

Analyzing and Comparing the Translation Strategies Used in the Spanish and Chinese Versions of the Film *Call Me by Your Name* (Llámame por tu nombre)

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Abstract : Subtitling is an essential branch of audiovisual translation involving the transition from spoken language to written language. This paper is an attempt to prove that Henrik Gottlieb's subtitling strategies (1992) can be well applied in Spanish translation and Chinese translation to guide further translation practice, with the aim of improving the quality of interlingual subtitling. The research objects of this study are Chinese subtitles and Spanish subtitles of the film *Call Me by Your Name*, which are both available on Netflix. The study provides several examples to shed light on how each translation strategy is adopted by Spanish subtitler and Chinese subtitler, and tries to explore possible reasons behind their translations. In this movie, the Spanish translator tends to use transfer, transcription, condensation, decimation and deletion, while the Chinese translator prefers to use expansion and paraphrase. The main hypothesis is that language and cultural differences between English and Chinese are more significant than between English and Spanish.

Keywords : AVT; Subtitling; Interlingual Subtitling; Translation Strategies; Difficulties of Interlingual Subtitling; LGBTQ Movies; English-Spanish Translation; English-Chinese Translation

La subtitulación es una rama esencial de la traducción audiovisual que implica la transición entre el lenguaje hablado y el lenguaje escrito. Este trabajo pretende demostrar que las estrategias de subtitulación de Henrik Gottlieb (1992) pueden aplicarse bien en la traducción al español y en la traducción al chino para orientar la práctica de la traducción, con el objetivo de mejorar la calidad de la subtitulación interlingüística. El objeto de la investigación son los subtítulos en chino y los subtítulos en español de la película *Llámame por tu nombre*, ambos disponibles en Netflix. En el presente trabajo ofrecemos varios ejemplos para analizar cada estrategia adoptada por el subtitulador español y el subtitulador chino, e intenta explorar las posibles razones de sus traducciones. En esta película, el traductor español tiende a utilizar las técnicas de transferencia, la transcripción, la condensación, la reducción y la supresión, mientras que el traductor chino prefiere utilizar las de expansión y la paráfrasis. La hipótesis del presente es que las diferencias lingüísticas y culturales entre el inglés y el chino son más significativas que las del inglés y el español.

1. Introduction

1.1 Research objective

The aim of this study is threefold. The primary purpose is to form a well-rounded understanding of the current research in the field of audiovisual translation and sum up specific puzzles and difficulties encountered during the process of translation practice. The aim also includes comparing and studying the differences between translation strategies adopted by the Spanish translator and the Chinese translator. These strategies are basic for beginners in particular and cover a wide range of areas.

Secondly, the study of audiovisual translation in China is still in its initial stage and has not formed a well-developed theoretical system structure, and this is because it had not been given enough attention. In many cases, some Chinese film-goers are even better than professional translators and can directly point out mistakes in their translations. In the interview with Professor Jorge Diaz-Cintas (2019), he mentions the phenomenon that a large number of Chinese fans join non-profit fansub groups to provide

high quality, efficiency, and speedy translation to the audience. Therefore, it is hoped that this article could call for more attention to the emerging field of audiovisual translation and could bring useful references to other studies of translation strategies for subtitling.

Finally, this paper aims to promote cultural exchanges between western and eastern countries. On the one hand, the Chinese viewers not only understand the connotations of works accurately but also can experience the charms of western culture. On the other hand, the paper hopes to inspire more excellent translators to devote themselves to audiovisual translation and deliver more works from their own country to the world.

1. 2 Research methodology

1. 2. 1 Research design

This paper adopts a comparative analysis and a theoretical analysis on the basis of the Spanish subtitles and Chinese subtitles of the same film to discuss translation strategies for inter lingual subtitling. The comparative analysis is carried out from Spanish subtitles and Chinese subtitles in terms of the same dialogue to find out the differences between them. The theoretical analysis implies that this study applies the classification of ten translation strategies proposed by Henrik Gottlieb (1992: 161-170) in order to reveal how the Spanish subtitler and the Chinese subtitler translate the source text by using these strategies. As for the research subject, the project carries out a case study of the movie Call Me by Your Name, which includes various translation difficulties that may encounter in the process of translating.

1. 2. 2 Data collection

It is well known that Netflix provides subtitles in several languages, including English, Spanish, Arabic, Romanian and simplified Chinese. The original soundtrack of this film is English, and I transcribe Spanish subtitles and Chinese subtitles of the whole film. Besides, in the film there are many conversations in Italian, French and German, but these dialogues’ subtitles are not available on Netflix (see figure 1). Thus, I also reference thescreenplay to include lines in Italian, French and German.

