

An appreciation of the translation strategies of culture-loaded words in Lin Yutang's English version of *Six Chapters of Floating Life* —— Take Volume One, “Boudoir Records of Music” as an example

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Abstract: Lin Yutang's translation of *Six Chapters of Floating Life* contains a large number of elements reflecting Chinese culture. These culture-loaded words reflect China's unique history and culture. They are the focus and difficulty of translation work. This paper makes a statistical analysis of the five categories' culture-loaded words in the first volume of “Boudoir Records of Music” in Lin Yutang's “*Six Chapters of Floating Life*”, and explores Lin Yutang's different translation methods for different types of culture-loaded words. The translation strategy adopted by Lin Yutang is of great significance to the “going out” strategy of China's outstanding traditional culture.

Key words: Lin Yutang; *Six Chapters of Floating Life*; Culture-loaded words; Translation methods

1. Introduction

Six Chapters of Floating Life is an autobiographical prose work written by Shen Fu, a scholar in Qing Dynasty. It has a special genre with an autobiographical story, also talk about the art of life, leisure, landscape scenery, literary criticism and so on. In 1935, Lin Yutang translated it into English and published it in the English magazines “*Tianxia Monthly*” and “*West Wind Monthly*”, which was deeply loved by readers. Lin Yutang, who was “both grounded in Chinese and Western cultures and devoted to commenting on cosmic articles”, was so proficient in English that his translation was praised as a “humble classic” by British Sinologist Trewin & Hawkes (1961). *Six Chapters of Floating Life* describes the quiet daily life between a couple, which contains many culture-loaded words that are rich in cultural connotation and reflect national culture. Sun Zhili pointed out that the biggest difficulty in translation is often not the language itself, but the cultural connotations carried by the language. As an ancient civilization with 5,000 years of profound cultural deposits, how to translate culture-loaded words has become a major challenge for translators when translating traditional cultural works. This paper makes a classified statistical analysis of the culture-loaded words in the first volume “Boudoir Records of Music”, and explores Lin Yutang's translation strategies, which have implications for the international dissemination of Chinese excellent culture.

2. Definition and classification of culture-loaded words

Our country recorded culture-loaded words as early as 1897, and Gao Fengqian put forward the following views: “Translation books should have two, one is to identify names... It is owned by Taixi, Chinese owner; Owned by China but not by Tessie; There are both Chinese and western, and to use different... The translator can not know its good, in the name of meaning, often the same thing, two books are different. The scholar Liao Qiyi (2000) pointed out that “culture-loaded words are words, phrases, and idioms that denote things unique to a certain culture. These words reflect the unique ways of activities of a particular ethnic group, which have been gradually accumulated in the long course of history and are different from those of other ethnic groups “. In foreign countries, scholar Mona Baker put forward her own opinions on culture-loaded words. She believed that the concept expressed in the source language might be unfamiliar to the target language readers, because the concept might be related to the material, religious, social, customs and other aspects of the source language. The classification of culture-loaded words is based on culture. Among them, Eugene Nida divided culture into five categories: ecological culture, material culture, social culture, religious culture and linguistic culture. This kind of classification is clear and definite, and easy to operate. This paper uses Eugene Nida's classification method to make a statistical analysis of the ecological-culture-loaded words, material-culture-loaded words, socioculture-loaded words and language-culture-loaded words.

3. Domestication and foreignization of translation strategies

Schleiermacher, a German translation theorist, puts forward two cultural orientations in translation: one is to let the author settle down as much as possible and guide the reader to get close to the author; The other is to let the reader settle down as much as possible and guide the author to get close to the reader. The former is called “foreignization” and the latter “domestication”. Foreignizing translation focuses on the source language, preserving the cultural image unique in the source language but not in the target language, and preserving the cultural differences between the source language and the target language in the translation, while domestication is to get closer to the target language readers. The original author wants to have a direct dialogue with the readers, so the translation needs to become the authentic native language.

4. Translation strategies for the four types of culture-loaded words in “Boudoir Notes”

The first volume “Boudoir records of music” mainly describes the life of Shen Fu and his wife, who met, knew each other, loved each

other and got along after marriage. They or the moon review flowers, fishing mountaineering, or travel for the summer, invite the month to drink, or poetry talk, fishing and flowers, full of life. There are loads of loaded words with cultural significance in this volume. Lin Yutang deals with the differences between Chinese and Western cultures with his superb translation skills and appropriate translation strategies.

4.1 Eco-culture-loaded words

Eco-culture-loaded words refer to the culture-loaded words that reflect the geographical environment, climate characteristics and nature of a specific region. According to the author's statistics, there are 23 eco-culture-loaded words in the first volume, most of which are geographical names. Table 1 shows the statistics of eco-culture-loaded words in it.

Table 1 Eco-culture-loaded words in “Boudoir Records of Music” in Six Chapters of Floating Life

| Translation method [↵] | Number [↵] | Examples [↵] |
|--|---------------------|---|
| Transliteration (phonetic translation) [↵] | 5 [↵] | 潇爽楼 Hsiao Shuang Lou; 平山 Pingshan [↵] |
| Literal translation [↵] | 3 [↵] | 千顷云 A Thousand Acres of Clouds; [↵] 近山林 Forest by the Hill [↵] |
| Free translation [↵] | 5 [↵] | 福寿山 the Hill of Good Fortune and Longevity; [↵] 五岳 The Five Sacred Mountains [↵] |
| Language translation (literal translation+free translation) [↵] | 11 [↵] | 饮马桥 the Bridge of Drinking Horse; [↵] 宾香阁 Tower of My Guest's Fragrance [↵] |

