High modality uses those color photographs, middle one adopts sketch drawings while low modality only applies simple sketch lines with white or black colors.

And represented participants (RPs) usually refer to the figure representing the people in the real world appearing in the picture and so on.

Interactive meaning or interpersonal meaning is the description of the relationship between the image producer, the visual, and the viewers. Royce indicates that some visual techniques used to analyze interpersonal meaning are the absence or presence of facial expressions towards the viewer, gestures that make commands, and offers of information or offers of goods and services to the viewer (2007). In most cases, the interpersonal relationship also has to do with social distance and perspective, as Kress and Leeuwen (2006) state two points: first, the degrees of social distance and intimacy can add information that can't be transmitted by verbal mode. Second, the degree of participation in a visual between the image-producer, viewers, and RPs is expressed in the horizontal angle, including frontal and oblique planes. In terms of the vertical angle, Royce (2007) holds that the high angle forces the viewers to look down on the RPs, which is suggestive of their superiority. A low angle forces the viewers to look up at them, implying the viewer's inferior position. An eye-level angle is suggestive of a sense of equality between the viewer and the RPs.

And compositional meaning focuses on the application of layouts and visual salience. Moya and Pinar (2008) show that the compositional features of a multimodal text are related to a study of page layout aspects of how the visual and verbal elements attain a sense of unity to the whole unit. Apart from the visual study of the verbal elements, compositional intersemiosis includes the visual study linked to the distribution of information value, visual salience (size, color, focus), and visual framing. In addition to the layouts and visual salience, the position of elements on the left or right of the page, the figures' size in the image, and the use of framing are all important compositional elements (Unsworth & Wheeler, 2002; Kress & Leeuwen, 2006).

#### **4. A Multimodal Analysis of the Book Cover**

This chapter will develop a multimodal analysis of the representative 11 covers of *The Three-Body Problem* in 10 languages, finding out the diverse characteristics of translating the textual message of *The Three-Body Problem* into the image information in different language versions.

##### *4.1 The Translation Mechanism of the Design of Book Covers*

Laying the foundation on a deep understanding of the book content, book covers' design emphasizes the language transformation from verbal symbols to visual signs, thus the design of book covers, to some extent, is a kind of intersemiotic translation, Gottlieb (2005) states: translation activities always are conducted in "the semiotic networks." And some of them happen in the same semiotic systems, and others adopt different semiotic systems. Some of them belong to the same semiotic system (i.e., interlingual translation), while others span different semiotic systems (i.e., intersemiotic translation). Interlingual translation refers to translation between one textual symbol system and another textual symbol system, and intersemiotic translation refers to translation between textual symbol systems and non-textual symbol systems. The design of the book covers of a translation involves, on the one hand,

the transformation between different texts (e.g., translation of the book title), and, on the other hand, the change of symbolic properties (from textual to visual symbols), i.e., interlingual translation. Multiple symbolic attributes constitute multimodalities. The translation mechanism in the design of the translation cover can be expressed in the following pattern:

At the first stage of interlingual translation, the original text (Chinese text) is learned so that its key information (content and title) can be distilled from it and translated into another textual symbol. The second stage of intersemiotic translation starts when the translated textual information is transcoded into the image information of the book cover in another language.

Based on the intersemiotic translation, the study attaches importance to analyzing the design of multilingual versions of 11 book covers of *The Three-Body Problem*. The representative covers collected are as follows:







Korean

French

English

#### 4.2 Analysis of Book Covers

These book covers will be analyzed within the framework of three meanings of visual multimodality, including representational meaning, interpersonal meaning, and compositional meaning. Based on some key concepts including visual continuum, color usage, visual salience, etc., they will be studied, being divided into groups, in order that the whole image analysis maintains logical and feasible.

##### 4.2.1 Representational Meaning

In terms of representational meaning, the cover's color, image elements, and visual continuum are to be discussed further.

In the representational meaning, the covers are more colorful, using richer image elements and reaching a middle modality. Black color is used to color the common information, and red, as usual, is used to emphasize the major information of the title. Other colors, including blue, dark red, yellow, green, and so on, are all presented in the figure picture. And the appearance of the picture removes the viewers' attention from the title, therefore, the title is colored light red, while the background color of the picture is colored with dark red. Only in this way can the title, the most important information, be the first information captured by the viewer. The rich elements of the third picture dramatically promote the information volume of the cover. The textual information, the use of abundant colors, and the figure in the picture of the cover offer viewers more complete messages of the book increasing the viewers' curiosity to learn the book.