Audio	Subtitles
German	European Spanish
✓ English [Original]	✓ English [CC]
European Spanish	Off
French	Arabic
Italian	Romanian
English - Audio Description	Simplified Chinese

Figure 1. Netflix only provides subtitles in five languages.

1. 2. 3 Data analysis

The entire analysis is divided into two parts. The first part is that I propose certain translation difficulties and detail ten subtitle translation strategies.

Another one is about how each strategy is adopted by the Spanish translator or the Chinese translator. The analysis can be broken down into the following steps: ① Timeline; ② Context; ③ Source text (ST); ④ Spanish subtitles (SS); ⑤ Back translation from Chinese subtitles (CS).

1. 3 Research significance

1. 3. 1 Research significance of translation strategies for subtitling

Most acclaimed films are bound up with successful inter lingual subtitles. Subtitling is a branch of audiovisual translation (AVT), and like other translation practices, is of importance to scores of researches aimed at offering guidance. Only with advanced and systematic theoretical background can translation activities be carried out successfully and translators be guided to the appropriate translation level to ensure the transmission of films’ messages. However, the difference between subtitling and other translations is that subtitling in films and TV dramas is subject to technical and contextual constraints. The first and foremost characteristic of inter lingual subtitling is condensation, both to deliver the full meaning in the limited space and to make the audience to grasp the meaning in a few seconds. In view of the fact that the research of subtitling lacks well-developed system, the significance of studying translation strategies for subtitling lies in the following three aspects:

In the first place, a good translation of film subtitles will be loved by multitudinous consumers, and can better convey the ideas and concepts. This study hopes to provide a theoretical basis for inter lingual subtitling, achieving the goal of improving the standard of audiovisual translation. Secondly, this paper uses a comparative analysis of Spanish subtitles and Chinese subtitles and then hopes to inspire more and more researchers to make a contrastive study among two or more languages. Finally, it calls for more attention to be paid to inter lingual subtitling, carries out a comprehensive and in-depth research, continuously enriches the theory research of

translation strategies applied in subtitles.

1. 3. 2 Research significance of the film *Call Me by Your Name*

The day May 17, the International Day Against Homophobia, is a major global landmark, representing the interests of the homosexual community are protected as well as supported. Nevertheless, homosexuality was once said to be a mental disorder by the WHO between 1948 and 1990. Until May 17, 1990, the WHO claimed that “homosexuality is not a disease, a disturbance or a perversion”.

The film *Call Me by Your Name* vividly portrays homosexual love in a tender and gentle way that has gained popularity around the world. As a matter of fact, there were several works relevant to gay love before *Call Me by Your Name*, such as *Maurice* (the UK, 1987), *Lan Yu* (China, 2001), *Brokeback Mountain* (America, 2005), and *Blue is the Warmest Color* (French, 2013). It can be seen that the public has turned their attention to this topic along with social progress, and more and more scholars began to focus on the analysis of characters and plot in literature and audiovisual works.

Up to now, same-sex marriage has not been allowed in many countries yet, while Spain, as the third country, has announced gay marriage is legal since July 3, 2005. It is hoped that this study could call for more and more countries to provide a comfortable environment where the LGBTQ group could pursue their love, free from sexist, homophobia as well as constrictive stereotypes.

2. Analysis of interlingual subtitling

2.1 Definition of interlingual subtitling

Interlingual subtitling is a type of audiovisual translation (AVT). It is a kind of translation presented on screen and preserves the original sound of the film. Many scholars have put up various views to give a precise definition of subtitles as a form of translation, which is listed below, summarizing the different opinions.

Luyken, Georg-Michael, et al (1991: 31): condensed written translations of original dialogue which appear as lines of text, usually positioned towards the foot of the screen. Subtitles appear and disappear to coincide in time with the corresponding portion of the original dialogue and are almost always added to the screen image at a later date as a post-production activity.

Gottlieb Henrik (2004: 219-220): diasemiotic translation in polysemiotic media (including films, TV, video and DVD), in the form of one or more lines of written text presented on the screen in sync with the original dialogue.

Jorge Diaz-Cintas and Aline Remael (2007: 8): a translation practice that consists of presenting a written text, generally on the lower part of the screen, that discursive elements that appear in the image (letters, inserts, graffiti, inscriptions, placards, and the like), and the information that is contained on the soundtrack (songs, voices off).