As can be seen from Table 1, in this volume, Mr. Lin Yutang mainly adopts four methods: transliteration, literal translation, free translation and language translation. Among them, the language translation method is the most used, with 11. The language translation method here refers to one of the “culture-specific words” translation strategies put forward by the Spanish scholar Exilla, that is, to preserve the referential meanings of culture-specific words in translation. For example, “饮马桥” is composed of the category word “bridge” and the proper name “drinking horse”. The bridge of drinking horse preserves the referential meaning of the word in English, and the subsequent drinking horse is a free translation. Such a translation method not only reflects the uniqueness of Chinese culture, highlights the cultural connotation of symbols, but also absorbs western expressions, which is very flexible and reflects the translator's skilled translation skills. The free translation uses the “domestication” translation strategy to transform the unfamiliar culture to the familiar content of the target language readers, so as to facilitate their understanding. There are three transliteration methods. These three geographical names do not contain special meaning or cultural information, so the translator uses transliteration method to deal with them. This translation method retains the cultural color of the original text, highlights the foreign language and culture, enables foreign readers to enjoy the elegance of Chinese culture, and stimulates their curiosity and exploration of Chinese culture.

4.2 Material culture-loaded words

Material culture loaded words involve material economic life, daily expressions, living utensils, science, technology, culture and facilities. Generally speaking, the words related to means of production, transportation, food, medicine, clothing and other aspects belong to the material culture loaded words. In “Boudoir Records of Music”, there are 23 material culture-loaded words. The material culture-loaded words counted here refer to things that are unique to China, excluding things like “bed” that also exist in Western countries. Lin Yutang's method of translating material culture-loaded words is free translation and transliteration as a supplement. Among the 23 words, 20 adopt free translation, such as stinking bean-curb, the double favoured gravy, butterfly-buttery shoes. These are material words with distinct national characteristics and contain unique cultural connotations. Free translation can let readers know the true name of the words and avoid falling into the confusion of not knowing what is said in the “clouds and fog”; There are three transliteration methods, which are “makua (马褂)”, “li (里)” and “mow (亩)”. Such translation methods increase the exotic flavor and are conducive to the spread of traditional Chinese culture.

4.3 Sociocultural loaded words

Sociocultural loaded words refer to the culture-loaded words that reflect the customs, activities, behaviors, living habits and other aspects of a specific nation. In the first volume “Boudoir Records of Music”, there are a total of 29 social and cultural loaded words. For most of the words, Mr. Lin Yutang mostly adopts the method of free translation. The ancient Chinese used “□” to tell the time and “□” to tell the time, so Mr. Lin translated “三鼓” as “about midnight” and “已漏三下” as “midnight”; In China's feudal society period, the emperor's year number was used to record the year, and the lunar calendar was used, while the target language readers were used to using the Gregorian calendar, so the “Qianlong Gengzi 22nd of the first month” was translated into “1780”, and the domestication strategy was adopted, which was concise and easy to read; In the traditional eastern culture, there is a big disparity in the status of men and women, while the Western culture advocates that men and women are more equal, so in the original text, the wife uses “□” to call herself and “□” to honor her husband, but Mr. Lin Yutang simply translates them as “I” and “you”, without elaborating the cultural meaning in order to adapt to the

Western habit of addressing terms. In addition, there are two literal translation methods in the article, such as “月下老人” translated into “the man under the moon”, “寒士” translated into “poor scholar”, reflecting the unique Oriental culture.

4.4 Language culture-loaded words

Language culture-loaded words are an important part of a certain national language, and idioms and colloquial sayings are important manifestations of them. A large number of language and culture loaded words appear in this volume. According to the author's statistics, there are 28 words in total, including 14 idioms, 4 poems and 10 common sayings in this part. Idioms contain a lot of cultural information and folk traditions, which is an important embodiment of the uniqueness of Chinese culture. For these idioms, Mr. Lin Yutang mainly adopts the method of free translation, either translating them into phrases or translating them into sentences, and adding out the cultural meaning contained in the idioms, so that the target readers can better understand the original. For example, he translated the idiom “白头到老” into “live together until old age”, avoiding the message of “白头” and focusing on the meaning of “accompanied until old”; Translate “因果” into “the old tales of retribution”, weakening the information point of “cause and effect” and replacing it with “old tales”, which makes people feel that the meaning is infinite. The literal translation of individual idioms, such as “落花流水” translated into “dropping petals and flowing waters”. This idiom originally described the scenery of late spring, after commonly used to metaphor was beaten. The translation uses the foreignizing translation strategy to literally translate its superficial meaning and vividly describe this scene. Chinese poetry is rich in meaning. For the translation of the poem, this translation focuses on domestication and uses free translation to express the meaning of the poem clearly. If the translation is literal, the reader will be confused. Common sayings in classical books mainly rely on free translation, and literal translation is supplemented. For example, “媒人” is translated into “the go-between”, and “琵琶行” is translated into “Po chu yi's poem”.

5. Epilogue

Through a statistical analysis of the culture-loaded words in Six Chapters of Floating Life, this paper finds that Mr. Lin has adopted a variety of translation strategies, flexibly using literal translation, free translation and language translation for different types of culture-loaded words, and tried his best to retain and convey the traditional Chinese cultural information contained in the words. To enable Western readers to understand and appreciate Chinese culture as much as possible. At the same time, Mr. Lin skillfully uses domestication, foreignization or a combination of both translation strategies in an attempt to give English readers a wonderful reading experience. His translation method in Six Chapters of Floating Life is worth studying and learning, which has important implications for the current communication of Chinese traditional culture.

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