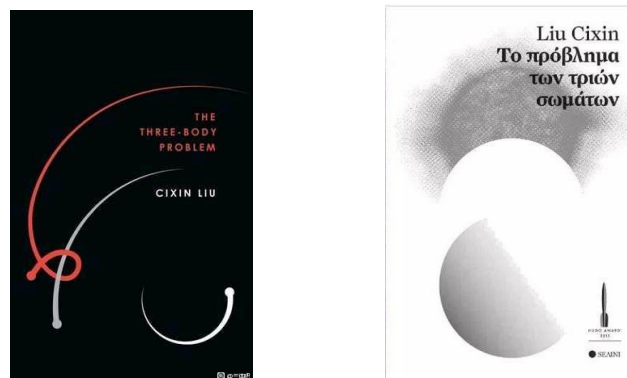
The middle modality of the third book cover is at a higher level than that of the second book cover, as the pattern of the third cover is drawn with complicated sketch lines and color design. The character information displayed on the cover reveals the designer's definition of the theme of the novel.

Generally speaking, the third cover design correctly conveys the content information of the book by expressing the image of the author Laozi and the characteristics of his works: full of wisdom, globally popular, etc.

The type and color of the image itself affect the representational meaning conveyed by the cover. Royce (2013) thinks that different types of images form a visual continuum from low mode to high

mode, whose theory can be summarized as a visual continuum: line sketch → sketch stick figure → sketch → black and white picture → color picture → high fidelity picture. The covers of *The Three-Body Problem* in different languages also take on some features of the visual continuum. The covers in group 1 are more like sketches and stick strokes which emphasize lines and are more influenced by the subjective thoughts of the visual designers, so they are considered to have low modality.

What's more, Group 1 is also defined as low-degree images, whose features can be summarized as follows: (1) there is only basic information such as title, author, translator, and publishing house; (2) highly blank space featuring monochrome background (3) the design is similar to academic works.



**(Group 1) low modality and low-degree image**

In addition to the detailed design of covers, color also affects the modality level, as color carries cultural implications. Color can be used as a supplement to text translation to add more social and cultural significance to translation. Red and yellow, as symbols of Chinese culture, are the main colors of Group 2. In addition, colors also express different emotions and attitudes toward things. For example, the dark blue color conveys the features such as calmness (Madden et al., 2000), thoughtfulness, and seriousness (Grimes & Doole, 1998). The dark color-based covers in Group 3 concord with the Western knowledge about *The Three-Body Problem*: a mysterious Chinese-style and physics knowledge-based science fiction that needs to be read with calmness and seriousness. Furthermore, the textual information on the cover includes the book title and the translator's name. Among various colors, two colors are mostly adopted: white and red. Although white usually colors the textual information and red emphasizes the major information like the title, they both are effective when the image elements are complicated. It is obvious that many covers in Group 2 and Group 3 are in line with the white and red usage pattern. As the French cover displays, the key title “Le Problème à Trois corps” is emphasized with red color, compare to the white author's name and additional information.



(Group 2) the usage of colors



(Group 3) the dark color

#### 4.2.2 Interpersonal Meaning

The essence of interpersonal meaning in cover design is to use images and words to establish social relations with viewers. Designers try to provide information about the contents of books through the cover, which is usually a narrative description of the scene. This kind of information provides interaction between the designer and the viewer. One of the important means to produce interpersonal meaning is the construction of visual patterns.

In Group 4, the cover designers of different countries all attract the viewer through the so-called “image behavior” (such as the gaze of the viewer on the figure). Most of designers in Group 4 present human beings in a tiny size and a back or side position at the bottom of the covers to the viewer. This kind of figure presentation suggests a low level of participation in interpersonal interaction as the cover figures are presented without any visual interaction with the viewer, which increases the distance between them.

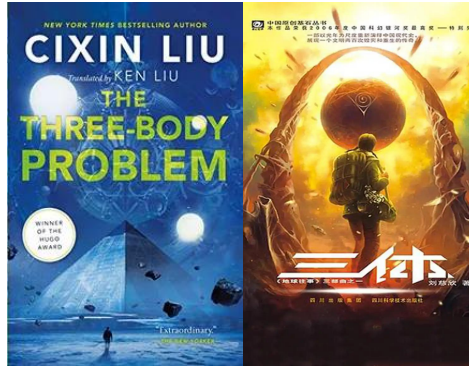
In addition to the effects that back or side views have on the interpersonal interaction with the viewer, different covers have produced a series of design schemes in terms of framing distance. As far as visual distance is concerned, the bust can shorten the distance between the viewer and the figures on the cover,