According to the above definitions of subtitling provided by academics, subtitling can be summarized as the act of translating the source language into the target language in writing for films, TV series and other audiovisual works. More significantly, a subtitled audiovisual text also is a semiotically complex text associated with images, sounds, background music and other elements. The facial expressions, body movements and wardrobes of characters in the film are part of the non-verbal messages. Translators not only act as intermediaries between the two languages but also play the role of cultural intermediation and transmission of the message.

2.2 Types of subtitling

Henrik Gottlieb (2005) states that subtitling can be classified into two types: intralingual subtitling and interlingual subtitling.

Intralingual subtitling: according to Gottlieb (1997), it is a subtitling within the same language. Gottlieb (2005: 27) also calls it as “vertical subtitling”, which refers to that only mode is changed, but not language. Liu Dayan (2014: 1105) holds the view that “its target audiences are: the deaf and hard of hearing, language learners and karaoke singers”. As for the last one, Jorge Diaz-Cintas and Aline Remael (2020: 16) explain that “karaoke is used to transcribe the lyrics of songs or movie musicals so that the public can join in the singing at the same time as the characters on screen and the rest of the audience”.

Interlingual subtitling: it is the translation of one language into another. What is more, it is required that translators transform one culture into another one that is acceptable to the audience. Briefly, it involves changes in both language and culture of the message. This paper focuses on interlingual subtitle translation of the movie *Call Me by Your Name* in English-Spanish translation and English-Chinese translation.

2.3 Difficulties of interlingual subtitling

Basil Hatim and Ian Mason (1997: 430) point out that the limitations of subtitling would create difficulties to translators, and in their opinion, these constraints can be divided into four categories:

(1) The shift in mode from speech to writing.

(2) Factors which govern the medium or channel in which meaning is to be conveyed.

(3) The reduction of the source text as a consequence of (2) above. Because of this the translator has to reassess coherence strategies in order to maximize the retrievability of intended meaning from a more concise target language version.

Apart from these constraints, different cultural backgrounds also bring huge difficulties to translators who are less familiar with the culture. For example, Patrick Zabalbeascoa (2005: 202) mentions the metaphorical value of the word “dragon” depending on different backgrounds. In Christian mythology, “dragons” normally symbolize death and terror, war and killing, evil and greed. On the contrary, the Chinese “dragons” are often associated with prosperity, wealth and glory in mythology. It has always been regarded as the most representative symbol of Chinese culture, and Chinese people are proud to be the “heirs of dragons”. In the following part, I will analyze the five constraints mentioned above in interlingual subtitling.

2.3.1 Transition from spoken language to written language

The transition from the spoken language to written language involves distinct accents (American accent, British accent or Indian accent), tones of voice (high pitch, low pitch), speaking styles (slow, quick), character changes, etc. These features of the spoken language are not automatically reflected in the written language. Therefore, it is difficult for the audience to understand content without the help of translators. Here is an instance of the transition from spoken language to written language.

Example 1

Timeline:(00:45:34.940 00:45:39.730)

Context:Oliver asks Elioif he could accompany him to the town to pick up some things.

ST

Oliver: That is, of course, | unless you have more | important business going on.

Elio: [mock imitation]

SS

Oliver:Si. Ahora mismo. | A menos que tengas | algo más importante que hacer.

Elio:“A menos que tengas | algo más importante que hacer.”

Back translation from CS

Oliver: Yes, right now, | of course, unless you have more important things to do.

Elio:“Of course, | unless you have more important things to do.”

In this dialogue (example 1) between Oliver and Elio, Elio imitates Oliver’s low and deep voice, but does not speak clearly. The English subtitles of the original version show “mock imitation” instead of giving specific lines. But in Spanish and Chinese versions, both translators provide the whole line that is enclosed in double quotes. However, in this way, Spanish and Chinese viewers could not tell that Elio ismimicking the way of Oliver’s speech by watching the subtitles. It also suggests that the transition from spoken language to written language is a challenging problem for translators.

3.3.2 Time restriction and space restriction

Compared to book translation, the biggest difficulty of subtitling is that it is limited by time and space. This is why the scholar points out that interlingual subtitling can be defined as “constrained translation”, which originally comes from the work of Christopher Titford (1982). His insight obviously has multiple implications. On the one hand, subtitles should appear on the screen around the same time as the actor’s lines and keep up with the reading speed of the audience. More often than not, the minimum time for a subtitle is one second, and the maximum is around six seconds. On the other hand, audiences prefer brief sentences because they are easier to read. Consequently, this requires that subtitles should not take up too much space on the screen, which echoes the view of Basil Hatim and Ian Mason (1997: 65) “these are physical constraints of available space (generally up to 33, or in some cases 40 keyboard spaces per line; no more than two lines on screen)”.

