Journal of Education and Educational Research
ISSN: 2957-9465 | Vol. 7, No. 1, 2024

Study on the Translation of Culture-loaded Words in Red Sorghum from the Perspective of Frame Theory

Wenxin Wang

School of Foreign Languages, Southwest Petroleum University, Chengdu, Sichuan, China

Abstract: Frame theory is an important guide for subtitle translation in films. From the perspective of frame theory, subtitle translation is a process of translators' understanding of the original text and construction of the translation frame to achieve frame equivalence. Due to the cross-cultural conversion of cultural factors, the translation of Chinese culture-loaded words often becomes a thorny problem for translators, and scholars have long studied the translation of culture-loaded words from different perspectives. However, few scholars have used the framework theory to study the translation of culture-loaded words in subtitles. Therefore, based on the frame theory, this paper takes the Berlin International Film Festival award-winning film "Red Sorghum" as an example, and explores its translation strategies from three aspects: frame replacement, frame transplantation and frame adjustment by comparing and analyzing the Chinese subtitles and their translations.

Keywords: Frame Theory; Red Sorghum; Culture-loaded words.

1. Introduction

Language is rooted in culture, and its production and development are inseparable from the cultural background of society. At the same time, language is a carrier of cultural communication, and linguistic and cultural communication can effectively expand its influence, thus allowing language and culture to form a double helix structure of mutual influence and mutual promotion. Nakayama&Halualani(2010) suggest that cultural exchange has a clear principle of equality, and this equality is also the key to mutual promotion between culture and language, but this principle of equality has not yet been realized. The imbalance in comprehensive national power between countries makes cultural exchange unbalanced as well. In the case of our country, far more original English books and their Chinese translations are published in China than Chinese books or their foreign language translations are published overseas, and the number of English films, especially those that can be shown overseas, is far greater than that of Chinese films. Not only in terms of quantity, foreign books and movies are filled with easily acceptable cultural elements, while the Chinese culture exported abroad through books and movies is biased, for example, Huang(2018)mentioned that the dragon was not selected as the mascot for the Beijing Olympics in 2005 because it is translated as dragon in English, the same name as the biggest devil in European and American culture.

As in the case of the translation of the "dragon" mentioned above, cultural exchange depends on translation. Moreover, translation inherits the principle of equality in cultural exchange, but post-colonial translation theory sees translation as a new tool of cultural imperialism for global expansion and destroys the principle of equality in cultural exchange. In order to avoid the expansion of imperialist culture and maintain our national image, it is necessary to effectively and accurately communicate our culture in translation. Culture-loaded words are the most direct and deepest impressions of cultural exchange and an important carrier of national cultural soft power, and accurate translation of cultural loaded words is an important method to realize the principle of equality in translation.

However, the translation of culture-loaded words is not easy. Culture-loaded words can be classified into five aspects: ecological culture, material culture, social culture, religious culture and linguistic culture, ecological culture is mainly the nature that brings the most essential differences, such as some plants and animals unique to our country; material culture includes food and clothing, transportation, production tools, etc.; social culture involves political system and customs; religious culture is religious beliefs, myths and legends and their value system, etc.; linguistic culture is most simply language habits, such as dialects. Religious culture is about religious beliefs, myths and legends, and their value systems; language culture is simply about language habits, such as dialects. There are different ways to translate culture-loaded words, among which the most direct one is to simply use pinyin to translate phonetically, however, this kind of translation needs to be supplemented with more explanations, and Huang Ji believes that "transliteration-short comment-long comment" is a better way to translate on the basis of phonetic translation. Based on the phonetic translation, Huang Ji believes that "translation name - short comment - long comment" is a better translation method. However, when faced with practical situations, especially the translation of culturally loaded words in ancient poems, it is difficult to use simple phonetic translations because of the same pinyin, etc. When Gao Wencheng and Wu Chaoyi studied the translation of culturally loaded words in Li Sao, they did not use pinyin for phonetic translations with the help of the translation framework of embodied linguistics, but this completely discarded the role of pinyin in it because pinyin can better reflect the original pronunciation of the word and its original meaning. Therefore, the question of how to translate culturally loaded words more accurately and effectively is a controversial issue that needs to be addressed.