which is beneficial to establish a friendly interpersonal relationship between them. For example, Chinese doll in Korean cover in Group 4 is placed at the cover center, bring the viewer closer to the book. While the whole-body image in small size intentionally lengthens the distance between the viewer and the figures, which is convenient, objective, and comprehensive to show the activities, status, and attitudes of human beings facing the extraterrestrial intelligence in the picture. The choice of full-body images of people at the bottom of these covers reflects the creators' desire to distinguish the three-body civilization represented by buildings on the covers from the Earth civilization represented by humans, from which the viewers grow up. This design serves as a "distance" strategy to increase the distance between the viewer and the figures on the covers, offering the viewer a more objective and omniscient view to observe the civilization on Earth as just "one of civilization in the whole universe" when the whole story presented in front of them.

In addition, the power relationship between the viewer and the figure on the covers can be clarified from overlooking perspective, upward view, and horizontal perspective. In Group 4, many designers mostly offer the audience an upward view to see the figures, augmenting the power gap between them in order that the sense that humans are small, curious, and even scared when facing a more advanced extraterrestrial civilization represented by the giant buildings can be conveyed to the viewer through these book covers.

Based on the content, it is clear that many covers can convey the original meaning of the book, yet it is evidenced that the Korean cover misreads the book. Different types of image elements are organized with strong Chinese-style icons, and at the center of the whole cover is a Chinese doll as the major figure. The figure has eye contact with the viewer in a front bust pose from a horizontal perspective, displaying an equal relationship with the audience, yet it is never mentioned in the whole story of *The Three-Body Problem*, causing a wrong perception of the book on the book cover. Therefore, it is obvious that the cover only scrabbles the element mentioned in the book, without consideration of delivering the real story. Despite the misunderstandings of the book content in the Korean version, the figures on most of the covers display human beings' status and their relationship with the three-body civilization by objective and artistic narrative technique.





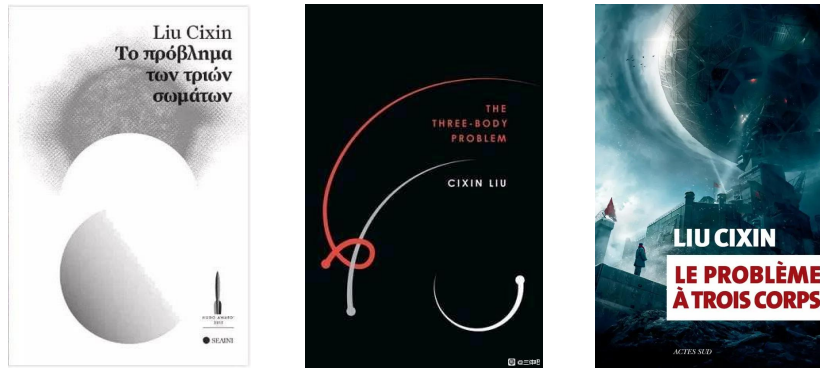
**Group 4. Interpersonal meaning**

#### 4.2.3 Compositional Meaning

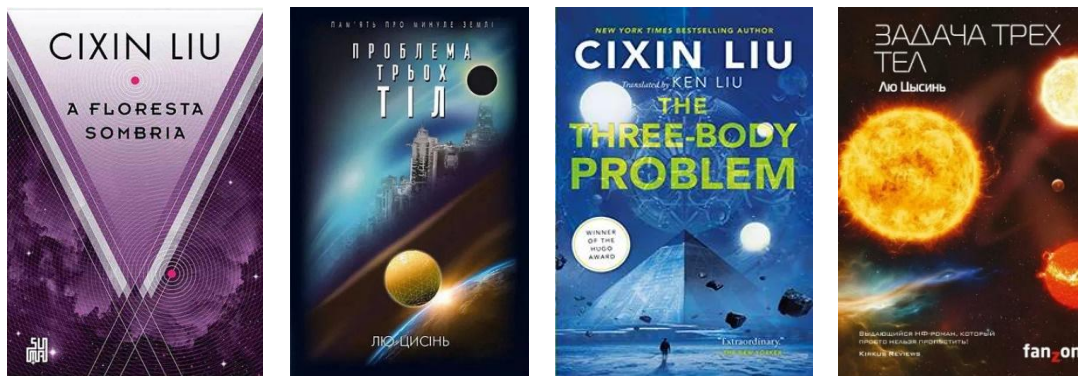
Well-organized cover composition is helpful to convey information value and highlight book content and narrative theme. The translation process included in the cover design does not always lead to the loss of information but also creates new meanings in different aspects. The cover text of a book usually includes the title of the book, the name of the author, the translator, and the publisher. The book cover serves as a kind of independent communication (Kress & Leeuwen, 2006). Reasonable cover composition helps to convey information value and highlight book content and theme.