It is also worth mentioning that for the Chinese subtitles, some forms of punctuation are not allowed, such as commas, periods, colons, largely because punctuation marks take up space. Besides, the Netflix website provides a specific answer about the maximum number of characters per line allowed: “In general, the maximum number of characters per line to around 42, but there are a small number of languages where a maximum character per line limit is enforced. These languages and limits are:

Korean: 23

Chinese Simplified: 23

Chinese Traditional: 23

Arabic: 50

The number of characters should ideally be an amount that fits in each line of subtitles. This implies that translators should be more conscious of choosing shorter words or phrases to keep the number of characters down. Example 2 shows that how a translator does not always strictly follow the requirement.

Example 2

Timeline: (00:04:59.340 ã 00:05:03.090)

Context:Oliver just arrives at Elio’s family and Elio takes Oliver to his room.

ST
 Elio: My room is now your room. | I'll be next door.
 SS
 Oliver: Mi habitación ahora es tu habitación. | Dormiré en la de al lado.
 Back translation from CS
 Elio: My room is now your room. | I live next door.

In order to check the number of characters, I import the Spanish subtitles and Chinese subtitles into Aegisub.

Table 1. The data are from Aegisub

Start	End	CPS	Style	Text
0:04:59.34	0:05:01.76	10	Default	My room is now your room.
0:05:01.80	0:05:03.09	13	Default	I'll be next door.
0:04:59.34	0:05:01.76	15	Default	Mi habitación ahora es tu habitación.
0:05:01.80	0:05:03.09	20	Default	Dormiré en la de al lado.

When the Chinese subtitles and Spanish subtitles are imported into Aegisub, Chinese subtitles do not exceed the maximum length of characters, while Spanish subtitles fails to meet the requirement. It can be seen that the first Spanish line “Mi habitación ahora es tu habitación” seems to be repetitive and lengthy. Moreover, the second Spanish line “Dormiré en la de al lado” does not conform with the number of characters, thereby marked in red. In view of this, I provide another alternative to shorten the number of characters as shown below.

Table 2. I provide an alternative Spanish translation

Start	End	CPS	Style	Text
0:04:59.34	0:05:01.76	11	Default	Mi habitación ahora estuya.
0:05:01.80	0:05:03.09	11	Default	Estaré al lado.

The revised Spanish translation is not only less wordy, but also easier to understand in terms of content. This is why translators are after advised to take the number of characters and the audiovisual context into consideration for the sake of the audience's viewing experience.

2.3.3 Reduction of original text due to time and space constraints

As for the reduction of source text due to time-and-space constraints, Basil Hatim and Ian Mason (1997: 430) make it clear that “in face-to-face communication, the normal redundancy of speech gives hearers more than one chance of picking up intended meaning; in subtitling, the redundancy is inevitably reduced and chances of retrieving lost meaning are therefore fewer”. In other words, due to time and space limitations, the content of the subtitles is heavily condensed and the message conveyed is correspondingly reduced. Unlike reading written texts, people are unlikely to pause the video or replay the film to get information that they missed or did not understand (especially in the cinema). When this is taken into account, many words are reduced in the dialogue (example 3) due to reading constraints.

Example 3
 Timeline: (00:45:03.860 à 00:45:15.380)
 Context: Elio tells Oliver that her mother is reading a French romantic about a knight and a princess.
 ST
 Oliver: So, does he speak?
 Elio: No. He fudges.
 Oliver: Mmm. It figures. He's French.
 SS
 Oliver: ¿Y él habla?
 Elio: No. Lo elude.
 Oliver: Seguro. Es francés.
 Back translation from CS
 Oliver: So he said it?
 Elio: No, he avoided it.
 Oliver: I knew it. He's French.

Before this conversation, Elio tells Oliver that the story comes from a 16th-century French romantic novel. But if the audience is not fully aware of the previous dialogues, they can easily get a bit lost or confused by the Spanish translation and the Chinese translation, too.