Su&Wen(2018) hold the view that as an important school of contemporary cognitive disciplines, cognitive translation has provided many important conceptual models and theoretical frameworks for translation. The framework theory was first introduced into linguistics by Charles Fillmore, who successively proposed "any system of language choice" C.(1975), "a specific, unified knowledge framework"

C.(1985), and "a cognitive structure approach, multiple definitions"C. and Akins(1992). In short, it is a problem-specific analysis, as different peoples, regions, cultures, languages, and groups exhibit different frameworks. Yet it is this frame theory that distinguishes commonality and identity that can be better integrated into cross-cultural communication, and Sun(2010) draws on frame theory to analyze The Scream and how it can be better translated within the cultural, historical, and political framework of the time. This provides a method for how to accurately translate culturally loaded words, based on a certain frame when facing a film or a literary work, and to be able to find the support or trigger for the translation of culturally loaded words under the frame.

Therefore, in order to effectively explore the timeliness of the framework theory on the translation of culturally loaded words, and to solve the current problem of the principle of equality of cultural exchange in China with the help of culturally loaded words, this paper takes the movie "Red Sorghum" as the entry point to study the translation of culturally loaded words in the movie under the theoretical framework perspective, so as to provide reference for future works involving cultural exchange.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Translation Studies from the Perspective of Frame Theory

The research on translation from the perspective of framework theory is mainly divided into two categories: theoretical direction and applied direction. In the theoretical direction, Wang (2005)proposed that language mainly depends on cognitive frames, and linguistic expressions are triggers to activate cognitive frames or support points for cognitive frames, while translation is to find appropriate linguistic expressions from which to coordinate different cognitive frames. Si (2005) directly investigated the quality of translation under the framework theory, arguing that translation is a kind of interaction with a purpose and contains formal, functional and situational aspects, and proposed criteria for assessing the quality of translation. Cai Xiaoyan, on the other hand, focused her attention on metaphorical translation and made suggestions in large groups on how to translate direct translation, find corresponding metaphors, retain meaning, discard imagery, and add notes in English from two directions: the same frame and different frames. He&Mei(2021), on the other hand, place their research more specifically on sub-technical words, arguing that frame theory can adjust the translation of sub-technical words and reduce the difficulty of foreign scientific and technical communication. It can be seen that the research on frame theory also tends to develop in a refined way.

In terms of application directions, they are divided into two main broad categories: analysis of literary works and other applications. In terms of literary works, many researchers have focused on classic literary works, and Ruan&Zhang(2021) take Wenxin Diao Long as an example to explore the role of framing theory in contributing to metaphorical translation, which is considered to be important for the dissemination of our traditional culture. In the study of metaphor, Wang et al.(2010) take the metaphorical works in the classic literature of Diary of a Madman and Medicine as an example, and propose that the reciprocal conversion strategy can be used when translating contents with the same frame, and the transposition and addition strategy can be used for contents with different frames. In addition to classical literature, Wei(2014) even used the report about the fiscal cliff in U.S. News and World Report as a corpus to realize the translation strategy of transposing, transforming and omitting metaphorical imagery by three ways: presupposing, highlighting and constructing political stories.

Due to the large number of related articles, this paper also conducted a scientific bibliometric analysis of translation studies related to frame theory with the help of Citespace. The literature was searched on China Knowledge Network, using "frame theory" with "translation" as the subject term, and 162 search results were obtained, which were analyzed scientifically. As shown in Figure 1, "metaphor" emerged as a keyword, including metaphorical English translation, metaphorical information, and metaphorical translation, indicating that the relevant researches focus on metaphorical research, which proves the suitability of frame theory and metaphorical research. On the one hand, using Jin Yong novels as a corpus is innovative in terms of material sources, so it will be used as a keyword in the article, and on the other hand, it shows that there is a "Jin Yong fever" in the research under the framework theory. On the other hand, it shows that there is a "Jin Yong fever" in the frame theory, which is dedicated to spreading Chinese martial arts culture.