In terms of the layout rules, Western cultures prefer a left-right reading path horizontally, so the elements are more often placed in the left area. With more abstract information at the top and more detailed and concreted messages at the bottom, the key information like symbols is centered on the cover. Covers in Group 5 adhere to the left-to-right reading pattern, no matter where the textual information is placed vertically, the Western designers tend to put them in the left part, which is a traditional layout for their target readers. In Group 6, all the abstract information such as the book title and author's name is set at the upper part of the cover, naturally, detailed information, for example, the publishing houses and the awards of the book, are listed at the bottom.





Group 5



Group 6

In East Asian culture, the elements in the central region are usually more significant than those in the marginal region, and the information value in the central area is higher. For instance, on the Japanese cover, the book title is placed at the center of the cover. What's more, using a visual pattern in the center can better emphasize the book's core contents or major figures than language, for example, the figure Ye Wenjie, the first discoverer of the three-body civilization, is placed in the center of the Chinese cover above the book title. The picture designed for presenting the three-body problem is placed in the center part of the Vietnamese cover, with the less crucial information like awards that the book receives and the symbol of the publishing houses at the margin area.

Although differences exist in the Western and Eastern approaches to designing and presenting the same book contents, there are still some cross-cultural common information values in visual design. 8 of the 11 covers collected in this paper (including covers from Asian countries like Korea and Vietnam) put the title and author's name at the top (more generalized and abstract information) and other elements (more concrete images) at the bottom. This reflects the dominant position of Western culture in the global publishing industry.

As the cover is shown, the noticeable contrast between the book titles and their background clearly conveys its top visual salience by larger elements, compared with other additional information on the cover.

It is easy to find out that the major information (the book's name and the author's name)'s font size in nearly all covers is bigger than that of the minor information. This adoption of visual salience efficiently conveys the key messages of the book.

In addition, the picture with complicated colors, and various icons occupies most part of the covers, improving its visual salience and the attention of the viewer. Yet the relatively brighter color and larger size of the font of major information still can be clearly presented by virtue of the visual contrast, making sure its largest visual effects of the whole cover.

## 5. Conclusion

### 5.1 Major Findings

Through these representative multilingual covers of *The Three-Body Problem*, it is discovered that the intersemiotic translation of *The Three-Body Problem* in different languages adopted a balanced strategy between foreignization and domestication, as *The Three-Body Problem* as Chinese science fiction was completely new and unique to Western readers in terms of style, culture, ideology. Therefore, when maintaining the Chinese elements and original style, proper foreignization intersemiotic translation allows only elements in Western culture to appear on the book cover such as their own languages, their traditional design for the book cover, and only awards of the book which are familiar to them.

In addition, as the technique of book cover design is different in countries, the cover design took on a different degree of image, visual salience, color design, modality, image elements.

In a word, the design of a book cover needs to consider the cross-translation between text, picture, and visual mode. The conception and design of the cover are not only related to formal aesthetics but also involve the construction of social relations with the viewer and the loyalty to the original work. Based on intersemiotic translation and visual modality techniques, the book cover design of *The Three-Body Problem* in 10 languages utilizes symbolic elements in different forms so that the textual information of book contents can be conveyed more completely and vividly by the book cover in another semiotic form. Only in this way can the book cover design create greater convenience for international readers, strengthen its competitiveness as the print media, and contribute more to national cultural communication.

### 5.2 The Disadvantages of the Study

In the study, the scale of the corpus is not large enough, as there are only 10 covers collected for the study. It is necessary to choose more representative book covers in more languages.

In addition, the thesis language is not as concise as it should be. The repeated use of the same words and sentence pattern should also be taken seriously. Improving writing skills is a necessary part of producing a high-quality research paper.

The ability to write a literature review should be promoted as soon as possible. First, the lack of reading ability will influence negatively the understanding of the articles that are read. Second, knowing how to choose articles mostly related to the research is also a skill that needs to be mastered in the future.

The reflection of the academic research should also be done in the daily study so that future studies can be dealt with more professionally as a postgraduate student.

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