2.3.4 Requirement of matching the visual image

The requirement of matching the visual image means that the subtitles should be in tune with the content of the images, such as facial expressions, character movements, non-verbal sounds. In the process of translating for subtitles, translators are advised to keep sound, image and subtitles to achieve a degree of consistency. In a narrow sense, the subtitles need to be consistent with the characters' turns of speed so that the dialogue spoken by B does not appear while A is speaking; In a broad sense, the subtitling aims to fit with the story of movies, scenes, characterization, striving to create a favorable viewing experience and meet the audience's expectations. For instance, if a noble and highly respected scholar says, "That is great", it is unlikely translated as "Eso es de puta madre" in Spanish. If translators comply with guidelines and audience expectations, they will choose appropriate expressions to each characters' lines.

With regard to the film *Call Me by Your Name*, it seems that the translators for the Chinese subtitles (CS) and the Spanish subtitles (SS) are aware of this point, there is no inconsistency between the written words and the images, so I will not explore it further in this paper.

2.3.5 Different cultural backgrounds

Due to temporal and spatial constraints, in many cases translators do not have enough time and space to introduce many cultural phenomena to the audience in subtitling. There are lots of words that contain certain cultural information, also known as culture-loaded words, bearing the unique features of foreign culture. If audiences are unfamiliar with these culture-loaded words, it will cause great difficulties for translators. I select an example (4) of culture-loaded words in the film and then illustrate how difficult it is to translate these words for both the CS and the SS.

Example 4

Timeline: (02:03:30.860 à 02:03:32.610)

Context: Elio returns home to celebrate Hanukkah with his family.

ST

Mafalda: Happy Hanukkah!

SS

Mafalda: ¡Feliz Janucá!

Back translation from CS

Mafalda: Happy Festival of Lights!

In example 4, "Hanukkah" is a Jewish festival, which means "dedication" in Hebrew, also known as Feast of Dedication or Festival of Lights. This is why it is translated as "Festival of Lights" in Chinese, while the SS adopts transliteration, a basic method of translating culture-loaded words.

Although Hanukkah is not a public or official holiday in Spain, most Spanish people have heard about it and know that it is a Jewish holiday, largely because it is mentioned in lots of Hollywood productions and is nearly always transliterated. By comparison, Chinese people have never heard about any Jewish festivals. Such culture-loaded words, therefore, pose major difficulties for Chinese translators because of the cultural barriers. This instance shows that it is harder to translate "Hanukkah" for CS is more than for SS.

2.4 Interlingual subtitling strategies

As a newly-rising research field, the classification of subtitling strategies, scholars say there is no uniform. Henrik Gottlieb, who is a pioneer in the field of subtitling, states that subtitling strategies can be divided into ten types: ① expansion, ② paraphrase, ③ transfer, ④ imitation, ⑤ transcription, ⑥ Dislocation, ⑦ condensation, ⑧ decimation, ⑨ deletion, ⑩ resignation. The following is explanations of each subtitling strategies raised by Henrik Gottlieb (1992: 161-170):

Expansion is used when the original text requires an explanation because of some cultural nuance not retrievable in the target language.

Paraphrase is resorted to in cases where the phraseology of the original cannot be reconstructed in the same syntactic way in the target language.

Transfer refers to the strategy of translating the source text completely and accurately.

Imitation maintains the same forms, typically with names of people and places.

Transcription is used in those cases where a term is unusual even in the source text, for example, the use of a third language or nonsense language.

Dislocation is adopted when the original employs some sort of special effect, for example, a silly song in a cartoon film where the translation of the effect is more important than the content.

Condensation would seem to be the typical strategy used, that is, the shortening of the text in the least obtrusive way possible.

Decimation is an extreme form of condensation where perhaps for reasons of discourse speed, even potentially important elements are omitted.

Deletion refers to the total elimination of parts of text.

Resignation describes the strategy adopted when no translation solution can be found and meaning is inevitably lost.

In this paper, Gottlieb's translation strategies might not work for all subtitling, the main reason is that dislocation does not appear in the Spanish translation and Chinese translation. So, I probe into the remaining nine subtitling strategies to analyze and compare different translation strategies applied in *Call Me by Your Name*.

3. Subtitle translation strategies used in the film

3.1 Expansion

Expansion (see example 5), as the name implies, is the addition of words or sentences to the target language. The purpose of using this strategy is to complete the meaning that exists in the source language, but is not clearly expressed in the target language. In many cases, there are significant cultural or linguistic differences between the source language and the target language, and translators tend to add supplementary information to render the information more comprehensible. In some cases, if the translator does not give further explanations about the source text, the target-language audience may not be able to understand the contents and ideas of the film due to the influence of their own language, which may cause confusion in the audience. However, this is not an easy task for subtitlers who are constrained by time and space.