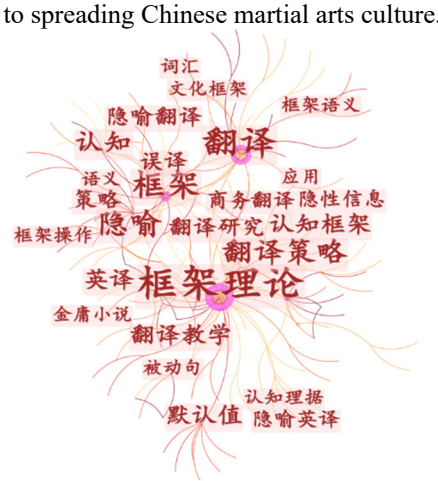


Figure 1. Keyword Co-existence Network Diagram

In summary, it can be seen that the translation studies under frame theory mainly focus on the study of metaphor, and in terms of corpus focus on literary works mainly Jin Yong novels. In contrast, film, as an important mode of cultural communication, has seen little relevant research.

2.2. Previous Studies on Chinese Culture-loaded Words in films

Many scholars have studied the translation of culturally loaded words in movies, and most of the previous studies have studied culturally loaded words in movies from the perspectives of purpose theory, functional equivalence theory, ecological translation science, and naturalized alienation strategy. Based on Naida's functional equivalence theory, Jia(2022) analyzed the translation of culturally loaded words in the subtitles of the movie Jiang Ziya from three translation methods: direct translation, Italian translation and variant translation; Huang(2018) even directly proposed that the translation of culturally loaded words should follow six principles, which are simply the aspects of others' position, in-depth interpretation, down-line thesaurus, and combined with pinyin. However, few scholars have systematically

studied the translation of culturally loaded words in films based on the framework theory, and the studies on Chinese films are even scarcer.

It can be seen that, as a part of cognitive linguistics, frame semantics has high research value for the translation of culturally loaded words, which can activate the cognitive framework from linguistic expressions and then understand the linguistic basis through the cognitive framework, which is more suitable for the analysis of cultural load this at micro level. Therefore, this paper takes the Chinese film "Red Sorghum" as a corpus to explore the explanatory power of the English translation of culturally loaded words in frame semantics films at a more subtle level to promote the proliferation and internationalization of Chinese culture.

3. Discussion on Translation Strategies of Culture-loaded Words in the film Red Sorghum under the Frame Theory

Nida(1945)classified cultural load words into five major categories, including material culture, religious culture, linguistic culture, social culture, and ecology. Since language is the carrier of culture, it can be divided into ecological culture-loaded words, social culture-loaded words, religious culture-loaded words, linguistic culture-loaded words and material culture-loaded words. In the subtitle translation of the movie "In the Red Sorghum", all five types of cultural load words are involved. Using frame theory to analyze film and television translation, the key lies in whether the translator can activate the same or similar frames as the source language with the expressions in the target language, so that the audience can quickly understand the film and television plot and characters' feelings. In this paper, the subtitle translation of "Red Sorghum" was selected from Tencent Video subtitle group as the corpus, and the subtitle translation strategy was discussed based on frame theory.

3.1. Frame Replacement

Frame substitution refers to replacing difficult frames in the source language with relevant frames in the target language so that viewers can better understand the film and reduce their cognitive effort in the process of enjoying the film. In other words, frame substitution is the naturalization method in translation.

例1：掉到**福窝窝**里。

译文：You have so much luck.

"福窝窝" is a Chinese proverb, "福" stands for "福气" and "窝窝" stands for"简陋小屋", thus activating the "充满福气" frame, but foreign readers are not familiar with this colloquialism and cannot activate the same frame. Westerners often say "good luck", so the frame corresponding to "充满福气" in Western culture is "lucky", and the degree is deep. So the translation can be "You have so much luck".

