



CONVEY THE CULTURAL IMAGES IN THE TRANSLATION OF FILMS

Convey the cultural images in the translation of films

In these decades, film translators dedicated a lot of outstanding foreign films to a wide audience. From these excellent dubbed films, the audience have not only enjoyed and learnt foreign customs of some other languages, but also felt the charm of the language it brings.

Cultural images is “a cultural symbol, has a relatively fixed and unique cultural meaning, some of them have rich, far-reaching associations; when people refer to them, they could immediately take the hint it is easy to communicate each others’ ideas . Here is an English proverb:“It is the last straw that breaks the camel’s back.”means “最后一根稻草压垮了骆驼”,which could be further explained as“压垮骆驼的最后一根稻草”The expression “the last straw”, vividly symbolizes “something makes people extreme to intolerable”.

Dubbed films, also known as translated films, are some excellent foreign films which must be translated before being accepted by the Chinese audience. Unlike other literary works translation, film translation is used to visualize the language to express the image of the superb art of mind. However, it is different from other film translation in its special nature: “Language is part of the culture, the meaning of any text reflects a corresponding culture directly or indirectly, the ultimate meaning of words could only be found in their respective cultures .” “Cultural differences almost have been naturally reflected in the differences of

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language.”

Film translation is unique and different from translation of other literatures. The question we need to discuss next is how we reconstruct cultural images in the films.

For example, there is a film called Red Shoes, which is talked about a ballerina who could not make the last choice when facing her love and career, finally she lost in despair and commit suicide. This film was translated into “红舞鞋”,first which is not a bad translation, but even “红舞鞋”correctly translated the basic intent of the English original film,as a literal translation,it is too simple, not implying deep enough and could not arouse any association from the audience by the plain translation like this one.

Here is another example could explain the importance of cultural image reconstruction. American film Waterloo Bridge’s original or literal meaning is “滑铁卢”.It is well known that the name of Waterloo Bridge is in memory of the Anglo-Dutch and Prussian victory at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815. If the name is directly translated as “滑铁卢”,most of the audience would think it is a war film about fighting with Napoleon army or a documentary about the bridge construction. However, audiences having seen the film know that this is a heart-touching movie of romance.

Therefore, the translator chose“鸳鸯” instead of “滑铁卢”,which not only could avoid the misunderstanding resulted from the cultural differences for the Chinese audience who are lack of knowledge of historical background field ; and “鸳鸯” this implies the image of Chinese culture, make the audience saw the title immediately realized that this is a movie of love.

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The significance of cultural Image reconstruction in the film translation lies in its ability to make timely and effective manner with communication between the audience and the original texts. As the East-West cultural differences widely exist, film translation might be not recognized and accepted by the majority of Chinese audiences if they are be literally translated word by word.

The translator should be based on their own cultural, from the point of view in art appreciation and from the experience of the local audiences, use the localized language which are with the most similar reference related to the original expressions, and whose terms and cultural images are familiar to the audience, and easy to accept by them.

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