Example 5

Type: Expansion (ST-CS)

Timeline: (01:00:32.670 à 01:00:45.220)

Context: Oliver is comforting the nosebleed Elio.

ST

Oliver: That wasn't my fault, right?

Elio: No. I'm a mess.

Oliver: Oliver: Well, the kitchen | table sure is.

SS

Oliver: ¿Has sido por mi culpa?

Elio: No. Soy un desastre.

Oliver: La mesa de la cocina sí que lo es...

Back translation from CS

Oliver: That's not my fault?

Elio: No, I'm a mess.

Oliver: The kitchen table is an absolute mess.

Example 5 shows that the back translation from CS renders the ST "the kitchen table sure is" as "the kitchen table is an absolute mess". It can be seen that the Chinese translator is used to explaining incomplete information to avoid misunderstandings or loss of information, while SS are not like this.

Example 5 presents the use of expansion in Chinese translation, while it is less frequently used in Spanish subtitles. The reason is primarily the fact that the linguistic and cultural differences between English and Chinese are greater than the differences between English and Spanish. It is commendable that Chinese translator realize these differences and well deliver the ST to the Chinese audience

3.2 Paraphrase

Paraphrase (see example 6) refers to a rewriting process that the translator uses his or her own language to convey the main meaning of the dialogue in the movie. Like the expansion strategy, paraphrase is used when there are language barriers or different cultural differences between source language and target language. In the process of subtitling, even if the source text is translated word for word, the audience may still do not understand its content accurately; in this case, it is necessary to rewrite the content or create a logical connection. There is an example (6) that shows paraphrase was used in Spanish subtitles and Chinese subtitles.

Example 6

Type: Paraphrase (ST-CS)

Timeline: (01:01:02.780 à 01:01:06.830)

Context: Oliver wears a necklace, and Elio tells to Oliver that he used to have one.

ST

Elio: I used to have | one of these.

Oliver: You used to?

SS

Elio: Tenía una igual.

Oliver: ¿Tenías?

Back translation from CS

Elio: I have one of these before.

Oliver: Before?

Example 6 shows that the difference between Chinese and English lies in that English is a synthetic language, with ample variations in terms of tense, number, while there are no verb tenses or irregular verbs in Chinese. So how does Chinese express when things happen? The answer is adverbials of time. As example 6 indicates, the sentence “I used to have one of these” was translated as “I have one of these before” in Chinese, then the next line “You used to?” becomes “before?” in Chinese, which stresses the event happening in the past by using adverbial of time.

This example shows that the difficulty of interlingual subtitling is mainly reflected in two aspects. Firstly, the perceived need to keep the meaning of the source language consistently. Secondly, an effort for the target language and the source language to share some cultural connotation, and by doing so, the audience of the target text are able to react similarly to the audience of the source text. The strategy of paraphrase also conforms Nida’s principle of dynamic equivalence (1969), which aims at producing a similar response between source-text readers and target-text readers. Therefore, if translators do not paraphrase what characters say, then literal translation probably sounds strange or even makes viewers puzzled.

3.3 Transfer

Transfer (see example 7) is the strategy of translating the source language completely and accurately, that is, the translator translates the original text into the target language according to its grammatical structure. As Spanish is close to English, transfer is more frequently used in Spanish subtitles than in Chinese subtitles.

Example 7

Type: Transfer (ST-SS)

Timeline: (00:04:18.500 à 00:04:20.460)

Context: Elio’s family greets Oliver warmly.

ST

Elio’s father: Our home is your home.

SS

El padre del Elio: Nuestra casa es tu casa.

Back translation from CS

Elio’s father: You can think of this place as your home.

In example 7, the Spanish translation shows that transfer strategy not only achieves a faithful transmission of content, but also coincides with the structure of the source-text sentence. Additionally, this sentence “mi (nuestro) casa es tu casa” has become a well-known saying in English, which might even be funny among the Spanish audience.

3.4 Imitation

Imitation (see example 8) is often used when translators translate the names of people, places, book titles, addresses, etc. Because sometimes a foreign word appears in the source language, the translator might keep foreign elements in the target language. The main benefit of this strategy is that the translation could be synchronized with the movement of the actor’s lips. This type of translation strategy is commonly found in the names of people and places in this film, and I select a representative example (8) of using the imitation strategy.

Example 8

Type: Imitation (ST-SS, ST-CS)

Timeline: (01:43:10.760 à 01:43:13.730)

Context: Elio’s dad tells Oliver’s mom that Oliver is going to leave soon.