例2：你他妈的，**阴不阴阳不阳**的，胡唱些什么歪腔邪调？

译文：Fucking neither fish nor fowl, what kind of rubbish are you singing?

This sentence is from the heroine Jiuer's father. He satirized male hero Yu Zhanao was not good at singing. In Chinese, generally “阴” refers to female, “阳” refers to male, said someone "阴不阴阳不阳" that is not like male nor female, not Yin not Yang. Therefore, the "性别" framework is activated, referring to Yu Zhanao's singing as neither male nor female. It may be difficult for Western audiences to understand the connotation of describing a person as neither feminine nor masculine, but in English the corresponding frame is "非鱼非禽", which is a ready-made idiom in English "neither fish nor fowl". The word "fish" refers to animals in the water, and "fowl" refers to those on the land, and water and land are in spatial opposition, meaning that both types of creatures are unlike each other. So the translation is "neither fish nor fowl".

例3：这娘们，也**不省油**。

译文：This woman creates only trouble.

In Chinese, there is a common phrase "不是省油的灯" to describe someone who is not easy to deal with, not an easy person or a good person to deal with, activating the "性格" frame. In English, the corresponding frame is "make trouble", which describes someone who always creates all kinds of trouble and does not keep to himself. So the translation is "creates only trouble".

例4：伙计们，**掌柜**的来了。

译文：Guys, the boss is coming.

In Chinese, "掌柜" is a common name for an ancient shopkeeper. Since the target audience is not familiar with the meaning of the word "掌柜", it is necessary to replace the frame in the source language with the "boss" frame in English. The frame in the source language needs to be replaced by the "boss" frame in English. So the translation is "the boss is coming".

3.2. Frame Transplantation

Frame transplantation refers to the transplantation of the linguistic framework from the source language to the target language, in other words, it is a kind of alienation translation method. Due to the different history, geographical conditions and customs of each nationality, each nationality has its own unique phenomenon that is different from other languages. Therefore, in the process of subtitle translation, the imagery in the source language should be transplanted into the target language and constructed in the target language in order to achieve the purpose of cross-cultural communication.

例5：足足的**盘缠**。

译文：Travel with enough money around the waist.

In Chinese, in ancient times, the meaning of "盘缠" refers to travel expenses during the journey in modern times. When people go out to visit relatives, they can only bring bulky bunches of copper coins, the copper coins coiled up and wrapped around the waist, both convenient to carry and safe, so the ancients will be this "盘" and "缠" travel expenses called "盘缠 ". The word "盘缠" activates the frame of "钱", which corresponds to the frame of the target language "money", but the direct translation as "money However, the direct translation of "money" loses the historical and cultural connotation of "盘缠", so in order to preserve its cultural flavor, we need to transplant the imagery of "盘缠" from the source language into the target language, and translate it as " enough money around the waist".

例6：你逞啥能，不吃饭，想**成仙**啦？

译文：What’s all the flaunting about? You don’t eat? Are you an immortal?

In Chinese, the word "成仙" is a very distinctive word in religious culture. In Chinese mythology, gods are immortal and eternal, and they do not need to eat or drink anything to

sustain their lives. However, in Western culture, there is no such thing as "成仙", so it is necessary to transplant the "成仙" imagery from the source language to the target language. Due to the special nature of subtitle translation, the translation needs to be short and easy to understand, so it is directly summarized by the "永恒" element contained in the "成仙" framework, preserving its cultural characteristics.

3.3. Frame Adjustment

Some corresponding linguistic expressions in English and Chinese are similar, but they do not belong to the same framework. Because there are both the same and different elements in a certain frame activated by these apparently similar linguistic expressions. Therefore, in the process of subtitle translation, the language expressions that activate the same or similar frames should be selected to avoid frame conflicts. Since frames are activated by vocabulary, the purpose of frame adjustment can be achieved by adding or deleting words.