ST

Elio’s father: Oliver has to go to Bergamo | for a few days.

SS

Oliver tiene que ir a Bérgamo unos días.

Back translation from CS

Elio’s father: Oliver is going to Bei Er Jia Mo for a few days.

Example 8 demonstrates that both translators adopt the imitation strategy in terms of translating places. The place “Bergamo” is translated as “Bérgamo” and “Bei Er Jia Mo” in Spanish and Chinese. The upside is that this strategy can achieve a phonetic equivalence between the source language and the target language. The strategy of imitation therefore can be regarded as one of the most common and favorable strategies applied in translating the names of places.

3.5 Transcription

Transcription (see example 9), a strategy known as copying, is similar to imitation, but it is usually adopted when terms or phrases are from third language. Some explain that this strategy is the preservation of peculiarities or salient features of the source language. In Call Me by Your Name, example 8 uses the strategy of transcription in Spanish translations.

Example 9

Type: Transcription (ST-SS)

Timeline:(01:12:54.160 à 01:12:59.910)

Context:A homosexual couple called Isaac and Mounir (also called “Sonny and Cher”) will visit Elio’s family.

ST

Elio’s mother: Don’t forget, Isaac and Mounir | are coming for dinner.

Elio:Also known | as Sonny and Cher.

SS

La madre de Elio:Acuérdate de que Isaac y Mounir | vienen a cenar.

Elio: También conocidos comoSonny y Cher.

Back translation from CS

Elio’s mother: Don’t forget, | Isaac and Mounir are coming over for dinner.

Elio: Also known as “Sang Ni and Xue Er”

Before we go any further, it is necessary to know the origin of nicknames “Soony and Cher”. Sonny and Cher are an American pop music duo and heterosexual couple. However, in this movie Isaac and Mounir called “Sonny and Cher” are a same-sex couple. One can infer that although Issac and Mounir are physically a same-sex couple, everyone thinks they are heterosexual, like most couples. This hypothesis can be verified later from the plot. When Elio firstly introduces Issac to his friend, he says, “Remember Issac? The girl from Paris?” In this sense, Elio’sfamily believes in treatingIsaac and Mounir with the same respect as straight couples.

From the perspective of translation strategy, the Spanish translator adopts transcription to preserve the cultural elements of the source language, as paraphrase or expansion strategies cannot be used to replace them. On the flip side, transliteration is used in Chinese translation, and is also a common strategy to translate the names of people.

3.6 Condensation

Condensation (see example 10) is the closest equivalent to a concise translation, conveying the original message but with fewer words. This strategy is not only strictly restricted to the words or phrases, but also is confined to syntactic structures. Here is one of examples of condensation strategy.

Example 10

Type: Condensation (ST-SS)

Timeline:(01:40:24.720 à 01:40:33.060)

Context:Elio shows affection and love to Oliver.

ST

Elio: God, | we wasted so many days. | Why didn’t | you give me a sign?

Oliver: I did. I did.

Elio:You didn’t give me | a sign.| When?

SS

Elio: Hemos desperdiciado tantos días. | ¿Por qué no me hiciste una señal?

Oliver: La hice.

Elio:¿Qué va! | ¿Cuándo?

Back translation from CS

Elio: God, we’ve wasted so many days, | why don’t you give me a hint?

Oliver: I did, I did.

Elio:You didn’t give me a hint. | When?

In example 10, the Spanish translator condenses the meaning of “You didn’t give me a sign” into just two words as “Qué va”, while Chinese subtitled does not remove any words or compress the whole sentence. The core of condensation is to keep the most important part of the source text, but it depends on the translators’ priorities (Patrick Zabalbeascoa, 1996) to decide which part is of importance in the source language and then must be kept, and which words are less important and could be deleted. As prescribed by Patrick Zabalbeascoa (1996: 243), “we may arrange the set of priorities for a given translation on a vertical scale of importance, ranging from a top priority all the way down to very minor priorities”.In this dialogue, Spanish translator probably considers that conveying the negative message is at the top of the priority list, and thus filters other information. As two characters speak fast and are in an excited mood, the strategy condensation adopted by the Spanish translator is highly advisable.

3.7 Decimation

The strategy of decimation (see example 11) is achieved by filtering unimportant or worthless information, while keeping the main context. The difference between condensation and decimation is that decimation may result in a loss of lexical and syntactic structures.

Example 11

Type: Decimation (ST-SS)

Timeline:(00:23:38.200 à 00:23:42.420)
 Context:Elio is playing piano in the living room.
 ST
 Oliver: I can't believe | you changed it again.
 Elio:Oh, I changed it a little bit.
 SS
 Oliver: La has cambiado otra vez.
 Elio:Un poco.
 Back translation from CS
 Oliver: I can't believe you've changed it again.
 Elio:I've changed a little.

As shown above, the Spanish translator omits the subject and object of the sentence, translating it from “I changed it a little bit” to “a little bit (un poco)”. However, even though the Spanish subtitler deletes the subject and object, the audience could infer what has been omitted from the context.

3.8 Deletion

Deletion (see example 12) refers to the direct omission of some parts of the dialogue, such as repetition, filler words, profanity, and other offensive phrases. In the movie, this strategy is used to cope with several tag questions within a short time.

Example 12
 Type: Deletion (ST-SS)
 Timeline:(01:03:12.370 à 01:03:18.250)
 Context:Elio's mother notices that Elio likes Oliver.
 ST
 Elio's mother:You like him, | don't you? Oliver?
 Elio: Everyone likes Oliver.
 SS
 La madre de Elio:¿Te cae bien Oliver?
 Elio: Le cae bien a todo el mundo.
 Back translation from CS
 Elio's mother:You like him, don't you? Oliver?
 Elio: Everyone likes Oliver.

In example 12, the Spanish subtitler deletes the tag question “don't you” in order to conform to spatial and temporal constraints. By contrast, there is no deletion or omission to be found in the Chinese translation.

To summarize, there are three translation strategies (condensation, decimation and deletion) that can be considered as reductive strategies. Among three strategies, condensation remains the source text as much as possible, and decimation keeps the main information and cuts down inconsequential details, while deletion refers to direct omission because of time and space constraints.

3.9 Resignation

Sometimes translators skip ambiguous or untranslatable content, which would have no relevant meaning in the target language. This is called resignation. This type of translation strategy (see example 13) is also regarded as zero translation, as its characteristic is inability to translate the source content. In this film, resignation strategy is mostly adopted in Spanish and Chinese when characters are talking about linguistic terminologies.

Example 13
 Type: Resignation (ST-SS, ST-CS)
 Timeline:(00:12:13.850 à 00:12:26.530)
 Context:Elio's father explains the origin of the word “apricot” to Elio and Oliver.
 ST
 Elio's father: The origin of our | Italian albicocca is al-barquq. | It's amazing that | today in Israel and | many Arab countries, | the fruit's referred to | by a totally different | name, Mishmish.
 SS
 El padre de Elio: El origen de nuestro | “albicocca” italiano | es “al-barquq”. | Sorprendentemente hoy en Israel, | y en muchos países árabes, | la fruta se llama de un modo | totalmente distinto: “mishmish”.
 Back translation from CS
 Elio's father: Our Italian word | “albicocca” | comes from “al-barquq”. | It is really amazing that | nowadays in Israel and other Arab countries, | this fruit has a completely different name, | “Mishmish”.

Resignation has positive and negative roles. Comparatively speaking, resignation is more effective in embodying and exporting

the source culture, although it may not be as smooth as others.

4. Conclusion

This paper is a tentative study of comparing Spanish and Chinese subtitles under the theoretical guidance of Henrik Gottlieb. The researcher elaborates a typology of nine strategies to deal with problems caused by five obstacles with some examples. Overall, the major finding can be concluded as follows:

(1) Interlingual subtitling is constrained translation, restricted by multiple factors, such as a transition from spoken language to written language, limitations of time and space, the reduction of the original text and the requirement of keeping pace with visual image, and different cultural knowledge. The above elements prompt that subtitling is a complex, demanding and compressed type of translation.

(2) As can be seen from the above examples, Spanish translator is inclined to adopt transfer, transcription, condensation, decimation and deletion. The most probable cause is that Spanish subtitlertakes into account the number of characters and limited time. Whereas Chinese translator often uses expansion and paraphrase strategies in order to avoid potential misunderstanding and ambiguity.

(3) As for translation styles, Spanish translation seems to be natural and smooth for the audience. This may also be related to the fact that they adopted a wide variety of translation strategies. By comparison, the Chinese translation seems to do not achieve the anticipated expectation, which is more or less affected by immense differences in cultures.

(4) We can infer from the study that these strategies proposed by Henrik Gottlieb are well applicable to the film *Call Me by Your Name* both in its Spanish and Chinese versions.

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