例7：还整天**五迷三道**的**转不过来**。

译文：Yet you’re still so stubborn.

The phrase "五迷三道" refers to people who are confused or confusing. In Chinese, there is a common phrase, "脑子转不过来", which describes a person's slow reaction, so "转不过来" activates the "反应迟钝" frame. This sentence is spoken by the heroine's father to Jiu'er, accusing her of not knowing her blessings while she is in the midst of them. Because of the immediate nature of the subtitle and the limited number of words, the translation of "五迷三道" can be omitted and the main meaning of the whole sentence can be retained.

例8：马马虎虎，**马马虎虎，胡乱混口饭吃**。

译文：I only make it for feeding myself.

This sentence is Hu Er's reply when he is complimented by the Japanese. The words "马马虎虎" and "胡乱混口饭吃" mean the same thing and activate the framework of "谋生making a living", so it is enough to keep one of them.

4. Conclusion

Frame theory provides a new way of thinking and perspective for film and television translation. The subtitle translation activities from the framework theory perspective should not only focus on differences in linguistic forms, but also the differences in the ways of thinking implied behind the different forms. Based on frame theory, this paper discusses the current state of English translation of culture-loaded words in *Red Sorghum* subtitles from three translation strategies, including frame replacement, frame transplantation and frame adjustment.

References

[1] C. F C. An alternative to checklist theories of meaning [J]. Berkeley:Berkeley Linguistics, 1975: 123-31.

[2] C. F C. Frames and the semantics of understanding [J]. Quaderni di Semantica, 1985, (6): 222-54.

[3] C. F C, Akins B T. Toward a frame-based lexi-con:the semantics of RISK and its neighbors [M]. Hillsdale:Lawrence Erlbaum Assoc, 1992.

[4] Di S. On the traslation of Call To Arms by Mr.&Mrs.Yang Xianyi from frame theory [J]. Journal of Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics(Social Sciences Edition), 2010, 23(03): 101-4.

[5] HE Yan M M. The translation strategies of sub-technical words in EST from perspective of fame theory [J]. Chinese Science & Technology Translators Journal, 2021, 34(02): 5-8+28.

[6] Ji H. Six important concepts for cross-cultural translation [J]. Journal of East China Normal University(Humanities and Social Sciences), 2018, 50(06): 72-80+174.

[7] Liqin J. Translation of cuture-loaded words under the theory of functional equivalence--taking subtitle translation of the film Jiang Ziya [J]. Journal of Wuhan Metallurgical Manager's Institute, 2022, 32(04): 66-9.

[8] Lirong W. Applying the frame theory to translation [J]. Chinese Translators Journal, 2005, (03): 27-32.

[9] Nakayama T K, Halualani R T. The handbook of critical intercultural communication [M]. Wiley Online Library, 2010.

[10] Nida E. Linguistics and ethnology in translation-problems [J]. Word, 1945, 1(2): 194-208.

[11] RUAN hongfang Z M. On metaphor translation in Dragon-Carving and the literary Mind from the perspective of frame theory [J]. Journal of Anshun University, 2021, 23(05): 45-9.

[12] SU Chong W X. Cognitive strategies for the translation of gestalt imagery [J]. Chinese Translators Journal, 2018, 39(04): 13-20+129.

[13] WANG Zhen Y S, HU Dongping. A FT-based study on translation strategies of Luxun's metaphor--take English versions of A Madman's Diary and Medicine as example [J]. Journal of Hunan Agricultural University(Social Sciences), 2010, 11(01): 87-94.

[14] Xianzhu S. The theory of verbal behavioral famework and translation quality assessment [J]. Foreign Languages Research, 2005, (05): 54-8+80.

[15] Zhongsheng W. Discourse-constucting power of metapher and its translation as viewed from frame perspective: a study based on critical discourse analysis of news report on American fiscal cliff [J]. Contemporary Foreign Language Studies, 2014, (04): 53-7+78.